

The background features a complex digital network of red and blue lines and nodes. Several circular icons are overlaid: a magnifying glass with a network diagram inside, a drone with a Wi-Fi signal icon above it, and a hand holding a smartphone. The Veremark logo is prominently displayed in the top left.

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“Workforce of the Future”: How to Create the Workforce of the Future and Deliver a Competitive Advantage for a Client’s Business

A Guide for HR Staffing & Recruiting Businesses

Delivering the ‘Workforce of the Future’

I Introduction

How do we create the workforce of the future?

HR professionals need to be ready to create the workforce of the future. Read on to learn how to deliver the workforce of the future for your clients.

Every HR staffing firm, recruiting agency, and HR professional is working to create the “Workforce of the Future.” Improvements in technology and increased access to modern technology have levelled the playing field across sectors and regions of the world. People strategy has become more competitive than ever before. HR professionals have the daunting task of outdoing each other or at least being the first to build a workforce that leads their organization into the hyper-competitive future.

The first question is, how do HR professionals stay ahead of the competition and deliver the workforce requirements of their clients?

The first step is to understand that a clear strategy involving participation and effort from all the stakeholders is required.

Recruiters and staffing businesses have to work hand in hand with employers, other HR professionals, up-skilling outfits, and tech providers to create an optimum hiring ecosystem and candidate experience that is better than the rest at every stage in the process.

This whitepaper outlines how staffing firms, recruiters, and those in the HR sector can deliver the dream workforce of the future. In essence, this whitepaper could be used as the handbook to create the workforce of the future.

This strategy has fourteen elements that an HR professional needs to get right. Let us discuss them one by one.

1 Culture

The culture of an organization helps talent thrive. Organizations must be willing to make an effort to create a culture that the workforce appreciates.

To thrive, organizations need to attract talent. They require talent that is skilled, hardworking, and determined to achieve the organization's objectives. Creating an outstanding and desirable employment culture is the best way to attract talent. Employers should take the initiatives to continually build a fabulous brand and culture of leadership and innovation to ensure that great talent never leaves.

Organizations need to portray great work culture. Recruiters and staffing businesses are an inherent extension to the HR system.

HR staffing firms, recruiting agencies, and others service-providers need to ensure that their culture embodies the values of their clients.

By extension, recruiting agencies and staffing firms must ensure that candidates experience the culture during their interactions with the organization.

These parameters are vital in creating the best work culture:

a) Base your culture on trust

Trust is the foundation on which companies need to build relationships with their employees. Employees who feel that their company can be relied upon feel safe. They don't feel the need for added security. Creating trust goes a long way in creating the right kind of environment.

An employer that can showcase understanding and genuine engagement keeps worries and stress away from employees and allows them to focus on work.

The pandemic is a great example. Organizations across the globe were forced to lay off employees and cut costs. Whilst this was going on, some companies that valued their existing talent saw the pandemic as a temporary threat and took the measures required to keep their employees on the payroll using furloughs as an alternative option. For some, this meant taking bridging loans to keep their employees on the payroll. While this did

mean that they were under financial pressure, when work began to return to normal, they did not face the shortage of talent faced by other businesses in the same sector.

b) Understand the current culture

The first step to bring about change is to understand and benchmark the current situation.

It is vital to conduct an analysis of what the work culture is at the moment. The analysis will expose the behavior and practices that are below the desired standard. This knowledge will provide a foundation to work on and build a better organizational culture.

To understand where you stand, take these simple steps:

- Take a survey of how employees view the organization
- Ask them what they think about the culture?
- Observe your employee behaviors and interactions with each other and customers

c) Define your goal

Deciding that your organization needs a good work culture is merely a thought. The thought has to be put into action. To act upon the thought, the desired goal must be clear.

Understand what kind of culture is essential for you and your business by discussing, agreeing, and planning, as a board and executive leadership team, a differentiated and suitable People Strategy for your business.

Understand what message you want to send to your employees, potential candidates, and customers.

Once you have a clearly defined goal, communicate that goal with your team.

d) **Set clear goals and expectations**

Once you have defined your goals, set realistic timelines to achieve them, and a minimum acceptable change within a specified period, understand that change takes time and consistent effort. It is also important to be aware that your desired goals have to incorporate some flexibility into them.

