Building Your Candidate Pipeline: Lessons from Health IT Staffing Firm Avanti

From a recruiting perspective, health IT is one of the most challenging fields out there. Leaders in this field need a unique combination of skills – technical abilities, quantitative capacity, and familiarity with complex healthcare systems. As you can imagine, these candidates are tough to find.

Northern California based Avanti Recruitment Solutions has faced – and conquered – this recruiting challenge since 1998. The firm's success strategy? Build a strong passive candidate pipeline. We interviewed Evelyn Milani, president of Avanti Recruitment Solutions, to learn how.

Build 1:1 relationships at scale

Avanti's team of recruiters fill up to 60 positions each year – an aggressive target that requires a steady stream of candidates. The firm ventured out to well-known job boards, but found limited success. They then turned to LinkedIn.

LinkedIn: What attracted you to a partnership with LinkedIn?

Evelyn: LinkedIn provides the platform to build our relationships and grow a community. It allows us to push relevant content to our audience and establish thought leadership so that we are always top of mind. There's nothing else like it out there. We've built a hub for our brand, and the candidates now come to us.

LinkedIn: How has LinkedIn helped you build relationships and expand your reach?

Evelyn: LinkedIn's technology makes it easy for us to spark 1:1 conversations. For example, I came across a gentleman in my network who I hadn't spoken to in a few years. I decided to reach out and re-introduce myself. As it turns out, his company had half-a-dozen IT positions open, and he was able to get me connected with the director of development who oversaw the hiring process. In the past 45 days Avanti has filled two positions and is about to fill one more – bringing in $50,000 for the month in revenue.

On average, we're filling more than five positions per month. Three-quarters of the people we place come from the relationships we've built on LinkedIn.

LinkedIn: Could you walk us through how you go about growing your candidate pipeline?

Evelyn: We use LinkedIn Recruiter as our primary tool. I'll hand select people with relevant skills that I send InMails out to, and we hear back from them quickly. I engage the candidates, and then my staff conducts the interviews.

We are trusted resources for talent. But we can't get on the phone and call our entire network. Recruiter gives us the ability to stay in touch with everyone in a scalable way.

LinkedIn: How does this approach translate into ROI?

Evelyn: I just sent some InMails right before our chat, and now I have candidates on standby to talk to our recruiters. It's saved us at least a week in our typical time to placement. If you have credibility and you're not spamming IT professionals, you'll hear back from them.

Stand out to passive candidates

LinkedIn: In this competitive market, how does your firm stand out?

Evelyn: By providing consistent quality and high level of integrity at all times. It's not a numbers game. It's about building and fostering long-term, solid relationships. We focus on having a great reputation, consistent quality work and giving back to the community.

What are your favorite tips for getting the attention of passive candidates?

Evelyn: Writing compelling updates and InMails. You want to pique candidates' interests. We pay close attention to our clients' company perks to build appeal – and we never, ever simply repost jobs.

Our ability to draw candidates in is essential. We appeal to people who are looking for a better opportunity, not just any opportunity. Building our brand helps us provide that credibility and integrity.

LinkedIn: Any final thoughts you'd like to share?

Evelyn: There are so many job boards that boast advanced technologies and algorithms. But these systems have their limitations. Relationships will *always* be the heart of the recruiting industry. Technology will never replace relationships, which why I will always use LinkedIn.