


**Marketing Inside Out:  
Recruiting and Hiring  
Staff as an Internal,  
Ongoing Strategic  
Marketing Effort**

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Since the direct care employees **ARE** the service being provided, growing and keeping the best care team possible is essential to future success.

## **Warning Signs of poor staffing:**

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- ▶ Overtime payments to employees that cannot be charged to clients
- ▶ Employees whose skills/availabilities don't match the job requests-client complaints
- ▶ High turnover
- ▶ Unusual absenteeism levels
- ▶ Last-minute "shopping" for staff to fill scheduled jobs
- ▶ No annual budget line item for flexible/PRN staff
- ▶ Low employee morale

## **The chicken or the egg?**

The agency has to have caregivers ready to work in order to fill a request for service (staff a case).

i.e., the agency needs to hire people before the request for service comes in.

i.e., the agency needs staff before it has clients.

## **If your standard process is, and has been...**

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- ▶ You place an ad
- ▶ You screen, interview and hire some caregivers.
- ▶ You market and hope to get clients and referrals
- ▶ It does take some time to gain trust so you get the referrals/clients
- ▶ By the time you get your first client, all of your hires have gone to work elsewhere
- ▶ You place your ad again
- ▶ You screen, interview and hire some caregivers.
- ▶ You market and hope to get clients and referrals
- ▶ And on it goes...

Recruiting and retention will always be ongoing issues, and need to be addressed on a daily basis by every single person in the agency.

**So, how are you going to approach this differently?**

## **You are going to use strategy.**

You are going to create a plan based on data, implement that plan and then track and measure for results, and then adjust the plan to be the most effective as possible.

**A strategy** is a plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal.

Strategy is the means or the tool by which objectives are **consciously** and systematically pursued and obtained over time.

The word "strategy" derives from the Greek word stratēgos; which derives from two words: -  
"**stratos**" – meaning army and  
"**ago**" – which is the ancient Greek for leading/guiding/moving.

The strategy definition most commonly known today is as the art of analyzing, projecting and directing campaigns.

Strategy is, however, an Art, not a Science.

It is the art of ensuring future success.

### Recruitment Strategy:

Learn to run the agency as a “human resources business”. Understand that your product is your caregivers delivering services to the client at a fee for which you make a profit.

If you want to hire superior people, you need to create and use a system designed to hire superior people, not one designed to fill jobs. The idea of hiring the best must dominate every aspect of an agency's hiring process.

Strategy: Hire superior people who are caring, who are flexible, and who want you to succeed.



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- ▶ Make it easy for the best candidates to apply for your job openings.
- ▶ Make certain that all staff is looking for the same qualities in candidates.
- ▶ Try to eliminate emotions, biases, prejudices, and first impressions as the basis for the hiring decision.
- ▶ Make certain that the needs of the best candidates are addressed/met in your agency.

### **Basic marketing strategy (revisited)**

- ▶ Find a way to stand out: differentiate to be remembered
- ▶ Understand the target audience
- ▶ Understand the messages that resonate with the target
- ▶ Marry the visual with the message
- ▶ Communicate often in channels that reach the target
- ▶ Establish and extend your agency brand
- ▶ Focus on results, based on measurement

**Differentiate:**

- ▶ How are you different from other agencies?
- ▶ Why do folks work for you now?
- ▶ Identify the best 10 or top 10% of your current caregiver pool (whichever is greater).
- ▶ Ask these top 10 or 10% some specific questions about why they work for you.
- ▶ Write down the answers, and then analyze for commonalties.

**Sample questions:**

- ▶ What first interested you in working for MyAgency?
- ▶ What is it that has kept you here?
- ▶ What are the benefits of working here?
- ▶ What do you like least about working here?
- ▶ What would you change if you could?
  - ▶ About your job
  - ▶ About the agency

## Sample questions:

- ▶ Who was your most favorite client?
  - ▶ What did you like most?
  - ▶ Was there anything you did not like about that client?
- ▶ Who was your least favorite client?
  - ▶ What did you dislike the most?
  - ▶ Was there anything that you did like?
- ▶ Do you have hobbies outside of work?
- ▶ Do you belong to any community organizations?

## Sample questions:

- ▶ Have you ever referred anyone to work here?
  - ▶ If yes, why?
  - ▶ If no, why not?
- ▶ Do you regularly read any local newspapers or magazines?
- ▶ Where do you shop for groceries?
- ▶ Where do you do your laundry?

## **How are you different?**

### **Consistency of mission and values across your organization**

- ▶ Standards of identity that “brand” your organization.
- ▶ Infusion into orientation/training, mentoring.
- ▶ Do your employees and your customers say the same thing about your business?

