

Meghan M. Biro: Social recruiting, does it work? On this week's episode of Work Trends we're talking about the evolution of recruiting on social media and how we think it's going to change. Stay tuned for big ideas from Michael Webb and Cyndy Trivella, recruiter and employer branding veterans who are working together to simplify social and inbound recruiting at the startup work scene.

Meghan M. Biro: Welcome to the Work Trends podcast from Talent Culture. I'm your host, Meghan M. Biro. Every week we interview interesting people who are re-imagining work. Join us on Twitter every Wednesday 1:30 p.m. eastern using the hashtag work trends. I'm joined by my friend and co-host, Kevin W. Grossman.

Kevin W. G.: Hello Meghan M. Biro. How are you doing this fine day?

Meghan M. Biro: I'm doing cold, that's how I'm doing.

Kevin W. G.: Right now I can't even ... That's why I don't like to talk about weather in the wintertime, because even though it's cold and rainy here, that's not the same cold that you have there.

Meghan M. Biro: It goes deep into your bones. To all you other people out there in New England, we're staying positive through it, and I'm doing well. I am ... Speaking of New England and then getting out of New England, I'm excited to travel a bit. I know we've got some really fun events coming up this year. We've got everything from recruiting trends, to HR transform, to ERE to sherm, and many others in between, so it's going to be busy.

Kevin W. G.: Absolutely. Not to mention Unleash and all the talent board workshops that we're going to do and the talent culture panel chats that we've got lined up. Mercy me, it's going to be a busy, busy, busy first half of 2019.

Meghan M. Biro: Yes, it is. And I'm excited to see people in person, right, and to talk shop about HR and recruiting and leadership and, you know, technology, which continues to just ebb and flow and grow. I mean these are truly exciting times.

Kevin W. G.: Absolutely. Now today we're going to be talking about social recruiting with Work Scene. But before we do that, let's get to the news first.

Kevin W. G.: So we all know how social media is also a double edged sword. It can help your brand, totally help your brand. It can help you reach sought after candidates that you're looking for, and it can totally bring you down a bit too. No matter how much you want to, you can't control it, but you can encourage and guide it.

Kevin W. G.: For example, consider Airman Kelly Davis, who has more followers than the Air Force's new F35A Demo Team. She has three times as many followers as the USAF ROTC Instagram page. She has 12,200 plus followers on Instagram, compared to the 10,300 for the new official US Air Force F35 Demo Team.

Kevin W. G.: The whole point is that it's a total boon for the Air Force when it comes to visibility in recruiting. Now it hasn't hurt that she's leveraged her looks. That's her words not mine. From the article that I read.

Meghan M. Biro: Sure.

Kevin W. G.: I'm just letting everybody else know about it out there. Also with just the way that she's using social media and her depiction of life in the Air Force really has helped to create a value add for the Air Force. That's big, don't you think Meghan?

Meghan M. Biro: I think it's huge, and I think we've been seeing this trend happen, especially in the recruiting space, for the last decade really. So it's always interesting to me when you see this dynamic happening.

Kevin W. G.: Absolutely. So it can be a big boon for an employer, but unfortunately the double edged sword comes into play, and there's been some not so positive social media stories about the Air Force of late, which didn't help their visibility in recruitment. Again, you can't always control what's shared and when, but you can do a better job of aggregating the positive people in stories that can share to improve your visibility in recruitment.

Meghan M. Biro: Absolutely. Speaking of recruitment, let's talk with Work Scene about improving social recruiting. This is going to be a great show.

Meghan M. Biro: Welcome to Work Trends Michael and Cyndy. Please introduce yourselves.

Cyndy Trivella: Thank you Meghan. My name is Cyndy Trivella and I am the Vice-President of Strategic Relations for a brand new social media startup called Work Scene. I had a background in Human Resources Marketing, content development, [inaudible 00:04:39] branding. I worked with Fortune 500 companies from all around the globe. And, that experience has brought me to where I am today, working at Work Scene.

Meghan M. Biro: And, I would like to share with everybody, Cyndy's name probably sounds pretty familiar to all you people in the Talent Culture community. She has been a friend and a colleague for many years. So, we're so delighted to have her here today.

Cyndy Trivella: Thank you Meghan. I appreciate that.

Meghan M. Biro: Michael, tell us more about you.

Michael Webb: Yes, my name is Michael Webb. I'm the founder of Work Scene, which is a new social startup really focused on recruiting. My background, I've been in recruiting for about 20 years from started as a coordinator, have worked as a VP of recruiting. Probably about 10 years ago I started building recruiting tools online, and kind of have evolved into a bit of a serial entrepreneur. And, I met Cyndy kind of along this path, and we've connected, and have similar backgrounds, and share a common belief in the importance of kind of seeing recruiting evolve.

