Madeline Laurano
Co-Founder & Chief Research Officer
Aptitude Research Partners

PRIORITIZING THE CANDIDATE JOURNEY THROUGH RECRUITMENT AUTOMATION

When considering recruitment automation, the benefits to the recruiter and talent acquisition team are hard to deny. Yet, the benefits to the candidate are too often ignored. Recruitment Automation plays a critical role in communicating with individuals, personalizing the recruitment process, and building trust between candidates and employers. As the competition for talent intensifies, companies need to prioritize the impact of recruitment automation on the candidate experience and ensure that candidates are moving along through the process. This report based on data collected in 2018 will highlight the role of recruitment automation on the candidate journey and outline strategies for success.

July 2018

CANDIDATES COME FIRST
A Shift in Talent Acquisition Priorities

It is a candidate-centric job market. With a record number of job openings and unemployment under 4%, companies are struggling to attract and recruit talent. More than ever before, the candidate experience needs to be a priority and a differentiator. According to Aptitude Research Partners' 2018 Hire, Engage, and Retain study, over 60% of companies identified improving the candidate experience as the number one priority.

The key to building a successful candidate experience is understanding that it begins well before an individual is actually a "candidate". It begins during the attract phase of talent acquisition when employers leverage a variety of channels and content to engage and inform both active and passive candidates early in the process. Yet, most companies still struggle to provide individuals

THE INFORMED CANDIDATE

> " *Sixty percent (60%) companies identified the candidate experience as the top priority.* "

with the insights they need to make decisions about their next job. In fact, according to Aptitude Research Partners' 2018 Hire, Engage, and Retain study, one in three companies have made little progress improving that experience.

Today's candidates have three basic requirements from employers:

- **Trust:** Candidates want a hiring process that provides a sense of fairness and transparency throughout every stage. They want to know their profile, application, resume, or inquiry is going to be given consideration.

- **Communication**: Candidates want to know where they are at in the process. They want to receive communication from employers in a way that is meaningful and consistent. Too often, companies ignore the importance of communication in the candidate experience. Many companies are still struggling to provide information, a single point of contact, and transparency on the applicant status (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Current State of Candidate Communication
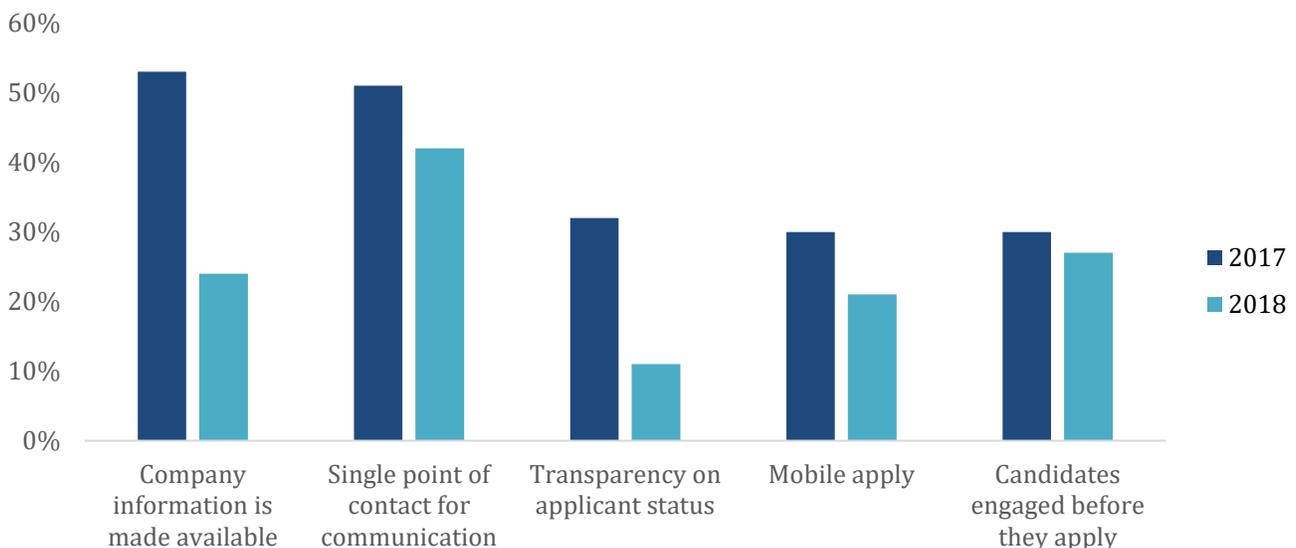
Source: Aptitude Research Partners. Hire, Engage, Retain Study, 2018. N=336

- **Personalization:** Talent acquisition has been long viewed as transactional. Companies fill positions as quickly and as cost-effectively as possible with little regard to the candidate experience. Today's candidates have different expectations and want a personalized experience from the time they first engage with a company through receiving an offer. Providing a personalized experience helps candidates feel more connected with a company or brand even before they apply for a job.

