GENERAL MOTORS

General Motors fuels corporate-wide hiring efficiencies

Accelerating talent selection and hiring with innovative IBM Recruitment Process Outsourcing

Overview

The need

In the face of intense competition for specialized employees, General Motors wanted a recruitment outsourcing strategy to attract leading-edge talent to design and sell the innovative vehicles of the future.

The solution

IBM Global Process Services evaluated the automaker's current and future recruiting needs and developed innovative approaches and processes to attract and retain a diverse talent pool rich in emerging technology skills.

The benefit

The General Motors talent acquisition team implemented strategic efficiencies to improve their cost- and time-to-hire, reinvigorate their employment brand, and hire high quality talent.

The new General Motors is one of the largest, most innovative automakers in the world.

Powering through roadblocks of the past to empower the future

General Motors has always depended on a spirit of innovation. But the General Motors talent acquisition center seized the opportunity to innovate for a specific reason: Outright necessity.

In 2009, General Motors faced scenarios that were common across corporate America. Challenged by radical economic shifts and changing consumer demands, General Motors leadership encouraged the organization to become more agile and innovative. Reinvention meant lots of new people with specialized skills. "One day Talent Acquisition had just a couple of openings. The next day we had hundreds. We tried to hold it together with some contract recruiters, but we could see the tidal wave approaching," recalls Sean Vander Elzen, Senior Manager Global Talent Management and Talent Acquisition. "We knew we weren't able to fill our hiring volume alone. So we decided to think outside of the box." The automaker was determined to reinvent its recruitment practices to keep up with changing demands. General Motors searched for a recruitment process outsourcing service provider with the experience and strategic vision to catapult its organization into the future.

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—Sean Vander Elzen, Senior Manager Global Workforce Performance Management and Talent Acquisition, General Motors Company

Selecting the most flexible drivers for the long haul

The General Motors talent acquisition team screened a group of organizations—commonly known as the baker's dozen—then interviewed representatives from six companies. "We wanted to make sure, from a relationship standpoint, we could work with the company we would ultimately choose," says Vander Elzen. Initially, the IBM team wasn't ranked among the top candidates because of concern over experience, flexibility and its lack of exposure in the industry's baker's dozen list. "But the more IBM came back, the more interesting they got," Vander Elzen recounts. "The IBM team really did a good job listening to us through the different phases of the process. Ultimately we felt IBM was the best fit."

Initially, the General Motors talent acquisition team planned for a typical conversion—months of process training and ramp-up—however, that plan shifted when demand on the talent acquisition team accelerated. The IBM Recruitment Process Outsourcing team was asked to immediately take over the automaker's talent acquisition workload. With no opportunity for practice runs, the IBM team hit the ground running. Vander Elzen remarks, "It was a tremendous demonstration of the flexibility and capability of IBM. They proactively sourced over 6,000 new candidates in the first month, and in the first two weeks filled a position that had been open for two years."

Accelerating recruitment and acquisition practices for greater efficiency

In a short time, the automaker's hiring managers recognized the strategic and day-to-day benefits of outsourcing recruitment activities to IBM.

For example, instead of spending time writing requisitions, the IBM recruiting team conducted brief interviews with hiring managers to capture the critical requirements of an open position, composed the talent requisition and drove the process for the manager. They seamlessly integrated the Taleo recruitment system—a solution that connects new hire performance and retention data with sourcing strategies and recruiting programs.

Solution components

Services

- IBM Global Process Services—
  Recruitment Process Outsourcing

Hiring managers accustomed to poring over 25 to 50 resumes per position quickly received the top five candidate files for more expeditious decision making. IBM implemented variable interview sites, which allowed candidates the option of experiencing their potential working environment in lieu of reporting to the talent acquisition center. Vander Elzen estimates, "We gained a savings of five to ten person-hours per requisition." The productivity increase alone equated to millions of dollars in savings due to increased efficiency and the ability for hiring managers to focus on designing, building and selling great vehicles. The IBM services contract also avoided 80 percent of agency fees annually.

Another significant improvement was a 50 percent reduction in the time to fill positions. Vander Elzen reports: "On average, the time to fill a position was 120 days. With IBM, we fill positions on average in 60 days." The improved processes quickly put the much-needed new talent on the road to productivity.

Looking beyond the horizon: A strategic vision for a revitalized company

The expertise and strategic vision of the IBM recruiting team produced such significant results that the General Motors talent acquisition team expanded its relationship with IBM within six months. "Now we have our recruitment delivery, candidate management technology as well as our systems administration contracts managed by IBM," says Vander Elzen. In response to General Motors' unique skill set requirements, such as cutting-edge technical knowledge and alternative energy expertise, IBM also created a strategy for hiring specialized, diverse talent and college recruits. By using a comprehensive social media portfolio—including Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube content—they drove sourcing to a broader audience. "With the help of IBM, we have pipelines of candidates for many positions. When the need for new talent arises, we have a short list of people we can quickly pursue," Vander Elzen remarks. Many senior leaders of General Motors have been impressed with the strategic acquisition tactics employed by IBM. Vander Elzen is equally pleased, stating: "If you have a strong relationship with your vendor, you can work through anything. That's what I feel like I have with our IBM team."

For more information

To learn more about IBM Global Process Services, please contact your IBM marketing representative or visit the following website:
ibm.com/services/process