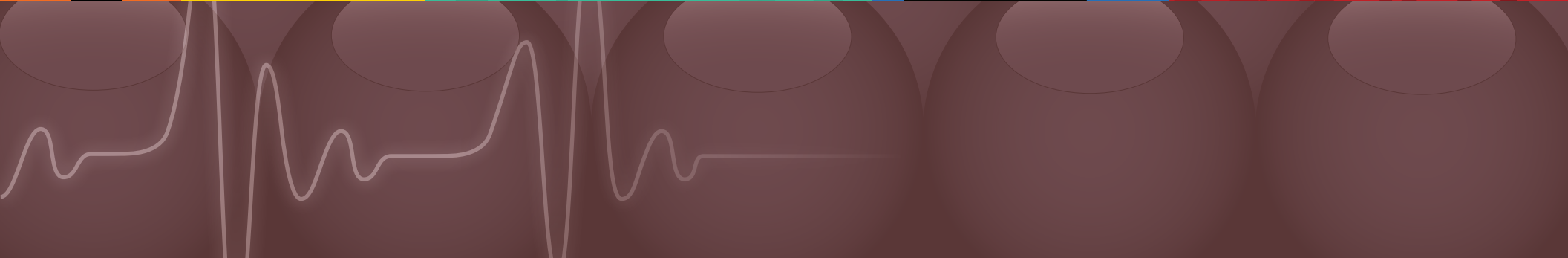




Best Practices in Healthcare Talent Management: Factors in ATS Selection

Going Beyond Applicant Tracking



Best Practices in Healthcare Talent Management: Factors in ATS Selection



Effective talent management in healthcare begins with understanding the true value of talent to an organization. People costs account for up to 70 percent of the total cost of doing business—and with good reason. It's people who administer medication, prep

operating rooms, and provide hospice comfort and a thousand other skilled functions that make the healthcare industry what it is. However, the healthcare industry suffers from a turnover rate of 15.5 percent overall, and as much as almost 40 percent for niches such as assisted living RNs and Certified Nursing Assistants. Since the cost of turnover is estimated at 1.5 times the salary of a departing employee, it is in every organization's financial interest to hire well.

Because people are the most valuable resource—and the greatest business cost—in any organization, it's a competitive necessity to have the best processes in place to attract, hire, train, and retain the best employees. But you also need to have the right system in place to keep track of your talent management processes and your people.

Whether you are in the market for a new applicant tracking system or you're a first-time buyer, keep in mind that one size does not fit all. The right system should streamline your workflow process, speed time-to-fill and save thousands of dollars in administrative costs—all the while helping you populate your organization with the right people in the right places. An ATS that doesn't fit your organization's needs can disrupt your workflow process, costing you time, productivity and competitive advantage as other companies snap up the best job candidates. So to help you better select the right ATS for your healthcare organization, consider these five guidelines.

An applicant tracking system should:



Provide true hourly and salaried talent acquisition solutions.

An ATS creates streamlined, efficient processes within the talent acquisition function—but only if it's the right system for your organization. It's critical to know what you need before shopping for an ATS. ***If your organization hires a mix of hourly and salaried workers, make sure the ATS you are considering is an enterprise-level system that can be configured to attract, screen, recruit and hire both populations. Can the ATS accommodate multiple applicant portals and screening questions?*** Very few vendors have solutions for both hourly and salaried employees AND that can meet the needs of small and large businesses alike.

For example, a regional medical center needed a flexible system that could accommodate both medical positions (nursing) and non-medical personnel (janitorial and administrative). They also needed to switch from their paper-based application system, which limited them to regional applicants and sometimes caused applications to be lost. However, they needed a solution that could mesh with their existing workflows. After switching to a configurable, paperless system, the number of applicants went from 4,800 per year to 30,000, as applicants from around the country were able to apply online. The medical center was able to draw from a larger pool to fully staff salaried and hourly positions with qualified applicants—and without losing them because of outdated workflow processes and poor manual tracking.



Configure to efficient recruiting and hiring workflow processes.

"Efficient" is the operative word here. Organizations that cling to inefficient, cobbled-together recruiting processes do so because "that's the way we've always done it" or because they fear change. If your current application process requires applicants to print a form from your career site and mail it

to corporate headquarters where it is then copied in triplicate and faxed to the appropriate branch—or if you're still using e-mail and spreadsheets to track your applicants—then your processes are probably inefficient and costly. **Carefully review your processes to make sure they are worth retaining, and then find an ATS that can be configured to work with them and improve them.**

For instance, the ATS should be able to accommodate your various end-users. You may have internal recruiters, hiring managers and corporate management who all use the system. The rehabilitation center may have ongoing open job requisitions at an individual location, while at the corporate level, a job req must be created, approved and properly routed. These are quite different processes, and the ATS needs to be able to handle them both. Or the home health manager may need to quickly schedule a drug screening and background screening; is the ATS you're considering flexible enough for your needs? Do you also need an ATS that can help with performance management and succession planning at corporate headquarters?



