

Recruiting In Senior Care

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR A CHAOTIC MARKET



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Finding and hiring employees in senior care has never been more challenging. In fact, new research shows that 73% of senior care professionals cite that finding qualified candidates is a top workforce challenge. And things may get worse before they get better. The same study found that the vast majority of respondents believe this challenge will remain the same or get worse over the next 3 years.¹

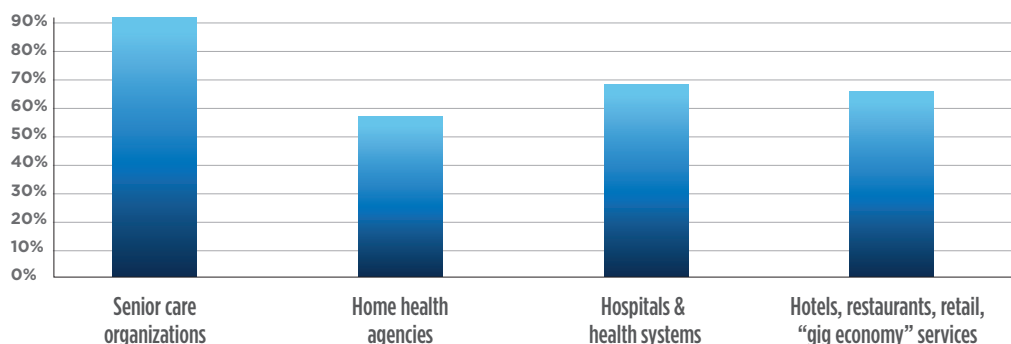
Not having enough qualified staff can cause chaos for senior care providers and risk the quality and continuity of resident care. This is happening today as many providers are having to fill positions with less qualified candidates, start employees before they are fully trained and/or work shifts without enough staff. Because of this, providers are often relying on their current employees to work overtime hours and perform additional duties. If sustained, this often can lead to employee burnout and create a detrimental turnover cycle.

Due to current workforce issues within your organization, how often has your organization had to:



Due to the tight labor market, the competition for talent is intensifying and not just among senior care providers. Nearly 66% of survey respondents indicated that they regularly compete for talent with organizations outside the healthcare industry, including hotels, restaurants, retail and “gig economy” services such as Uber, Lyft and Instacart.

Who do you compete with when hiring employees?



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“Competition is fierce out there,” says Kim Warnecke, Chief People Officer at Health Care Navigator.² “We used to worry about other healthcare professionals as a source of employment competition. Now, it’s everybody.”

On the bright side, many senior care providers are thinking outside the box to enhance their recruitment efforts. From creative grassroots initiatives to the use of modern recruiting and hiring technologies, providers have begun to invest in winning the war for talent.

This guide offers real-world examples and practices to gain a competitive advantage in finding and hiring top talent.

Cast A Wide Net

To really move the needle in recruitment efforts, providers must adopt modern strategies that target today’s workforce. Considering over 90% of job seekers use their mobile devices to look for jobs online³, providers should post open positions on as many job sites as possible. Many talent acquisition systems on the market today automate the dissemination of postings to hundreds of job boards including Indeed, Zip Recruiter and Google for Jobs, and also have the ability to easily share postings on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter with just a couple clicks.

Of course, a mix of both online and offline strategies is needed to reach as many potential candidates as possible. Providers should continue to use tried and

true recruiting methods like referral programs, career fairs and partnering with local schools to find talent, in addition to digital channels.

GET CREATIVE IN GRASSROOTS EFFORTS

Many providers are adding their own innovative spin on traditional grassroots outreach.

Lisa Whited, HR Manager at Washington Odd Fellows Home, says she and her staff regularly participate in local charitable events – the Human Society Dog Jog, the Walk For Alzheimer’s – dressed in their branded t-shirts, on the hunt for potential candidates. She says doing so has been a great way to connect with people that have that “caring spirit,” making them fit for a career in senior care.⁴

And, if a candidate has the right personality, but not the right skillset, they can take advantage of the organization’s home-grown CNA certification program, which has boasted a 72% retention rate.

Another provider, targeting soon-to-be high school graduates, attends Friday night football games and tosses mini footballs with their community’s contact information.

