Advances in E–Recruiting:
Sources, Opportunities, and Challenges

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, a web-enabled e-recruiting emerged quickly as a powerful method for both job seekers and recruiters. E-recruiting has become an integral part both among job applicants and among recruiters. E-recruiting reduces costs for recruitment and selection, increases the number of suitable applicants, enables time savings for both recruiters and job applicants and improves the corporate image (Lang et al., 2011). E-recruiting has driven companies to redesign the recruiting process and to move quickly to web-based integrated human resource systems that provide standardized frameworks for key personnel processes (Cullen, 2001). Currently, corporate career web sites are among the most widely deployed e-business web sites (Maurer & Liu, 2007). Job seekers visit corporate career web sites to survey a job market in addition to searching for job opportunities. Recruiting via social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn is also on the rise. In an attempt to use corporate websites to recruit job applicants from a labor market, employers have often found their hiring systems to be unexpectedly overwhelmed by large numbers of applications from poorly qualified individuals (Maurer & Cook, 2011).

E-recruiting systems have evolved through numerous technological developments since its introduction in the mid-1990s. At the early stage of the corporate e-recruiting system, the purpose of the career web site was to simply post job openings on the static web page for job seekers' information (Lee, 2005). As e-commerce technologies advanced and recruiters gained more e-recruiting experience, the front-end e-recruiting systems added new features and functions, targeted job seekers better, and integrated with a back-end human resource management system. An advanced e-recruiting system of large companies has been powered by an enterprise-wide system and incorporated best practice recruiting methodologies to achieve strategic advantage.

The main purposes of this chapter are to give an update on the various e-recruiting sources and to review opportunities and challenges in developing and managing e-recruiting. This chapter is organized as follows: Section 2 compares the traditional recruiting and e-recruiting processes. Section 3 discusses seven major categories of the e-recruiting sources. Finally this chapter concludes with the discussions of opportunities, challenges, and future e-recruiting research directions.

BACKGROUND: TRADITIONAL RECRUITING VS. E-RECRUITING PROCESSES

The traditional recruiting process consists of the following iterative phases: identification of hiring needs; submission of job requisition and approval; job posting, submission of job applications; screening of resume/application; interviewing; pre-employment screening; and job offer and employment contract. Both hiring managers and recruiters rely on hard-copy documents and conventional delivery mechanisms to complete the recruiting process.

The traditional recruiting process is typically a step-by-step sequential process whereby the subsequent phase starts the required tasks only after the previous phase completes its tasks. Labor-intensive hiring tools like face-to-face interviews, paper and pencil tests, and job previews are widely used in traditional recruiting. The traditional process has been fraught with task delays and miscommunications, which result in the long hiring process and high hiring cost.

Computers had been used in the traditional recruiting process even before the introduction of e-recruiting. However, computer applications were limited to the automation of internal processes rather than the rationalization of the process. Software packages could not communicate with each other, and the quantity and quality of job applications remained the same. Even with automation, most recruiting processes were still batch processes. The advent of e-recruiting moved the computer application of the recruiting process to a higher level. The e-recruiting system is a web-enabled, "anytime-anyplace," ubiquitous system for both job seekers and recruiters. Rudman (2010) explains that e-recruiting is the selection of prospective candidates applying for a job via the Internet (external) and Intranet (internal).

E-recruiting is also known as online recruitment. Using various e-recruiting sources, a candidate who is applying for an advertised job submits his/her application electronically to the recruiter (Finn, 2000). We define the e-recruiting as *practices and activities carried on by the organization that utilizes a variety of electronic means to fill open positions effectively and efficiently*. The e-recruiting process consists of the following iterative steps: identification of hiring needs; submission of job requisition; approval of the job requisition via a job database; job posting on the Internet; on-line search of the job database by job seekers, on-line pre-screening/on-line self-assessment; submission of applications by applicants directly into an applicant database; on-line search of the applicant database for candidate selection; on-line evaluation of resume/application; interviewing by recruiters/hiring managers; on-line pre-employment screening; and job offer and employment contract.

While traditional recruiting is characterized as a sequential batch process, e-recruiting is characterized as a continuous and on-line process in which some of the recruiting activities may be performed concurrently. The benefits of e-recruiting are accomplished with the extensive use of a centralized job database and an array of web-enabled integrated applications. For example, when there is a need for a new employee, hiring managers may prepare the job requisition by entering the predefined job code into the job analysis database and retrieving a detailed list of the job requirements. The submission of the retrieved job requisition to division managers is electronically processed. Once the job requisition is approved, the job requisition data are used for the job posting at the career web site. The job requisition data are also used to search resumes based on specific criteria/keywords. The qualified candidates are further narrowed down with an additional screening process that utilizes various on-line and off-line interview and test tools, and then the company conducts an on-line pre-employment background check and makes a job offer to the best candidate.

THE CATEGORIES OF E-RECRUITING SOURCES

Corporate recruiters tend to be interested in such factors as whether certain recruiting sources are more likely to yield a higher percentage of new hires, whether certain sources are likely to generate minority applicants, and whether the quality of job applicants is higher for certain recruiting sources (Barber, 1998). Numerous e-recruiting sources have been introduced to improve the recruiting effectiveness since the mid-1990s. Since Lee (2007) proposed six types of e-recruiting sources, social networking services have been widely used as an alternative e-recruiting source.

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