While working towards specific goals, organizations may observe that those goals have to be changed, as micro day-to-day, and other macro trends and forces, mean an adjustment to the People Strategy is required.

It could be because they may no longer be in the company's best interest or that other goals become a priority. Ensure that you can make the changes required to accommodate that kind of flexibility.

e) **Measure your cultural goals**

While a clearly defined goal is essential, it is equally essential to measure success in achieving or failing to achieve the said goal. Employers must lay out ways of measuring the changes in culture as well. One way to do this is to send out surveys. This could determine if your employees feel a marked difference in their motivation levels.

The workforce of the future has heightened expectations from a place of work.

Here are some ideas of the kind of culture the workforce of the future expects:

- Camaraderie amongst colleagues
- Involvement in the workplace after hours
- Transparency in communication
- Real Diversity is valued and contributions included

- Clear brand values that deliver for the greater good
- Success is celebrated
- Leaders are easy to access
- No internal office politics
- Opportunities for professional development are present

2 Training, L&D

Training, learning, and development are areas in which staffing companies, recruiters, and HR professionals must invest. There are two prongs to this part: Training HR / staffing / recruitment professionals, and training employees.

Staffing professionals, recruiters, and anyone else in the hiring process have to be ready to garner new skills. They have to use the latest tools coming out, be qualified to understand data, be able to analyse and interpret it, and be more empathetic.

HR departments need to learn where talent pools are available and how to make the workplace more diverse.

This means understanding new cultures, understanding how talent from different backgrounds can work together, and what kind of diversity can result in a more effective teams and improved results.

A major part of being an HR professional is about understanding humans. It may be well worth the investment to learn a little about psychology.

It could be workplace psychology, corporate psychology, business psychology, or just a basic certificate in psychology so that you can pinpoint talent that may need a little extra support.

Being computer savvy was enough a few years ago. Now HR professionals have to understand how data is collected, how it is analyzed, and how to create reports. Some tools can carry out these functions. However, understanding the system's workings makes it easier to know how the results come about. This knowledge will also mean that HR professionals are better prepared to resolve impediments.

The next vital step is ensuring the ongoing training of employees, to ensure cutting edge skillsets remain sharp.

Investment by organizations in learning and development programs has risen significantly. Organizations are making great efforts to find ways to give their employees more access to learning and development platforms as well.

Employers need employees who can improve themselves, which means that employers seek value in their workforce by investing in their education and learning. To keep pace with such a rapidly evolving world.

Staffing and recruitment businesses should see this as an opportunity to add value by investing in their own teams, and offering additional L&D services to their clients.

Candidates and employees realize the value of adding new skills, given the current job market; they too are looking for workplaces that will enable their up-skilling and give them the space to hone their talents.

Here are some areas that organizations should encourage L&D:

- Leadership
- Compliance
- Technology
- Product
- Sales
- Anti-bias and diversity training

Here are the ways that the workforce of the future would best absorb these learnings:

- Byte sized learning
- Personalized learning
- Gamification

Investing in training and development is a must for those looking to build the workforce of the future. HR, staffing & recruitment professionals also need to be aware that training & development is becoming more of an expectation of the younger generations.

Learning and development are areas that must be worked on constantly to achieve success and remain steadily ahead of competing organizations.

3 Communication

Creating an open and transparent way of communication is vital for those looking to prepare their workforce for the future.

This helps in improving transparency and transferring information across the company. It also creates a strong team.

An environment where employees can communicate openly and freely is necessary for building a close-knit and efficient team. Employees should be able to approach their superiors and let them know what they need.

Inversely, employers should be able to approach their employees and tell them what isn't going according to plan and what they expect.

The effort towards creating better communication requires input and effort from all stakeholders. HR, and their service providers, needs to make sure that team leads, section heads, managers, and employees at every level of the management are working towards keeping an open line of communication.

4 Leadership

Leadership imperative characteristic, which must be second-nature across the workforce of the future. In the past, leadership has been a quality sought after for positions of authority. Over the years, this has changed.

The workforce for the future you needs to lead on every level.

Employees need to take ownership of everything they do. This means that they need to be given the authority to make their own decisions and take full responsibility for everything they do.

Leadership also means being accountable, that is, responsible for one's productivity and responsible for their actions and delivering against business and personal objectives.

Organizations should not put extreme efforts into motivating their workforce. The ideal workforce of the future needs to be self-motivated.

