

TIPS FOR ATTRACTING, HIRING AND RETAINING TOP MILLENNIAL LATERAL CANDIDATES

Understanding Millennial Lateral Candidates

CHARACTERISTICS:

- They are NOT lazy but would like more flexibility in their jobs.
- They desire interesting and meaningful work as well as constructive feedback.
- They are mobile and entrepreneurial.
- They want to feel “special” throughout the recruiting process.
- Partnership is not necessarily their end goal.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO LAW FIRMS?

- The millennial work force at law firms is on the rise.
- Law firms have adapted well to recruiting millennials in terms of summer hiring but have been slower to do so for lateral recruitment.
- Firms that implement strategies that embrace millennial lateral candidates’ characteristics and career goals are most successful in achieving their hiring objectives.

Techniques for Finding Millennial Lateral Candidates

- Provide deep information beyond what a firm website offers.
- Differentiate firm in the market and avoid interviewing unqualified candidates by:
 - **Sharing background of the search:** Why is there a need? Are there any obstacles to the search? How important are academic credentials? How long has the need been open? What candidates have/have not been of interest and why?
 - **Providing practice group/firm facts:** What is the composition of the group? With which partners would this associate work? How many hours are associates currently billing in the group? What type of work are the associates in the group handling? Any notable deals/cases or names of sexy clients to share? Where have associates gone when they’ve left? (*see [Alumni Relations](#) below*)
 - **Understanding process:** Who handles the screening interviews? How many rounds of interviews will take place? How quickly is the firm hoping to make a decision?
 - **Highlighting success stories:** Share stories of successful lateral candidates.
 - **Teaming up with trusted recruiters:** Work together to develop strategies for difficult or high-candidate volume searches.

Interviewing Tips that Embrace Characteristics of Millennial Lateral Candidates

- Respond quickly for submissions and interview feedback.
- Fast track the process for top-tier candidates.
- Have a diverse lineup in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, etc., for all associates—not just diverse candidates.
- Include successful laterals on lineup.
- Make sure culture questions are addressed in interviews; be forthcoming about a firm's identity/brand.
- Coach partners to gear interview questions toward millennials' specific characteristics and desires. (see [Understanding Millennial Lateral Candidates](#) above)

Common Decision-Making Factors for Millennial Lateral Candidates

- **Compensation:** Signing or full year-end bonuses make candidates feel important and “special.”
- **Class Standing:** Candidates are reluctant to take a “haircut” on class year without an articulated reason.
- **Work/life balance:**
 - **Technology:** Associates expect advanced technological resources.
 - **Face-time:** Associates want flexibility to work remotely when necessary but also enjoy the sense of community created in an office.
 - **Offices:** Associates have differing opinions on glass offices, shared office space and open floor plans.
- **Staffing:** Free market vs. formal assignment system.
- **Parental Involvement:** Millennial associates are constantly seeking approval from their “helicopter parents.”
- **Transparency:** Millennial associates want an authentic picture of a firm.

Integration and Retention Techniques

- Focus on mentorship/training and provide constructive and frequent feedback.
- Schedule “check-ins” with practice group leaders or firm management.
- Incentivize partners and associates to work with laterals.
- Involve lateral associates in recruiting and summer events to make them feel more connected with firm.
- Create a lateral employee resource group (functions similarly to one's summer class).

Alumni Relations

- Actively assist associates in transitioning to clients and other opportunities.
- Share success stories about associates who have gone in-house.
- Host meaningful events for firm alumni.
- Create an alumni newsletter and database.
- Consider having a dedicated alumni relations professional to spearhead efforts and ensure confidentiality.

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