Meghan M. Biro: Well, can I add myself into this mix? You and I, Michael have something in common. We've both been in the recruiting space for many years, and as you just said, you specifically for around 20 years. Let's talk a little bit about inbound marketing, and inbound recruiting because that's really the new phrase, right, the new, new. We love that around here. Content is so important. So, talk to us just a little bit more about that.

Michael Webb: Well, so from a content standpoint, I mean the nice thing is most companies have the content. So, if you're in the HR department, or the recruiting department and you're taking photos of people enjoying your culture or the company picnic, or things you're doing in the community. I mean, it's really gathering all that information and sharing it in a way that people can see what it's like to work at your company. You can share information about projects that are going on.

Michael Webb: Really, it's endless. I mean, I think the nice thing about kind of an inbound recruiting strategy is that you create your own narrative. You're going to tell your own story. I think people need visually versus you know, kind of job postings where you're just reading about the details of the company. So, I would say the combination of kind of employer brand content, and inbound marketing strategies, but yeah. Content is definitely key.

Meghan M. Biro: Cyndy, let's talk about social media in recruiting. In your work in the employer branding and HR marketing world, how have you seen social media recruiting play out?

Cyndy Trivella: Well, I think social media as a whole to date has failed recruiting. It's not the Parnassian everyone believes it should be, and this is due to no fault of the people who are using it for recruiting. They've been using what's available, but

what's available is not really well suited for the purposes of [inaudible 00:07:42] recruiting.

Cyndy Trivella: So, social media as we know it, it's more suited for the promotion of products and services. It reveals the attributes of those items or services, but it doesn't really tell anyone about the organization's culture and work environment. And, really, it shouldn't because if I'm selling a product or a service, and I'm trying to push these products and services to a buying audience my intention is to recruit them to buy my products and services. Not to recruit them for employment.

Cyndy Trivella: So, for products and services, fabulous tool. For recruiting, historically, it has not been very easy to use. It's kind of clunky. Typical, it can be very ... some platforms are extremely complex to use for recruiting purposes. So, unfortunately the existing social media options just are not really viable solutions for recruiting.

Meghan M. Biro: You know, Cyndy that's a really good point. If you look at the history of recruiting and social media, and employer brand, they're not well connected yet. So, give us your take on job postings. I mean, job seekers are becoming more stoat and savvy about targeting companies they favor, but there's still some people who apply for a job and even make it all the way through that interview process with one picture of what the company is like. Then, when they start the job it's totally different. We know, we've been there, right?

Meghan M. Biro: How have job postings failed recruiting? You talk about that, and how can we make job postings better to really paint a true picture, a real picture, an honest picture of the culture?

Cyndy Trivella: Well, first job postings don't tell candidates what they need to know about the work environment. They simply outline the job responsibilities. They don't reveal the culture of the organization and, they're not designed to do that. They're one dimensional, static messages, and basically they're designed to indicate job requirements and duties. So, historically, job seekers have been conditioned to accept this because they aren't a lot of alternatives.

Cyndy Trivella: But, the good news is this is changing. There's a lot of data that indicate the intention of the modern day job seeker. We know that as new talent is entering into the work force they're not just looking for a position and a pay check. Though, these are obviously important. They're looking for a relationship and, alignment with their employer. They want to know that their personal mission is in lock step with the company before they make any attempt at applying for the job. And, secondly, we need to get companies to stop using job postings exclusively.

Cyndy Trivella: Now, we're not saying don't use them, but we're saying open up your options. They need to expand beyond job postings and create more of an inclusive message, more holistic. Get job seekers more information and more awareness of the organization. And, not at the end of the process, at the beginning of the process as job seekers are assessing opportunities and looking at developing a list of their target companies.

Cyndy Trivella: So, businesses that continue to be comfortable, and sedentary doing one thing and not integrating a more holistic approach, they aren't willing to really move the needle with the work or talent because they lack that integrated approach. So, businesses need to become more of a talent magnet. Become gathers rather than strictly talent hunters and, give job seekers the chance to discover and learn more about their organization at the forefront by driving people to their business versus having businesses hunt them out, and as Michael was talking about earlier, this is inbound marketing in its truest since.

Meghan M. Biro: Amen is one word I have to say to all that Cyndy. I mean, so true, so much sage happening here in this conversation right now. Michael, talk to us. What's your take on this?

Michael Webb: Well, when I think of job postings, I mean I don't know that the job postings are actually to blame. So, I'll probably date myself a little bit with this comment, but if you think of the evolution of the job board, right? So, initially people were looking for jobs in classified ads, and I remember at the time I was working in the Silicon Valley when Hot Jobs came in and said, "Hey, you can now post these jobs online."