How can this be achieved? The easiest way to achieve this goal is to hire people who exhibit self-motivation, an innate desire to do their best and be the best. Organizations need to foster such an environment.

Empower, delegate, be clear, and trust employees. Let them take ownership of the tasks they need to carry out. Give them the freedom and authority they need.

An example of this being a need can be observed from a recent trend. When companies initiated work from home models, there was an adjusting period. However, over time, employees acquired the ability to manage themselves.

Without managers and superiors being immediately accessible, employees can hardly adapt. When the workforce finally began returning to work, an obvious disdain for micromanagement was noticed.

Employees had displayed the enhanced ability to manage themselves and desired to continue to manage themselves.

Managers of the new workforce need to give their team space to create their path and become their best versions. It does not mean that managers have to take a backseat. It just means that they can focus on other important tasks, and be clear how all the team's tasks and contributions are crucial to delivering the organisation's priority objectives and business results.

5 Behavior

The ideal workforce of the future should have certain types of behavior. It should be a behavior that reflects the organization's culture and demeanor, aligned with the business objectives.

Employers need to reinforce the desired behavior with rewards and appropriate recognition.

Another aspect contributing to encouraging the right kind of behavior is creating a safe work environment. Creating a culture of universal acceptance is vital for the workforce of the future.

As the world becomes a smaller place, workplaces naturally become more diverse. Efforts have to be made to make it so. Workplaces will see an influx of new and varying cultures, behaviors, and norms.

Make sure your workforce is culturally intelligent. What this does for organizations is that it frees employees of their inhibitions. As a part of the workforce of the future, employees should not be worried about who they are or how they are different. Instead, they should focus on their jobs and be more productive.

Staffing and recruitment professionals can use techniques such as Insights behavioral profiling to get the right mix of candidates for their clients.

There are four types of Insights behavior:

Candidates who demonstrate enthusiasm are more engaging, positive, sociable, persuasive, and demonstrative can be classified as the **yellow** category.

The **blue** category consists of candidates who exhibit behavior that is cautious, precise, deliberate, inquisitive, organized, and formal.

Those that belong to the **red** category are competitive, demanding, purposeful and strong-willed.

The caring, encouraging, sharing, patient, and relaxed people are put under the **green** category.

Having the right mix of personality types goes a long way in making a workplace more productive.

HR, staffing and recruitment professionals play a vital role in making the changes required to accommodate a diverse workforce and ensure they thrive.

6 Valuing Employees

For an employee to feel valued, organizations need to take appropriate steps. Employees have to see and feel that employers notice their

contributions. This behavior has to be ingrained into everyday culture.

Communicate with your employees frequently, praise them earnestly and frequently. Another great way to ensure that employees feel valued is to share news of how the business is doing.

The workforce of the future will expect organizations to share plans for the future. Organizations will be expected to inform employees on how they can contribute to achieving these goals.

The result will be a workforce that knows what they need to do and becomes more willing to work harder to achieve those goals for their organization.

7 Recognising and Rewarding Employees

It may not seem too different from the previous point, but employers need to renew their efforts in recognizing employees and rewarding them appropriately.

It could be by offering them a few days of paid leave or sending them on a meditation retreat. Make your rewards accurate and valuable.

Employers need to move away from the traditional rewards that have become commonplace and give employees rewards that enhance their lives.

Organizations have to put much more effort into being sincere and showing employees that they are truly valued. This means that organizations will have to reconfigure their budgets. But they will reap the benefits.

This offers another opportunity for staffing and recruiting businesses to add value to their clients, by consulting on and / or delivering such life-enhancing rewards and recognition.

Employers can encourage employees to recognize each other's contributions on a peer level. Let employees choose the most inspirational worker for that week. Employees could even be asked to vote to select the employee of the month. Peer recognition is extremely valuable to employees.

Rewards and recognition also involve getting personal with employees. We mentioned earlier that rewards have to enhance your employees' lives. Employers must be invested in their workforce. Management and HR professionals have to understand their employees at a personal level.

While larger organizations may find it a challenge to ensure that each of their employees receives personal attention, they can still offer a variety of benefits such as medicare for their families and mental health care at subsidized costs, and ensure that people-leaders harness reward and recognition programs to recognise their people and teamwork.