Include recruiting, screening, hiring and retention components.

"Applicant Tracking System" is a bit of a misnomer these days, as systems have advanced to track the "applicant" through the entire employment life cycle, not just through the recruitment or hiring phase (hence the term talent management).

Organizations can now include background checks, drug screenings, career planning, learning management, performance management, succession planning and more in their "talent management" suites. Each organization's needs will differ, so it's best to find a configurable system rather than having to buy an as-is system with components you don't need but are forced to pay for anyway.

If you use multiple niche job boards for sourcing, look for a system that can push requisitions out to all of them. Since health organizations are often in perpetual recruiting mode, choose an ATS that can handle many open reqs at once. Organizations that handle large numbers of applications will benefit from a feature that allows for mass communication to applicants as well.

Choose your features carefully, considering the ramifications both in the short and long term. Think ahead to what your organization may need in the future, as well as what added benefits certain other features may hold. For instance, would the option of phone-in applications increase your talent pool? Could you benefit from paperless hiring and onboarding?



Drive the organization's business strategies and bottom line growth.

All the different functional groups that drive an organization forward—administration, skilled medical professionals, support staff, etc.—are powered by people. And your "people" help drive

the metrics that provide real value to the enterprise. Having the right people in place at the right time helps drive these goals and growth. **The recruiting, selection, training, development, and succession planning functions must thus align with your organization's strategic business plan.** Recruiting is then strategic and therefore truly becomes a value-added function.

Address the forgotten applicant experience.



The logical assumption in acquiring an ATS is that there will be applicants to track, yet the applicant is typically not a consideration when companies are choosing a vendor.

Remember that the first word in "Applicant Tracking

System" is applicant—they are the true customers of your recruitment function. "If you want high application and offer acceptance rates," says recruiting guru Dr. John Sullivan, you need to "learn how to duplicate the level of customer service that is usually provided by the sales, customer support, and product service departments." That means taking into account the needs, preferences and other demographic considerations of your targeted workforce—BEFORE you buy an ATS.

Applicants will often get their first impressions of employment with your organization from your career site and, if still interested, from the online application process. Is the career site easy for candidates to navigate? Can the ATS you are considering integrate with your career site? Can the ATS help you screen and communicate with applicants, and funnel strong applicants to the right hiring manager? Is your application process appropriate for the computer fluency, age and culture of your target demographic? Does the ATS enable hiring managers to communicate swiftly and regularly to applicants during the hiring process? A prospect who does not feel welcomed or wanted is unlikely to stick around long enough to complete the application process. On the other hand, a candidate who considers your site intuitive and can easily find job opportunities and apply for them could become one of your brand's biggest advocates as they share their experience with other job seekers.

Acquiring an ATS or replacing your current system is about more than streamlining processes. Before they acquired an ATS, a global medical manufacturer's HR staff was spending 16 hours a week manually tracking applicants—time they could be using to fill positions. Entering applicant data manually did not bring value to the company, so switching to an ATS was a logical business decision, and the time saved

could be reinvested in marketing and sales to spur new growth. The regional medical center saved \$50,000 annually in administrative costs by switching from its manual system to an ATS—money that can be reinvested toward its own bottom line: perhaps hiring more prestigious doctors or building a new research facility.



Apply these five guidelines when evaluating ATS vendors. Yes, there are many vendors to choose from, and they're all making similar promises, but keep in mind that only a few can truly deliver an enterprise-level system to accommodate both hourly and salaried candidates as well as the particular needs of the healthcare industry. In fact, we recommend skipping the old-fashioned RFP process. **Instead, define what your technical and key stakeholder requirements are and always require real-time demonstrations, giving the**

vendors "organizational recruiting and hiring" scenarios to speak to directly. How will their systems streamline your workflow process, speed time-to-fill, save thousands of dollars in administrative costs – all the while helping you populate your organization with the right people in the right places?

All the examples used in this white paper are satisfied nowHIRE customers, whom you can read more about at http://www.nowhire.com/WhitePapers_Research.htm.

nowHIRE: A COMPLETE ATS APPROACH

Since 1998, nowHIRE has been a premier provider of applicant tracking systems for companies of every size and in every vertical imaginable. Their industry-defining solutions feature fully integrated, Web-based recruiting and applicant tracking software modules that allows companies to configure the software to their specific recruiting needs—whether it be for hourly, salaried, internal, contingent, recruitment-based employees or any combination thereof. nowHIRE's solutions provide an easier, faster, fully automated and 100% paperless approach to talent acquisition giving companies a competitive edge.