“I like to recruit over the heads of lettuce,” says Shelly Szarek-Skodny, President at Accord Care Community, who wears her recruiting hat everywhere she goes – the supermarket, the McDonald’s drive-thru, the local coffee shop. “When I meet someone friendly, I hand them my business card and tell them to apply.”

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CREATE A COMPELLING ONLINE PRESENCE

Research shows that 86% of millennials would take a pay cut to work for a company whose mission aligns with their values.⁵ So, when it comes to bolstering your online presence, don't just stop at posting open positions. Showcase your culture and the rewarding aspects of working in senior care. Doing so is a great way to capitalize on the mission-driven mindset of today's workforce to get a leg up on the competition.

"There are amazing things happening in our centers every day, but we tend to be too busy to celebrate and share them," says Kim Warnecke, Chief People Officer at Health Care Navigator. "Nobody's going to tell the story of long-term care like we can tell it ourselves. Having your culture come alive online when people

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Health Care Navigator

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Your company website and social channels like Facebook, Snapchat and LinkedIn can help candidates get a sense of your culture. "Publicize your community awards, the fun activities and programs happening at your center and your mission and vision. People will

either connect with it or they won't. And if they do, there's a greater chance they are going to apply," Warnecke says.



Courtesy of McKnight's Long-Term Care News

For example, just this past holiday season, New Jersey-based Marquis Health Services organized an "Elf on the Shelf" and "Mensch on the Bench" photo competition to get everyone in the holiday spirit and have some fun with residents and staff.⁶

An unforeseen benefit—it significantly boosted staff engagement on social media and garnered a great deal of positive publicity. In fact, the organization had more than 2,500 engagements on its social posts during the contest's first week and impressions on their LinkedIn page increased by 174%. As you can see, social platforms are inexpensive, but powerful tools for showcasing company culture and building a brand.

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MANAGE YOUR ONLINE REPUTATION

Organizations must keep close tabs on online review sites like Glassdoor and be prepared to address any negative feedback during interviews.

“Most people read reviews on products that they buy,” says Matt Broman, HR Director at Era Living. “And so, of course, candidates read reviews of employers. It’s just part of our culture now, and we need to manage our reputation as an employer as actively as we manage our reputation as a provider.”⁷

According to a survey conducted by Harris Poll and Glassdoor, 35% of people say that reading negative

reviews from employees would make them pull out of the hiring process.⁸

Most unfavorable employer reviews cannot be removed. However, providers can turn the situation around by addressing negative reviews publicly. Leave a

comment telling the reviewer you are looking into their issue, appreciate their feedback and

are committed to creating a positive environment for employees. To improve transparency, it always helps to sign it with your name, title and contact information to show you take the matter seriously.

Position Your Perks in Recruiting

“Yes, money is important, and we need to be competitive but money’s not everything. If we are competitive financially, what gives us the edge up of why they want to work at our center?” asks Warnecke. “If a CNA or a nurse comes and applies with you right now, they probably applied with four or five different other locations. Why are they going to choose you? It has a lot to do with your programs, policies, culture and environment.”

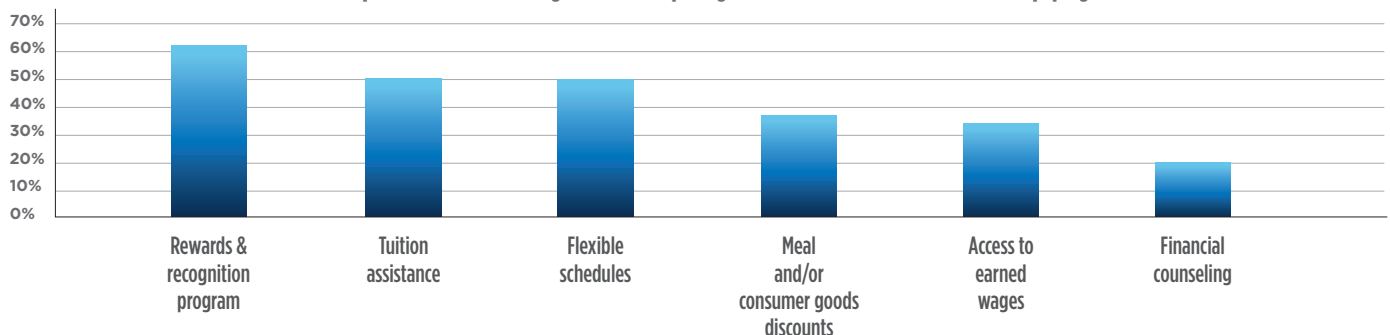
Offering perks and benefits – particularly ones geared at improving life for the often struggling-to-get-by hourly worker – is one of the best ways to differentiate yourself from the community down the street.