8 Bring contractors, service providers, and consultants into the fold

There is an imminent need for separate structures to become one. Employers, recruiters, consultants, service providers, and every stakeholder involved in creating and managing the workforce of the future have to be on the same page in every aspect.

Employers, and their service-providers, need to be proactive in letting their contractors and consultants know that they expect their employees to be of a certain high standard, and that they will be treated in a certain way during recruitment.

Recruiters must incorporate their client's desired hiring strategies into their recruitment methods. Employers must inform contractors that they are shifting towards a greener future and will only work with them if they are willing to move in the same direction.

Employers, recruiters, and HR firms need to be aware that workforce requirements are likely to be quite fluid in the future, which means there

may be sudden spikes in demand for talent. Recruiters will have to be prepared with a pool of talent that can be readily accessible as and when desired.

Recruiting agencies and HR firms can prepare for this by accessing job portals or allowing candidates to apply for vacancies anytime. This results in a stack of resumes being available.

9 Create a powerful employer brand

The employer brand may be the most critical aspect of building the workforce of the future. A strong workforce stays with an organization and attracts like-minded individuals to make the company successful.

Candidates today make an immense effort in researching the positions and the company. Organizations must be mindful of the fact that candidate perception about the brand and culture is vital.

Employer brand extends beyond just the organization, though. The recruiters, HR firms, and anyone involved in the hiring, onboarding, and human resource management also have to have a positive image that aligns with the organizations they are hiring for and portrays the same kind of culture.

Here are six quick steps to start your employer branding strategy.

a) Analyze your image

The first step is to understand how potential candidates perceive an organization. Send out surveys and analyze the data on your social media channels. This will help organizations gauge the current perception of candidates. It is equally vital to collect feedback from existing employees to understand how they perceive the organization.

Ask questions such as:

- "Was the job post clear?"
- "Did the post communicate the company's culture?"

- "How can we improve the recruitment process?"
- "How was your onboarding journey?"
- "What could be done to make your first day better?"

There are a variety of questions that can be asked. Add some open-ended questions and analyze the data thoroughly.

b) Set goals

Be clear on how the organization should be perceived. Be clear on the kind of experience organizations want to provide to candidates and work towards that. Set clear and achievable goals.

This could be done by ensuring better feedback throughout the hiring journey. Background checks need to be done, and they need not be invasive and cumbersome. Using the right tools and vendors to carry out background checks can add immense value to the candidate's experience.

c) Develop a strategy

Create a well-structured strategy once the perception is clear and the desired employer branding goals are set. It takes time, effort, and some investment. But you will reap the benefits soon.

d) Define your EVP

Be vocal about what a specific organization offers to employees that cannot be found elsewhere. Organizations need to show employees that they are willing to do whatever it takes to attract and retain them. Be clear about your employee value proposition.

The top five desired value propositions are:

- compensation
- work-life balance
- stability
- respect
- Recognition

e) Measure the results

Once the strategy is created and implemented, organizations often make the mistake of believing that the task is complete. It is vital that the right questions are asked and that results are measured.

- Are you getting the right kind of talent?
- Are your employees happier?
- Has your social media engagement increased?
- Are you getting more applications?
- How effective is each stage of the hiring process?

The results will reveal what areas require more attention and what changes need to be made to the strategy. Organizations need to be willing to work on constantly improving the branding strategy.

f) Focus on great content

Content is one of the most critical aspects of creating a powerful employer brand. You need great content. Potential candidates need to engage with an organization's content.

There are several ways to create great content:

- Short clips and videos describing the work environment
- Show what you do as a business
- Let your employees be your advocates
- Share candid employee testimonials
- Share employees' daily routines
- Showcase your efforts towards being more environmentally conscious
- Create interactive content

Of course, this does mean making adjustments to the budget. However, the results are well worth the extra expenditure.

10 Leverage the Hybrid Work Culture

Candidates are looking for a certain amount of flexibility. After the shift to working from home, employees have a marked desire to spend more time at home and less time at the office.

While there may be apprehensions for organizations that were adversely impacted by the initial move, the workforce of the future expects to be able to work from their home according to their will.

An article by Forbes shows that up to 84% of employees desire a certain amount of flexibility to choose when and how they work from their home.

Technology has advanced dramatically in a brief period. Moreover, it has become more accessible. Finding ways to make the “work from home” principle beneficial to your employees and your organization is vital. With the right technology to aid organizations and the right security measures, the advantages of adopting a hybrid work model are numerous.