Michael Webb: And so, the job posting is really designed to share the information about the job itself to the candidate. Then, overtime, as primarily all jobs moved online, somewhere along the line an HR person decided, or a recruiter decided that they were going to start including information about the company on the job postings, and it just kind of stuck. So, you know, whether you're using a job site, or a social networking site, I mean people are relying on the job posting to convey information about the company.

Michael Webb: So, I think the job postings are still a part of the equation, but I think the job posting should be kind of in the middle of the recruiting funnel. Then, at the top of the funnel to Cyndy's point, you know the company needs to show off who they are kind of on the front ends, and let people come in who think that they align with the culture. Then, they can see what positions they have that are open over time.

Michael Webb: I think one of the things that allows that to really take place is when companies start using talent communities, because in a talent community you can kind of nurture a relationship with job seekers and they can see jobs as they become open, but they already know they want to work for the company. But, you're right, often times you'll see job postings on a site, they'll be 25 for an account manager. The account manager that's looking for a job applies to all 25 because they can't really differentiate one company from the other. And, they don't know that the company isn't what they want until they show up for the job interview, or they don't know that the company is what they want until they show up for the interview.

Michael Webb: And, I just think it's ... it's kind of rethinking the process a little bit. I mean, you know there's so much information because-

Meghan M. Biro: Wait a minute. Hey, hey Michael. Rethinking the process a little bit? I think that's the understatement of the year. Okay? Michael you're too kind.

Michael Webb: I'm trying ... okay.

Meghan M. Biro: You're too kind. That's all I'm going to say. I think we absolutely have to reimagine job postings. As a former recruiter in the tech space, job postings have absolutely failed recruiting. They've failed recruiters, they've failed job seekers, and they fail the brand, and it makes us lazy. That's the bigger point here. We become lazy by just relying on job postings.

Meghan M. Biro: So, this is such a refreshing conversation. I'm so excited to hear more about Work Scene as you guys continue to progress. Okay, so I know our Work Trends audience always wants tactical advice. What are your tips for how we can all do a better job recruiting online?

Cyndy Trivella: So, going back to Michael's point about inbound recruiting strategies, and companies revealing their culture, revealing their mission, their values on the front end rather than waiting until somebody has applied for a job. You know, that's part of the reason why companies miss hire people, right, because they're not looking at the right things at the get go. Looking at attitude and train ability and, fit. Those are things that are probably more important within an organization. Very technical skills needed aside. But, those things are probably more important for an organization than if somebody can check a box, or type something in a Word document. Those things can be trained. Those things can be learned.

Cyndy Trivella: So, companies need to, again, take on that more inbound approach, and reveal their culture on the front end. And, Michael mentioned talent communities.

Those are extremely important. Being able to gather people rather than always be hunting for people. That puts people in more of a reactive mode, whereas talent communities put recruiting in the driver seat by giving them more of a proactive role. You've got a group of people. You know they're interested. You just need to keep them [inaudible 00:16:36] and engaged, make sure that as job opportunities come up that may be appropriate for them, but they aren't made aware of these.

Cyndy Trivella: And not to mention, what if you have a position and you interview three people for it, and of course you only have one opening. So, you're going to hire the best of the three. What do you do with the silver and bronze medalist? Those people need to go back into their talent community where they can be kept warm, yeah, and engaged because you already know they're interested in your organization. They're interested in your culture, and those are the things that make it all work and, make it magical at the end of the day.

Meghan M. Biro: All those silver medalist out there, are you listening? You hear this? Stay in the game. It matters, right? So, listen we've all been watching-

Michael Webb: And [crosstalk 00:17:28].

Meghan M. Biro: Yeah.

Michael Webb: No, I think with online recruiting I think the challenge is the interaction candidates and recruiters have with job boards, it's really very transactional. I need someone now, I'm going to post the job, which is transactional. So, to Cyndy's point about talent communities, with a talent community, you know I think that your online recruiting strategy becomes less transactional. So, people can join your talent community because they're the silver or bronze medalist, or they could be a gold medalist for you in the future, and they can join your talent community to learn about your company before they apply because maybe they're thinking of changing jobs 12 months down the road. So, they can familiarize themselves with your company before they apply.

Michael Webb: So, again, you have people that know they want to be there, which is better than posting a job and you know, hoping someone applies in the next 15 days that can fill this position. You know, you can have a whole ... I guess, you could have a pipeline of candidates that have followed the company, and are familiar with the company that have seen the things you've done in the community. Things that are going on in the office. And, you know the people could have been that pipeline for 12 months, 18 months, six months, three months. But, I don't think great people are always looking at the same time that you need them. So, that's kind of my thought.

Meghan M. Biro: We've all been watching the HR tech space for a long time. I think a lot of companies have been trying to improve social recruiting. So, kudos to all you companies out there trying. Cyndy, I want to hear from you on this. What has the HR tech industry missed when it comes to social recruiting?