According to our survey, collaborative, flexible scheduling, rewards and recognition programs, and timely access to earned wages before the typical two-week paycheck cycle are perks that many providers are beginning to offer. These perks don’t just positively impact the lives of your employees but help your organization stand out to the applicants that are applying to job openings en masse, as Warnecke mentioned.

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What type of perks does your organization offer or plan to offer your employees? Select all that apply.



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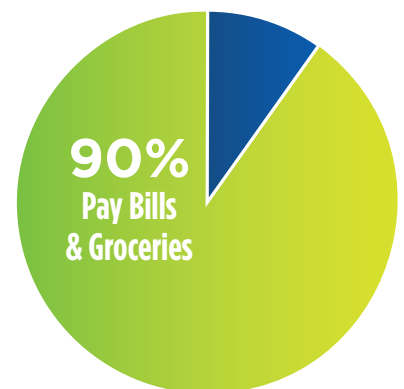
“Helping our employees financially makes sense not only for us as the employers but makes a huge impact for the employee as well,” notes Warnecke. “What says that you care more than helping somebody in a difficult financial situation to be independent and have access to funds ahead of time? We’re giving people choices they didn’t have before.”

Offering financial perks is proving a positive recruitment tool for organizations like Gulf Coast Health Care, who Warnecke works closely with in her current position. In a recent OnShift Wallet survey, 90% of users said they would recommend their workplace to a friend.

Aaron Fenberg, Director of Human Resources at Detroit-based Singh Senior Living, understands the value these perks can bring both to the organization and to the lives of employees. “There’s a lot of competition coming up in senior living in our market. If an associate has the ability today to earn a reward of additional paid time off through a rewards and recognition program or they have the ability to access money that they’ve earned but hasn’t been paid yet...that’s definitely a differentiator that they’ll stay with us, versus going to a competitor.”⁹

Early Access To Earned Wages Helps Employees

- 75% avoided paying bank overdraft fees, late payments, payday loans or other fees
- 90% intend to spend the funds on bills & groceries



These powerful programs keep your organization attractive to employees and candidates. Advertise them on your career page, in job descriptions, across your social channels and during interviews.

Prioritize The Candidate Experience

Once you’ve sourced and enticed job seekers to apply, it’s critical that you focus on giving them a positive experience – one that is simple, transparent and built for your targeted applicant pool. Without doing so, you risk losing top talent before you’ve had the chance to speak with them.

“92% of our employees are hourly workers, so why are we still using tools that were geared towards the other 8%? That’s what we had to ask ourselves,” explains Broman. “There hasn’t been a focus on the hourly worker until recently and now we’re all trying to use the tools and processes designed for a completely different candidate experience.”

“It has been a lifesaver for me. I am very grateful for OnShift Wallet.”

-Nakia Williams, Scheduling Coordinator, Singh Senior Living

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MAKE APPLICATIONS SIMPLE & MOBILE FRIENDLY

Hourly workers value an application process that is quick and easy. For example, a line cook, a dishwasher or even a caregiver may not have a resume. But simply collecting essential information, like job history and required certifications, allows you to evaluate them quickly without the need for a lengthy resume.

“A few of the questions we ask now involve where they worked the past few jobs, basically kind of coming up with a mini resume,” Bromen says. “They hit apply. And then our hiring manager is instantly notified and can immediately reply via text message. How powerful is that? Think about the experience now.”

The application process must be simple and mobile friendly, especially when you consider many hourly workers may be looking for jobs during their lunch break or from the comfort of their couch after a long day at work.

FOLLOW UP FAST

With nearly 40,000 open jobs in long-term care and senior living, applicants have more employment options than ever before.¹⁰ Once an application is received, hiring managers should follow up as quickly as possible to avoid losing them to competitor.

“Texting is a basic tool we should all have in our recruiting toolbox,” Bromen says. “We can’t continue to try and call people and expect them to pick up. I think about my dad, who’s retired. I call him, he doesn’t pick up. But if I text him, he’ll ping me back

in just a couple of seconds. It’s just the way things are now.”