These candidate expectations are only met when employers automate critical processes and ensure that candidates will not be ignored throughout their journey. Automation helps talent acquisition by lifting the administrative burden that face recruiters and let them focus on what is most important- the candidate. According to Aptitude Research Partners' 2018 Hire, Engage and Retain study, companies that invest in automation for talent acquisition were three times more likely to improve time to hire and two times more likely to improve the candidate experience. The following pages of this report will outline the role that recruitment automation can play in the candidate journey.

Case Study: Boston College

Boston College is a private school in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts which employees over 4,000 employees. With a strong employer brand, Boston College receives 150-175 applications for every job position. In order to manage this overflow of applications and provide a better candidate experience, Boston College needed to automate existing recruitment processes. Unfortunately, its' legacy system left candidates wondering if they had even applied and unsure if they were advancing through the system.

Boston College partnered with Cornerstone OnDemand to help lift the administrative burden placed on recruiters but also, provide a better candidate experience through automation. In a short period of time, it was able to reduce the number of complaints and improve the candidate experience.

THE IMPACT OF RECRUITMENT AUTOMATION

Recruitment automation streamlines the talent acquisition process to support a better candidate experience and provide the consistency and structure that is often missing from talent acquisition. The challenge most companies face is that they are still confused by the role recruitment automation can play in their existing talent acquisition strategy. While automation has transformed many other areas of the business including marketing, supply chain, and sales, recruitment is still immature in its adoption of these solutions. According to Aptitude Research's 2018 report, only 20% of companies understand the role of automation or AI in talent acquisition, only 22% use recruitment automation for sourcing, and only 7% use chat bots to communicate with candidates (see Figure 2).

APTITUDE
RESEARCH PARTNERS

Figure 2: Automation in Talent Acquisition

20%
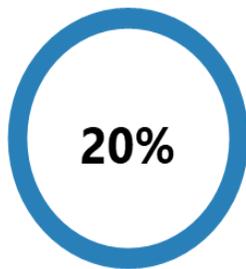
ONLY 20% OF COMPANIES UNDERSTAND AI'S ROLE IN TALENT ACQUISITION

22%

ONLY 22% OF COMPANIES ARE USING RECRUITMENT AUTOMATION FOR SOURCING EFFORTS

7%
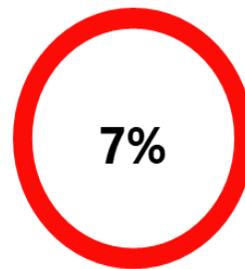
ONLY 7% OF COMPANIES USE CHATBOTS FOR COMMUNICATION WITH CANDIDATES

One reason companies are still immature is that they are only looking at recruitment automation from the perspective of the recruiter and the impact on recruiter efficiency. According to Aptitude Research Parners, companies identified screening the candidate as the number one reason to invest in recruitment automation (see Figure 3). When we consider recruitment automation from the viewpoint of the candidate, the value extends beyond efficiency and impacts the experience and the quality of candidates.

