



A Crystal Ball for HR

**3 Top HR Thought Leaders
Discuss the Industry's Future**

Some of the great minds of HR came together to deliver a live Webinar about the progress of the industry over the last few years and where they anticipate it will be going in the future. SPHR and founder of Tincup & Co., William Tincup, Chief Human Resources Officer of Kinetic, Tim Sackett, President of HRU Technical Resources, an engineering and IT staffing firm and blogger for Fistful of Talent and our own Chequed.com President and CEO, Greg Moran, offered their valuable insights into all things HR.

What's the Deal with "Big Data"?

“Recruiters and hiring managers don’t want to rely on silo-ed information”

All three of our experts agreed that “big data” is a whole lot more than just a buzzword – it’s the way of the future. Recruiters and hiring managers don’t want to rely on silo-ed information anymore. They need systems that have rolled up all of their available data and they need to be able to efficiently pull meaningful information from that data mass. “We want to know how we take all of this stuff that’s working by itself and bring it together to get real knowledge out,” says William.

Various organizations were mentioned as current leaders of such technology. Vancouver-based Visier was noted as using a single dashboard to combine and pull data from. According to their site, their workforce analytics allows hiring managers to “optimize their people strategy to meet their business strategy.”

Experian and eThORITY were both mentioned as leaders of aggregating data that can then be used to make better hiring decisions. Talentbin, too, was noted for its ability to aggregate candidate information from all online social profiles, thereby generating larger, but more succinct candidate pools.

Is “Social” More than Water Cooler Chatter?

As William so aptly pointed out, it wasn’t long ago when everyone was petrified of social media. It was a revelatory new tool and no one could have predicted how it would change human interaction. But now, nearly

everyone is engaging it. As Tim notes, "There is just a gigantic pool of talent on social media and there are some people who are doing some cool, hardcore recruiting out of Facebook."

And yet, not all organizations are latching on. Tim mentioned that at a recent Fortune 500 speaking engagement, 95% of the people said that they do not allow employees on Facebook during work time. Greg reiterated the same sentiments, suggesting that not enough organizations are making the most of social media, but that very soon it won't be merely an alternative – it will be a necessity in some capacity. "If you're in HR today," he began, "and you've still got those restrictions around social media, you've got to loosen those reigns. Your recruiters are going to source from social, so let them."

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–Greg Moran]

But as our thought leaders also pointed out, some good can come out of engaging social media cautiously. William led the mediated perspective, suggesting that we cannot and should not force our recruiters to utilize social media, but we should at least make it an available option.

He continued that too often organizations see competitors leveraging social media, so they jump on board quickly, but don't do so in a way that considers their audience. Instead, these recruiters should first align their hiring goals with specific business objectives and then determine if social media will help them in achieving a viable solution.

What Should Everyone Be Thinking About for Their Organization?

The answer to this question was overwhelmingly unanimous: raise your awareness about industry developments. To do this, hiring managers and recruiters should adopt a learning culture – an environment in which education and knowledge are coveted. However, the biggest difference in doing so today, as opposed to even five years ago, is that education is no longer a passive action. It's not merely about reading an industry magazine. It's about actually engaging with the content and the community.

And again, this comes back to social media. LinkedIn is a great space in which you can not only gain access to relevant, cutting edge knowledge, but you can also develop real relationships with thought leaders around the world. In short, you can build your own think tank! Doing so allows you to call upon peers when you have a

question or difficulty and subsequently receive unique answers that are derived from experienced individuals.

William also added that content consumption, through blogs, LinkedIn, or “virtually anything on the web that is from people who are like you or in the same field,” is critical. And by consumption, he refers to once again engaging the content by commenting and digging deeper.

“99.9% of the time, if you ask questions, your [digital] community will answer you back.”
-Tim Sackett

Tim offered up his own personal experiences with Twitter as an example: “For me, it was when I started on Twitter to where I am today and I was just the worker, the creepy person who just watched and didn’t really do anything else. So I would just follow people and they would typically follow you back, but now I have this huge international network of experts who I can go to for help or answers to questions. And 99.9% of the time if you ask questions, your community will answer you back.”

An added benefit of increasing your awareness and building communities is that, in time, you too will be able to actually generate content that is meaningful to your counterparts. In doing so, you will build not only your personal brand and industry reputation, but you will also be able to engage recruitment with greater efficacy.

What Are the Corner Office Exec’s Expecting?

Executives have a view from the top and what they say goes, so understanding their expectations is critical. When analyzing what changes are likely to come from the C-Suite level, two trends stuck out among our thought leaders.