Providers that have taken to texting candidates to schedule interviews have seen an uptick in their recruiting metrics – up to twice the number of hires in half the time.¹¹

PRACTICE CLEAR & CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

It’s important to be completely transparent with candidates throughout the entire hiring process. A Glassdoor survey found that nearly 58% of job seekers “wanted the company to communicate with them clearly and regularly during the application and hiring process.” Surprisingly, however, only 20% of candidates received such updates.

Providing transparency and timely communication isn’t just about securing top talent, it’s about putting the candidate at the center of the hiring universe and ensuring they have a positive experience. Research shows that nearly half of job seekers have turned down an offer because of a poor candidate experience.¹²

And a couple bad hiring experiences at your community can really hurt your candidate pipeline in the long run. In fact, 80% of job seekers say they are discouraged to apply to other job openings when a company fails to notify them of their application status. These same applicants would be 3.5x more likely to re-apply if they were notified of where they stood in the hiring process.⁸

It's A Journey, Not A Destination

Hiring in senior care never ends and the impact of the labor shortage is making it more challenging. That's why it's important to keep in touch with past applicants for when future openings become available. Talent acquisition systems can help recruiters and hiring managers engage passive job seekers by sharing job postings, organizational news and other relevant content.

When it comes to recruiting in senior care, it's all about making the most of what you have and being strategic. Take it from Whited, who keeps former employees top of mind.

"We stay connected with past employees because sometimes people move back into our community, like two employees recently did from out of state," she explains. "Sometimes that grass wasn't as green as it was promised at their other position."

Leverage Technology

Our research found that 41% of organizations are trying to fill 6+ positions every month.¹³ And when you consider that the average senior care recruiter wears multiple hats, it's no wonder that many are struggling to connect with job seekers fast enough.

That's why having a system in place to get candidates in the door as quickly as possible - while remaining compliant - is imperative.

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To improve the candidate experience, many systems provide candidates a portal to view where they are in the hiring process and send automated reminders to engage candidates when action is needed. This provides complete transparency for the candidate and accelerates hiring by streamlining tasks and communication.

Additionally, it's important to track key metrics including time to hire and applicant source effectiveness to continually optimize recruiting and hiring efforts.

"Track your recruitment efforts to spend your limited dollars more wisely. Determine what works so you can continue doing it and things that aren't working well so you can eliminate them," explains Warnecke.

As you can see, the process of recruiting and hiring in senior care can be a daunting one. But with the right practices and tools in place, organizations will see better results - more applicants, faster time-to-hire and most importantly, the right amount of staff on hand to deliver quality care and service.

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¹ Survey Report: Workforce 360, OnShift, 2020.

² 2019: The Year of Employee Retention, OnShift & McKnight's Long-Term Care News, 2019.

³ Why Mobile Recruitment is a Must, Academy to Innovate HR (AIHR).

⁴ Real Workforce Strategies That Succeed In LTC, OnShift & McKnight's Long-Term Care News, 2018.

⁵ Workplace Culture Trends: The Key to Hiring (and Keeping) Top Talent in 2018.

⁶ Holiday photo competition increases staff engagement for Marquis SNFs, McKnight's Long-Term Care News, 2019.

⁷ The Talent War: 3 Strategies For Winning In Today's Competitive Market, OnShift & McKnight's Senior Living, 2019.

⁸ What Do Job Candidates Want Most? Glassdoor Has the Answer and It's Pretty Simple, ERE Media, 2018.

⁹ OnShift Wallet Provides Hiring Differentiator For Singh Senior Living, OnShift, 2019.

¹⁰ The Number of Open LTC Jobs Nationwide Creeps Up in August, AHCA/NCAL, 2019.

¹¹ OnShift Text2Hire Helps Century Oak Hire Candidates In Record Time, OnShift, 2018.

¹² The Future Of Recruiting, PwC, 2019.

¹³ Hiring In Senior Care, OnShift, 2018.

About OnShift, Inc.

OnShift's next-generation human capital management platform fundamentally transforms the relationship between healthcare organizations and their employees. Our innovative approach to recruitment, hiring, scheduling and engagement fosters a culture where people want to work. That's why thousands of healthcare organizations rely on OnShift's integrated suite of software and services to dramatically reduce turnover rates, decrease costs and improve the quality and continuity of care. For more information, visit www.onshift.com.