Figure 3: Use Cases for Recruitment Automation
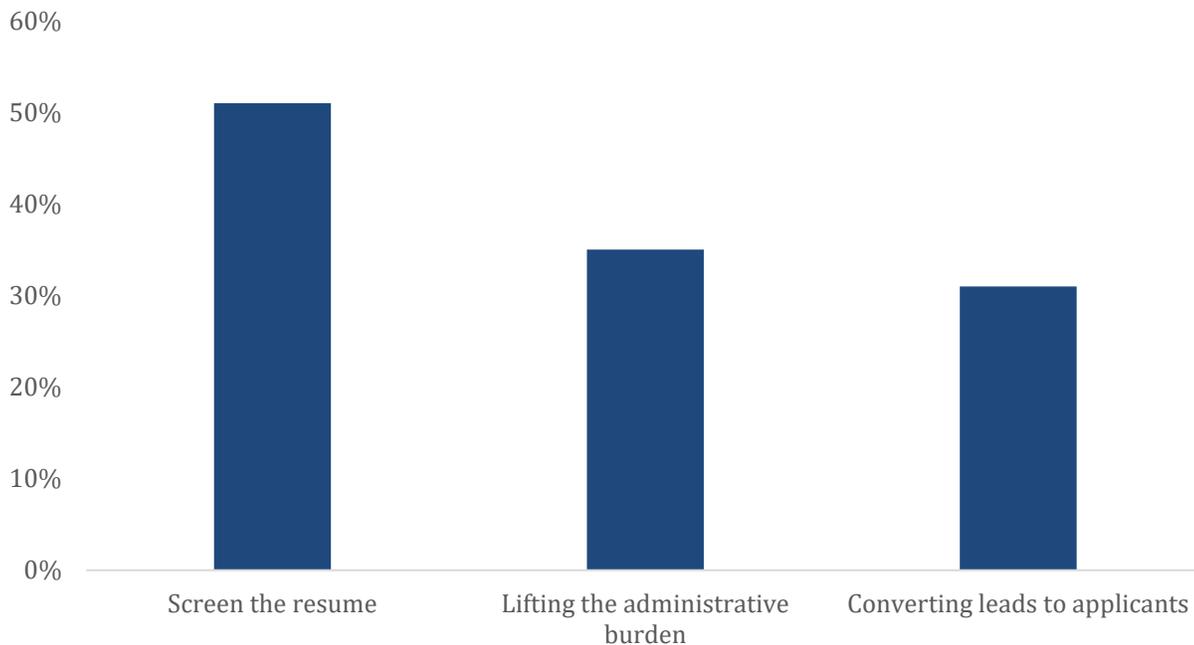
Source: Aptitude Research Partners. Hire, Engage, Retain Study, 2018. N=336

Recruitment automation plays a role in every part of the candidate's journey. According to research conducted by the Talent Function, LLC, on average 1,000 individuals will see a job post, 200 will begin the application process, 100 will complete the application, 75 of those 100 resumes will be screened out, 25 resumes will be seen by the hiring manager, 4 to 6 will be invited for an interview, 1 to 3 of them will be invited back for final interview, 1 will be offered that job and 80 percent of those receiving an offer will accept it. Companies need to engage with candidates through every stage and move them through the process and they can do this through recruitment automation.

Case Study: ResCare

Founded in 1974, ResCare is located in Louisville, Kentucky and employees 52,000 employees. With increased pressure to keep up with high-volume and direct care needs, ResCare needed to rethink its talent acquisition strategy and technology options.

It decided to invest in one provider for recruitment, learning, and performance and selected Cornerstone OnDemand. Through this partnership, ResCare was able to automate stages of the recruitment process, eliminating the need for any manual processes and improving the candidate experience. It was able to achieve the following results:

- Reducing application time by 40% to 17 minutes
- Increase the visibility that candidates have in the recruitment process

Increasing the flow of applicants that were no longer getting lost in the process

