



Nick Simcock: Employers should create an internal skills register.

Employers get smarter to acquire talent

They're balancing immediate needs and long-term goals.

By Venkat Raman

Employers are getting smarter at acquiring and retaining talent, making skills shortage work to their advantage, an expert has said.

Futurestep New Zealand country leader Nick Simcock said employers were adopting a strategic approach to recruitment, connecting internal and external recruitment with succession planning and performance management.

"They are re-examining how they balance immediate needs and long-term goals, and are improving how they apply people, processes and technology to acquire critical talent," he said.

He said increasing competition and globalisation presented more challenges in finding the right person for the right job.

The complexity of the recruitment process in the global markets had encouraged employers to build relationship with potential candidates, leaving less time for transactional and routine activity, he said. This included partnership with experts, consultants, recruitment agencies and talent acquisition service providers.

"Specialized resources can drive real improvements in speed and effectiveness over the traditional generalist model. Talent acquisition has become far more resource intensive than in the past," Mr. Simcock said.

"Resources are needed to develop the employment brand, create employee referral programmes, optimize internal mobility and, manage graduate programmes and other strategic initiatives."

He said employers were not only keen to recruit the best

talent but also to reduce the cost of recruitment.

Citing Fonterra as an example, he said the company had developed a flexible model that had increased its ability to compete for talent successfully at home and abroad.

"For most organisations, such flexibility will prove to be a great advantage by applying the right amount of resources in a market characterised by significant and often unpredictable changes," he said.

Mr. Simcock said internal recruitment was an invaluable talent pool but often failed to reach many candidates who may remain passive.

Cumbersome internal processes and outdated policies would encourage employees to pursue career opportunities elsewhere.

Mr. Simcock said employers should create an internal skills register, enabling employees to profile themselves online, so their talent can be matched to job vacancies that would arise from time to time.

"Companies can also attract the attention of passive internal candidates through internal careers fairs and 'hot job' promotions," he said.

"Fonterra's recruitment function is set up to ensure a steady pipeline of talent from both internal and external sources."

Recruiters could access internal candidate information to assess suitability against external pre-qualified candidates, he said.

Using performance and succession planning information would also provide recruiters with a benchmark to access external candidates.

"An organisation would seek an outsourced provider when it needs to build its recruitment capability quickly and leverage the skill and expertise of dedicated recruiters.

"An outsourced approach can scale up or down quickly in response to market fluctuations.

"It also provides the resources to help ensure that the talent acquisition function maintains its strategic focus," he said.