Employees would appreciate more time at home with their families. Flexible work schedules that allow employees to work from home for a few days a month could be seen as a worthwhile bonus.

It is also vital that periodically the whole workforce and teams come together in the same location, in order to the strengthen the culture, build rapport and enhance working relationships. Humans build relationships and connections better face-to-face.

Of course this needs to be done using covid-safe protocols.

11 Align Stakeholders

At first, understand who the stakeholders are. Once there is a clear picture of the various people involved, you must bring them under a common agenda. This cumulative effort will aid in building the workforce of the future.

Organizations need to send out a clear and concise communiqué to consultants, recruiters, and others involved in the hiring process, stating precisely what they require and how the goals can be achieved.

Recruiters and staffing firms must align themselves with the organization’s objectives.

12 Empower Diverse Workplaces

Diversity has been touched upon in this document. But, what does it mean to empower diverse workplaces?

Organizations need to stress the importance of diversity. A clear picture must be formed of what kind of diversity is desired and why that diversity is required. HR firms need to prepare for this. They would benefit from gaining access to a diverse candidate pool.

To truly empower that diversity, the key is to share what is different and ensure that the entire workforce understands, is empathetic, and accepts the differences.

The result would be a workforce that does not in any way feel disconnected. Instead, their unique backgrounds or cultures would bring more value to the workplace.

One way to celebrate diversity is to let people showcase their backgrounds and cultures and bring something to work to share with their colleagues.

13 Defined Performance

The workforce of the future cannot be expected to deliver an organization's desired results on the first day. An organization must create the right environment for its people to succeed.

Organizations have to set clear goals. Be clear about what is expected of the workforce, and extended service providers.

Organizations have to be clear about what they expect from recruiting partners and staffing agencies.

Set goals for every aspect of your organization. Right from developing recruiting goals to performance goals for your workforce.

There has to be a renewed focus on performance. You can do this by measuring your employees' performances.

Here are a few tips for measuring performance:

- Define your measurable performance expectations, linked to delivering business plan priorities
- Provide consistent feedback, coaching, and mentoring
- Have regular performance appraisal and evaluation meetings
- Set clear outlines of performance rewards and consequences
- Collect feedback from your employees
- Review the performance review process and try to improve it

14 Get the HRTech right

A vital part of engineering a strategy, implementing it, and effectively executing the plan to create the workforce of the future is to make sure that the right integrated and connected HR technology is used.

It means making sure that staffing partners and recruiters have to use the right kind of HRTech tools to ensure that they are accessing the best talent and funnelling that talent into their clients' organizations, using seamless digital solutions.

It is a must to have powerful, intelligent, and secure HRM software to ensure that your HR professionals are working on perfecting the HR policy.

While every aspect of every job is becoming more integrated with technology, there are security issues. Make sure your tech providers have an intense focus on security.

Innovative HRTech providers like Veremark provide the **Career Passport**, based on blockchain technology to maintain the authenticity and safety of the verified career credentials of candidates, to deliver faster and cost-effective hiring of the best talent.

Conclusion

There is a lot of thought and planning that goes into creating the workforce of the future. With the help of HR, staffing and recruitment professionals, who have experience and have garnered the trust of hundreds of organizations, creating the workforce of the future is an achievable and vital goal.

Choose service providers, across the hiring ecosystem that focus on building trust and lasting relationships.

With tools like the Veremark Career Passport, organizations benefit from quicker background checking verification procedures. Holders of the career passport do not require extensive background checks every time, as only the latest experiences need to be screened.

The fourteen steps that are covered in this document are important building blocks to ensure that the workforce of the future is an organisation's greatest asset. Recruitment and staffing firms have a huge role to play in helping clients to deliver such competitive advantage.

Budgets to can be used wisely when building the very best workforce of the future.

Veremark gives its clients a pay-as-you-use option, which means that organizations can request background screening for one employee or one thousand employees, and only pay for what they use.

We are here to help you recruit the workforce of the future.





Successful and safe recruitment is dependent on carrying out the right checks to not only protect company and customer interests but also to satisfy compliance. Whether or not staff are permanent, remote, contract, part-time or full-time, staff have access to company property and data, as well as other staff or customers, putting business security and wellbeing at risk. This is why background screening is so important.

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