## **Do you evaluate your agency?**

- ▶ Staff satisfaction survey
- ▶ Customer satisfaction survey
- ▶ Orientation evaluation

**Feeling an important part of the team  
is what caregivers want, and what will  
keep them with the agency**

## **Employee Morale**

- ▶ The **LUVE** principle:
  - ▶ Listened to...
  - ▶ Understood...
  - ▶ Validated...
  - ▶ Encouraged to learn and grow...

## The Ideal Caregiver Profile

- ▶ Determine Your Own Profile of an ideal caregiver
  - ▶ Someone who has shown through life's work that caring is important
  - ▶ Mature
  - ▶ Trustworthy
  - ▶ Warm
  - ▶ Caring
  - ▶ Would you hire this person to care for YOUR mother?



## **The process-interviewing, screening and hiring**

### **Pre-Interview, Interview / Screening**

- ▶ Screen for A,B,C candidates on Web applications or phone first, if possible
- ▶ Interview A's immediately and get them through the process
- ▶ B's can be group interviewed, or in as soon as convenient
- ▶ Do not waste time on the C's

## **Phone interviewing tips:**

- ▶ Give applicants a brief description of the duties and the days and hours the jobs involve.
- ▶ Ask whether they've had experience with the duties you describe.
- ▶ Notice whether they can give a specific, thorough description of previous experiences, rather than vague or general statements.
- ▶ Ask specifically what kind of schedule they are looking for.
- ▶ Listen for a pleasant tone of voice and attitude on the phone.

## **Screening and Interviewing**

## Interview Questions for Caregivers

- ▶ The most important questions for caregivers are regarding their previous work history.
- ▶ You want to know about their previous responsibilities and why they left their past job.
- ▶ Ask in detail about their past 5 years of work history as well as any part-time jobs they may have had.
- ▶ Ask interview questions that tell you a bit about the caregiver's personality.

## Strategic Marketing – Internal to Caregivers

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|--|--|
| ▶ Ongoing recruiting   | ▶ Ongoing training and/or certification in differentiated area, i.e. memory or dementia care |
| ▶ Each and every day   |  |
| ▶ Each and every staff member                                    |  |
| ▶ Training for caregivers  | ▶ Create a “certification” if possible to differentiate your specialty                       |
| ▶ Orientation to company policies, differentiation               |  |
| ▶ Pre-test for skills, then fill in where there are inadequacies |  |

## **Best Recruiting Sources**

- ▶ Current caregiver pool
  - ▶ Use the answers from your questions to the best to find where you need to recruit
- ▶ Employee referral program
  - ▶ ALL employees participate

## **Outreach**

### **Ads need to be compelling**

- ▶ Advertising specifics
- ▶ The more specific information to a job, the better chance of good candidates:
  - ▶ Location
  - ▶ Time
  - ▶ Client special needs
- ▶ Options for ads

## Outreach

- ▶ **Print media:**
  - ▶ Daily newspaper – caregivers
  - ▶ Weekly newspaper – caregivers
  - ▶ Non-English newspapers – caregivers
  - ▶ Bargain shoppers – caregivers
  - ▶ Local magazines
    - ▶ Sunday ads – caregivers
    - ▶ Week day ads – caregivers
- ▶ **TV, Radio** – focus on recruitment rather than sales
  - ▶ Options for marketing

## Outreach

- ▶ **Online job pages** – caregivers
  - ▶ Monster
  - ▶ Career Builder
  - ▶ Job Central
  - ▶ Craig's List
- ▶ **Your Web site**
- ▶ **Your blog, Twitter**
- ▶ **Employment agencies**
  - ▶ AARP
  - ▶ State/local government

## **Outreach**

- ▶ **Job fairs**
- ▶ **Schools**
  - ▶ Nursing schools
  - ▶ Universities

## **QA — Tracking Staff Retention**

- ▶ Consistency as necessary component for quality
- ▶ “Ideal” turnovers
- ▶ Understanding real costs of turnover
- ▶ Measurement issues relative to turnover
- ▶ Competitive planning
- ▶ Competitive strategies

## **It is critical to carefully monitor and manage your biggest expense: Labor**

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- ▶ **Carefully evaluate** workload levels based on both immediate and long-term needs. Hold weekly staff meetings to review staffing, and what cases are not staffed, or are having trouble staffing:
  - ▶ Live-ins
  - ▶ Specific hours not covered
  - ▶ Specific cases: location, personality desired, skill sets needed
- ▶ **Analyze Your Needs**

## **It is critical to carefully monitor and manage your biggest expense: Labor**

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- ▶ **Choose Your Players**
  - ▶ Clarify what specific skills, time slots, locations required.
- ▶ **How to Staff**
  - ▶ Pinch hitters or special-project professionals

**“Knowing is not enough;  
we must apply. Willing is  
not enough; we must do.”**

— Goethe

## For More Information

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