

HR NEWS



**Attracting Top Talent and
Keeping Your Best Employees**

Leveraging SEO to Attract Top Talent

By Steve Krull



Whether they are looking for remote work, a pay upgrade or switching industries entirely, American workers continue to quit their jobs at record rates. For employers, this means navigating what some are calling one of the most unusual job markets in history.

Organizations are reeling from months of turnover and job vacancies, with many knowing full well that making a new hire is only a short-term solution. As employers are being forced to revisit their overall recruitment strategy, many are electing to push more resources toward search engine optimization, or SEO, even while continuing to pursue more traditional tactics.

When most people hear the phrase “search engine optimization,” they think of marketing and keywords. Some may think about business lead generation tools. While each is a fair generalization, SEO can also be a powerful recruitment tool. This is true because SEO has a direct impact on a job listing’s visibility and credibility, which are two elements candidates consider strongly when trying to get a feel for an employer’s overall reputation.

Below, we explore how your own organization can use SEO to attract quality candidates. We start with quick tips to implement right away as you draft job descriptions. Then we consider other contexts in which SEO can help an organization achieve its goal of attracting top talent.

Crafting an Optimized Job Description

When writing and posting an announcement for an available position, it helps to work backward. First, envision the ideal candidate. Identify the skills, talents and experience level that would set an individual up for success in the position. The list will, of course, vary depending on the job.

A few examples of items on a list of attributes for an ideal candidate are project management, ability to work remotely, strong communication skills and proficiency in Google analytics. Get as

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specific as needed. Once the skills and talents have been listed out, place the most important at the top. This is how you should format your job listing.

The listed attributes will also serve as keywords for optimizing the content for search visibility. The most important keywords—the nonnegotiables—should be worked into the page title and the main header (H1, in formatting shorthand), as these are two of the most important elements for on-page optimization.

Many employers do not realize that when they share a job listing with a title like “Social Media Wizard” or “Content Development Guru,” they are shooting themselves in the foot. Google may not rank those as highly as other postings that are better optimized by being titled, say, “Social Media Account Manager” or “Digital Content Director.” To get quality candidates that meet your criteria, it is best to be straightforward and descriptive. If you write for your audience using clear words and phrases, you should be OK.

Enhancing Your Website With SEO in Mind

Online content needs to be optimized to be found and seen. This is why it is a good idea to write with the idea of getting as much attention from search engines as possible. Increased visibility leads to more eyes on your content, which translates into a boost in general brand awareness among both clients and viable candidates on the hunt for jobs.

Google takes many factors into account when ranking pages in search results. The algorithm assigns values to things like page load time, backlinks, quality of content and the proper use of keywords. Search engine algorithms are also constantly changing in order to produce richer results for users. This makes it critical to stay on top of trends to ensure the content on your website continues to rank highly.

Optimizing on all fronts—whether it is a dedicated landing

page sharing details about available services or temporary pages announcing career opportunities—sets your organization up for success by attracting increased and targeted web traffic. And this is not limited to your website. Every time an organization utilizes a third-party site to post job listings, an opportunity exists to optimize content so a listing surfaces for the right people.

Building a Strong Reputation Through SEO

Employers who put resources into SEO help themselves shape a more attractive and professional brand. For instance, many interested candidates do research ahead of applying or interviewing. A potential job applicant who encounters a slow and disorganized website may hesitate to consider employment with an organization that has a weak web presence. On the other side of this, an attractive, fast-loading website filled with rich content that is structured according to a logical sitemap communicates volumes about an organization being innovative, adaptive and an industry leader.

This is to say, optimized web content is much more likely to reel in high-quality prospective employees. Increasing SEO will not only help candidates find your job listings, it will allow candidates to visualize how your organization stacks up against competitors. Placing higher in search results equates to ranking highly in job seekers' esteem.

SEO should be part of any well-rounded recruitment strategy. Optimizing web content, and especially job listings, makes it easier to target and attracts quality talent that will help your organization continue to thrive.

Steve Krull is the CEO and cofounder of the digital marketing agency [Be Found Online](#). When he's not working, Krull can be found reading spy novels, rooting for the Chicago Cubs or riding his bicycle. —