



Deborah Frances White at Talent Connect London 2015 spoke about the importance of quantity. She reflected, that asking someone for 2 or 3 good ideas rarely yields better results than asking for any ideas.

Applying this to talent acquisition, asking a recruiter to present a shortlist of 2 or 3 candidates (or looking at a shortlist of 2-3 candidates) is unlikely to yield the “best” talent in the market for a number of reasons. Companies are starting to be more proactive in their hiring as they recognise the need to think about their pipeline of talent for future roles within the business. Below are just a few of the reasons why building a talent pipeline is or should be an essential part of any companies resourcing and recruitment strategy:

- 1. *Probability states that an increase in the number of candidates within the pool will yield an increase in the number of hires made.***
The recruiter can't read your mind and the more candidates that you allow them to choose the more likely they and ultimately you are to find the right people. By only ever asking for a shortlist of 3 top candidates, you miss out on the opportunity to review other strong contenders. But if you ask for a longlist of interested candidates, let's say for example 20, you could receive up to 20 qualified, potential individuals to consider instead. In this way, the more candidates there are, the easier the position will be to fill.
- 2. *You get to see the “out of the box” candidates that may never have crossed your mind.*** Whether it is down to the researcher's network, prior experience, previous work on similar roles or simply a difference in perspective, you are opened up to talented individuals who you may not have taken into account when initially considering candidates.
- 3. *You are made aware of talented individuals that are not actively looking for a job.*** Whilst it is always good to have candidates who have expressly taken an interest in a vacancy, these candidates will seldom be the best. By building a talent pipeline, individuals who are currently in stable jobs but could be interested in a new opportunity if you approached them are thrown into the mix, opening up the talent pool.
- 4. *Watch talent develop.*** Talent pipelines are all about the future, having a number of candidates in a talent pool can help you monitor those who progress better than expected as well as those who do not. You can also compare and benchmark the talent pool with internal employees in order to ascertain the development of your employee to see whether you made the correct decision.

5. ***A talent pipeline can fill other roles.*** Investing in a talent pipeline saves time because you can access the pool of engaged and previously qualified candidates when working on a similar role. Similarly, it saves money because once an investment has been made to research a market and build a large talent pool, there will be no need to invest in another market map again and the talent pool collated can be contacted immediately. Talent pipelining is therefore economically a good idea.
6. ***It prevents holes in your business.*** Talent pipelines allow you to bench talent so that you are aware of the contenders to replace a role before it becomes vacant. This is a valuable asset, limiting the negative impacts when a key employee leaves the business and there is no one to replace them or fill the gap. Building a pipeline of talent will help avoid the need for interim replacements and reduce the potential backlog of work and a general drop in team morale that often accrues when a leader exits the business.

These points illustrate why it is so important to build and maintain an up to date and high quality talent pipeline, and why your company can benefit greatly from it. At Taylor Osborne we regularly work on Talent Mapping & Pipelining projects, providing data on our clients' competitors, insight into key talent and competitor activity and proactively building readily available talent pools for both current and future hiring needs. An example is outlined below:

General Manager Talent Pipelining Project, FTSE 100 FMCG Organisation

This was a global mapping and sourcing project to identify top GM talent within our client's competitors to help them build a pool of bench talent to draw upon as and when GM vacancies arose. Our client was looking for top talent, i.e. individuals on an upward career trajectory who spoke a minimum of 2 languages and were internationally mobile and prepared to work anywhere globally. They were interested to know where the top talent within each of their competitors sat i.e. in which markets their competitors were developing their future leaders of the business.

We identified and engaged with individuals to hold open conversations about their background and experience to date, career aspirations moving forwards and interest in general discussions to talk about future opportunities with our client. We introduced these individuals to the business at this point but we also helped to maintain the pool of interested candidates on an ongoing basis to keep them warm until future opportunities arose. Whilst sourcing individuals in the market we gathered recommendations and market insight on typical structures, team sizes and the salary levels within the target organisations that we were searching within to help give context to the individuals identified and to provide additional insight into the typical structures within our client's competitors.