Tim pointed out that there’s going to be a big trend toward top-down demands for “increasing talent.” Consequently, everyone turns to recruiters as the source for achieving this. However, that’s not always the case. While recruiting top performers is essential, there needs to be greater focus on how HR managers are encouraging and coaching talent development.

As the bulk of our workforce reaches the age at which they can exit, HR is or will soon be seeing that they have a massive influx of young workers who have skills, but little experience. Consequently, HR will need to focus more on leveraging big data to more efficiently and effectively develop and increase talent.

“[Executives] want us to be 80% strategy and 20% tactics, though many of us have fallen into the opposite.”

-William Tincup

William, on the other hand, suggested that executives are going to begin seeking “80% strategy and 20% tactics” out of their HR departments. In other words, executives want to see causation and correlation. They want HR to play on the offense, not the defense. They’ll want HR to take on a leadership role and initiate great goals. And in order to do all of this, HR is going to have to back of all of the tactics, retrieve some of their time, and start looking big picture.

Is Quantity or Quality Going to Be the Focus?

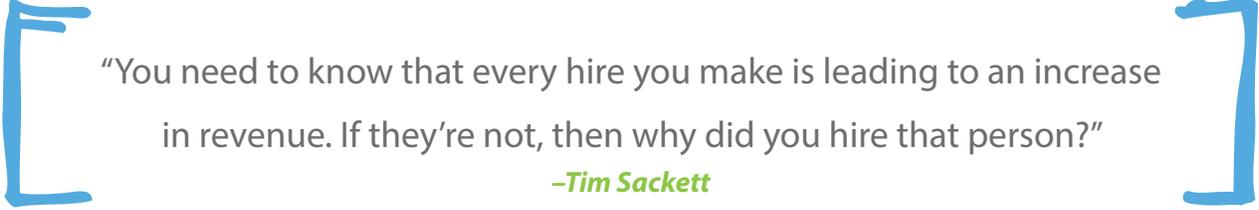
Greg cleared the air by stating that the question was really just a false choice. “Quality is always a critical issue, but you have to manage quantity. In a lot of roles, you’ve got candidates coming at you from all over the place. So you’ve got to really efficiently screen out candidates from the beginning, so that you can spend more time with only the candidates that you know are top performers.”

Tim and William both supported Greg’s assertion, though Tim did suggest that while “quality has always been there....quantity will be a major issue with the mass exit of retiring candidates and improvement in the economy.”

“The biggest issue should be fitability,” William added, “and how the candidate fits in the firm’s long term plan. The filters may be further out or earlier back depending upon the volume issue, but I hope we’re all really trying to determine fitability.”

What Does “Return on Hire” Really Mean?

William’s notes on fitability led well into the last question posed to the thought leaders. Greg started off advising, “I fundamentally believe we’ve spent an awful lot of time measuring the wrong metrics. Time to hire, cost to hire, and even turnover are kind of dead metrics,” he continued, “what do they really tell you about the effect on hiring and the firm?”



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-Tim Sackett

Return on Hire (ROH) investigates the candidate’s fit once they are actually part of the workforce. In other words, did the hiring process do what it was supposed to do and provide a candidate that was a good fit for the position? Greg added that we really must focus on ROH and move away from the traditional metrics.

“You need to know that every hire you make is leading to an increase in revenue. If they’re not, then why did you hire that person? This is exactly why you need ROH. But know that it’s going to make a lot of people extremely uncomfortable,” Tim warns. With ROH everyone involved in the hiring decision becomes fully accountable for his or her actions.

William chimed in with a somewhat different approach, touting a slight variation to ROH -- the metric of Retention of Top Talent. “To know this you have to measure (a) who is top talent and then (b) are you keeping them,” he began, “If you can’t retain top talent, that usually indicates a number of other underlying failures. With these metrics, we’re saying it’s no longer enough to just get them in the job, but we need to know if they actually did the job, how they performed, and how this is all tied into recruiting, compensation, and succession.” He added that by using such metrics, hiring managers are already talking in a language that is understood by business leaders and executives.

Prediction is Essential

Throughout the webinar it became evident that all of our thought leaders felt that prediction holds a critical place in the hiring process and, in fact, the useful data that we can retrieve from validated candidate assessments is only going to grow in importance. By utilizing assessment and reference checking software solutions, recruiters and hiring managers alike can more proactively satisfy many of the stipulations that William, Tim and Greg have laid out. But why rely on them to tell us what we already know: efficiency and effectiveness are essential to success.