Cyndy Trivella: I think HR technology simply put, it has over saturated its space with more versions of what already exist. This is the opportunity to develop an advanced platform that creates opportunities for sourcing and recruiting to have a bonafide inbound recruiting tool. And, HR tech, it's not social media. And further, social media, as we've all said, it's failed companies. It doesn't allow recruiting to access platforms designed to help them do their jobs effectively or efficiently.

Cyndy Trivella: The current state of social media does not allow companies to really show enough about the human side of their business. Again, because it is more geared towards the product and service side. So, we need to bridge that gap.

Meghan M. Biro: No question about it. I love the idea that we're still hiring people. And, if tech is helping us do that, great. So, I love the fact that we're just boiling this down and simplifying it because it's true. And you're either effectively doing that or you're not. There's really no ... there's not a lot of in between there really.

Meghan M. Biro: So, here we are. We're in 2019, and we're all thinking about the future of work. How do you think recruiting will evolve in the coming year?

Michael Webb: I mean, I think recruiting is evolving. I mean, I think the biggest change that we're going to see is I think the companies are starting to figure out that their brand story, or their ability to kind of create their own narrative, and build ... or reinforce their employer brand, I think that that's something that's becoming more and more important to companies. I think it's always been important. I just don't think there's been an easy way to do that, and I know I've come out of many meetings where people are talking about working on the company's employer brand. But, you know, there's no blue print, or specific action in the past that you can take to make that a reality.

Michael Webb: So, I think as more platforms become available that are designed to help companies reinforce their employer brands, and build talent communities, I think you're going to see more companies kind of shift to that mindset.

Cyndy Trivella: So, you know, my hope is that companies will take a more strategic approach and use tactics like inbound marketing, and also being more transparent around their company culture. Again, trying to appeal to new talent as it's entering into the workforce, and being able to accommodate their needs.



Cyndy Trivella: And, I believe this. I believe that everyone in the workforce, we all share a common bond. We all want a great job. We all want respect. We all want fair pay. We all want meaning in our work. Those things are true of anybody than any generation. But, as new talent, newer talent, is coming into the workforce they're demanding more of those things. So, companies will need to pivot. They're going to need to become more flexible, more revealing, and I think that by doing that, I believe that by doing that, they are going to gain a better advantage, a greater advantage in finding the right people that are the right fit for their organization.

Meghan M. Biro: Okay, so time for some last quick fire tips. If somebody is listening and wants to move the needle on candidate experience this year, what's one thing they can do?

Cyndy Trivella: I sound a bit repetitive here, because this has been said 100 times but, I'll repeat it again. Think like a marketer, and never under estimate the value of relationship building and revealing the human side to your business.

Meghan M. Biro: Thoughts on candidate experience, Michael?

Michael Webb: Candidate experience, I mean, is absolutely important. I mean, I think you know, you have to work within the resources you have and the limitations you have, but I mean I think that one thing to do is to analyze your existing recruiting process to see if there are areas where you could make improvements, you know make the process smoother. But, I mean, ideally part of that candidate experience would be the company kind of showcasing who they are before the candidate comes to the office.

Michael Webb: You know, I don't know ... and there are ways to do that, but yeah, I think the candidate experience is absolutely ... what the candidate knows about your company before they get there, and how you treat them when they're there, and I think you can make improvements to all aspects of the process. I think there are different phases of that candidate experience.

Meghan M. Biro: And, how you treat that silver medalist and beyond. I mean, it's so important to remember that as we're in 2019 this isn't as much about recruiting as it is retaining talent. If you want to get strategic, that's where, at least from my perspective, I think companies also need to be placing emphasis because there's nothing better than having people stay at your brand, or move around within your brand. So, I can safely say after this conversation you are making inbound recruiting a thing.

Meghan M. Biro: So, it's all good. Cyndy and Michael, thanks so much for being here today. I have a special treat for the Work Trends audience. If you're interested in a new social media platform designed for recruiting and you want to give it a try, you can get 50% if you sign up for Work Scene. Just go to WorkScene.com and enter the code TC2019.

Kevin W. G.: Meghan that was great. The key is transparency around company culture and why employees work at a company, and why they stay. We hear it every year from the candidates who participate in the talent board benchmark research.

Meghan M. Biro: Very true. True that, and again, while highlighting your employee evangelist, and yes, I used that word on purpose, is so key. Let's keep the conversation going. Join us for the Work Trends twitter chat. We are going to be on the Twitters with Michael and Cyndy on Wednesday, January 23rd at 1:30 PM eastern, 10:30 AM pacific, or wherever you are in the world. Join us and tell us what you've learned about hiring. If you'd like to get our twitter chat questions in advance, sign up for our newsletter at TalentCulture.com.

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