The key to recruitment automation is ensuring that the candidate has a consistent experience throughout every stage of the recruitment lifecycle. Candidates want a simple and transparent process and they want to trust that an employer will provide that experience. (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Automation through the Candidate Journey
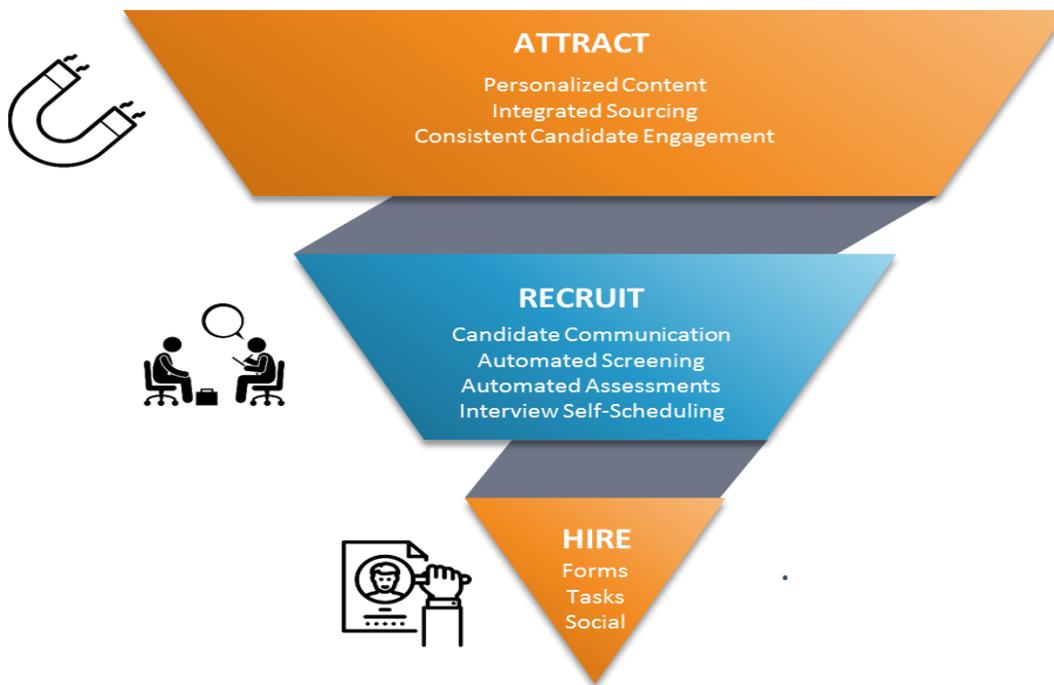
ATTRACT

Recruitment automation begins in the attract phase of talent acquisition when companies are first beginning to engage with candidates. During this phase, recruitment automation can help provide integrated sourcing solutions for both outbound and inbound sourcing efforts. It can also help to provide the right personalized communication and information to candidates to keep them informed about the employer.

RECRUIT

During the recruit phase of talent acquisition, recruitment automation ensures that the right candidates are moving along in the process or being dispositioned at the right stage. Candidates during this phase will receive consistent communication about their status and what they can expect moving forward. Recruitment automation can help to automate prescreening questions, offer candidate self-service to view status updates, provide interview self-scheduling, and realistic job previews.

HIRE

During the final stage of the recruitment process, companies can use recruitment automation to continue communication with candidates. Companies can automate background screening and the offer letter management stage to make sure that companies are staying compliant and that this experience extends into the new hire experience. Recruitment automation can continue to provide the communication and the positive experience during onboarding with forms automation, tasks automation and socialization into the company culture.

Companies have traditionally used email as a primary form of candidate communication. Companies need to engage with candidates using different modes of communication and recruitment automation provides these options. Below are a few of the tools available through recruitment automation that can help to augment candidate communication:

- Automated texts and emails
- Video
- Social Media Direct Messaging
- Chatbots

APTITUDE
RESEARCH PARTNERS

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recruitment automation can be a powerful tool for improving the candidate experience and moving candidates through the process. When companies consider making an investment in recruitment automation, they might want to consider the following:

Understand Your Unique Needs: Companies need to understand their unique requirements before making an investment. Companies should consider what goals they want to achieve and what processes they need to automate.

Start with One Area: Some companies are beginning recruitment automation through the sourcing function before they continue to other areas. Other companies are investing in self-scheduling when they consider recruitment automation. If automation feels overwhelming, identifying one area of talent acquisition to start might be the best option.

Consider a Provider with Expertise: Automating recruitment processes and investing in AI requires solutions with expertise in this area. Consider providers that have made a commitment through their product development and support teams.

Create a Change Management Strategy: Recruitment automation is only effective if companies use these solutions. Companies should consider a change management strategy to help support adoption efforts.

APTITUDE RESEARCH PARTNERS

Aptitude Research Partners is a research-based analyst and advisory firm focused on the new conversation required by changes in how HCM technology is delivered and utilized by today's organizations.

Our goal is to look beyond the obvious product capabilities to identify the real differentiators organizations should be looking for when considering providers, as well as the change management and change readiness capabilities consumers must have in place for successful technology adoption.

We conduct quantitative and qualitative research on all aspects of Human Capital Management to better understand the skills, capabilities, technology, and underlying strategies required to deliver business results in today's complex work environment.

Madeline Laurano
Co-Founder & Chief Research Officer
Aptitude Research Partners

Madeline@AptitudeRP.com
www.aptituderesearchpartners.com

@TalktoARP