

“Where are all the people?”

says every Chief People Officer everywhere right now. Are they hiding in plain sight? Did they abandon the work world altogether? How can they afford to live without a job?? Though there are countless articles on this topic - all stemming from the very real pain most of us are experiencing on the talent shortage front - none of them supply good answers to any of these questions. Or at least none that make us feel any better.

Here in the real world NOW, though, there are some very practical things we can ALL be doing to **be a magnet** to great talent in this great industry we call experiential marketing.

Do NOT undercut the industry in your messaging - internally or externally.

Though we design and produce events, we are much more than just events. At our best, **we create experiences that change the way guests see our client’s brand for the better.** That strategically moves the needle for us all. This industry is not for the faint of heart, but it is not for dummies either. Make sure you embody that mindset and educate your candidates to ensure you are attracting the kind of intelligent, capable and hungry talent we so severely need.

Trust your instincts.

This industry appeals to **people people**. **People people** can be very charming. But, if we are talking about raising the bar, we have to vet our prospective colleagues as astute, proactive people with a bias toward action. **Do not be fooled by a shiny object. You will know real gold when you see it.**

Do NOT lower your standards.

It is easy to cave and make a hire that is simply not qualified because you are desperate. Hold out until the right one comes. Though the journey to finding the right person can be tedious and expensive; **do NOT give in.** The risks of hurting your team and damaging your brand are too great. Consider the hours and resources put into training as the cost of potentially making a “bad hire”. It could be more detrimental than waiting for the right person.

Invest in your CURRENT team.

This is so simple but is generally overlooked. We often take for granted the assets we have right under our noses. And that they are people with hopes and aspirations to be the best they can be. They need training, yes, but they need quality coaching from mentors and managers who care about them enough to be candid about areas of opportunity and growth. This is a win-win-win for all parties involved.

Listen and adjust.

Employees are looking for the full package now more than ever before. They want to join intentional, well-rounded companies that prioritize people over profit. Are you really listening to what your employees are saying? Are you brushing issues under the rug or taking the time to understand and fix what’s wrong? Take the time to do this. It will pay dividends in the end to your team and your business.

Fear not, things **WILL** settle out eventually, but until then, following through with some of the above suggestions will go a long way toward setting your team up for success in this next normal world we are living in now.

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