



Candidate Nurturing During a Hiring Lull

Four Candidate Nurture
Campaigns to Streamline
Your Efforts

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CONCLUSION

Introduction.

The COVID-19 economic climate has forced many businesses to pause hiring efforts until further notice. While these recruitment teams aren't actively trying to fill roles, they are concerned with keeping candidates that are currently in their talent pipeline engaged and interested in their positions.

Candidate nurturing is an invaluable recruitment tactic made even more important by the slower hiring process and removed interactions of the remote working world. Use the following best practices and nurture tracks to keep candidates engaged while you adjust to the current situation.

SECTION I

What Is Candidate Nurturing?

Before we get started, let's review the basics of candidate nurturing and the purpose it serves in a broader recruitment strategy.

SECTION I

Candidate nurturing is the act of keeping job applicants engaged throughout the hiring process. It's an essential part of recruitment, especially during hiring lulls. The purpose of this practice is to ensure that your business and job opportunities stay top of mind among your ideal candidates.

When not actively hiring, candidate nurturing is the practice of cultivating your relationship with prospective employees until you're ready to ramp up your recruiting efforts again.

Candidate nurturing is the act of keeping job applicants engaged throughout the hiring process.

A successful recruitment strategy utilizes candidate nurturing best practices at every stage of the funnel. Think of it in context with the buyer's journey; candidates move through the same stages of awareness, consideration and decision making.

How you nurture individuals who are discovering your company for the first time should look a lot different than how you nurture your top candidates after an interview.



SECTION I

Depending on who your target candidate is, your nurture track — a series of interactions triggered by the candidate’s actions — should vary in timing, frequency, format and content.

For example, a candidate who submitted an application and is waiting for next steps will want to hear from you more frequently than a candidate who has yet to complete their application. Being mindful of where each candidate falls within the recruitment funnel is vital to nurturing candidate relationships without overwhelming prospects.

SECTION II

Best Practices for Candidate Communication

How you interact with candidates during a hiring freeze requires far more consideration than during a normal recruiting cycle. No matter what stage of the recruitment process a candidate is at, you must be thoughtful and transparent with your interactions in order to nurture each individual without misleading or disengaging them. Throughout the entire process, use the following best practices.

1. Don't be afraid to over-communicate

As the old saying goes, knowledge is power. Arm your candidates with the information they need to make decisions about their application process. The reality is that not every candidate you attempt to nurture will be content with waiting until your roles become available. Be direct with candidates and set realistic expectations so only those who want and are able to wait will do so.

Employer Brand Matters

75%

of job seekers consider employer brand when applying to a job.

Don't be wary of disengaging candidates when doing this — they'll appreciate your honesty and they'll leave with a positive impression of your employer brand.

This increases the likelihood that a candidate will consider reapplying to your open roles later on; 75 percent of job seekers consider a company's employer brand when deciding to apply for a position.

2. Make time for phone calls

Given the current situation, candidates may raise more concerns and ask more questions than you're used to. While it's easier to set an automated nurture track and simply monitor its performance, candidates will appreciate a personal conversation with a member of your team.

Not only does it demonstrate effort on your part and improve your reputation as an employer, a phone call is oftentimes more effective than an email.



SECTION II

In fact, 57 percent of people think a cold outreach email is spam even before they open it. Furthermore, phone calls have an 8.1 percent response rate, compared to 0.03 percent for email correspondence. When possible, make time for a phone call with a candidate, even if it's outside of work hours.

This demonstrates your interest in the candidate, which helps keep them engaged. Additionally, a phone call improves the quality of communication during the candidate experience, preventing prospects from feeling uninformed or out of the loop.

3. Automate when possible

Despite the value of a phone call, we understand there are limitations to what you're able to accomplish in a day. To ensure candidates don't slip through the cracks and miss an important update from your team, utilize recruitment automation tools. Software like your applicant tracking system (ATS) or an email marketing platform helps streamline your candidate interactions and nurture efforts.

***More than 80% of recruiters say
recruitment automation
increases their productivity.***

-Entelo

However, if budget and resources become a limiting factor, use email templates and scheduling functionalities through your email service. This is a low-cost way to make sure pertinent information makes it into every email and that candidates aren't waiting on an update from you.

When using templates, proofread carefully and add personalization elements when appropriate. Additionally, vary your subject line so each update stands out as unique and important.

SECTION III

Candidate Nurture Campaign Samples

Use the following sample tracks to streamline your candidate nurturing efforts and keep top talent engaged in your open roles until you can hire again.

Two-Week Track

Use the following template to create a track that will keep candidates warm over the course of two weeks. Depending on your level of interest in the candidate, you can adjust how frequently you reach out and in what format.

Since this is only a two-week track, you're likely making a decision on the role shortly and have only a few candidates to keep in touch with. Because of that, candidates will be eager for updates. Assuage any unnecessary anxieties by over-communicating and speaking directly with your top candidates.

Remember, every candidate touchpoint with your company is an opportunity to enhance the hiring experience and improve your employer brand; a short nurture campaign still carries weight.

DA

Y
1

Format: Email

Objective: Set expectations.

Thank the candidate again for applying to your open role and considering your company as a potential employer. Let them know that you expect to make a decision within two weeks and that you'll keep them informed throughout the process. For tips on how to craft a thank you email, use our [recruiting email templates](#).

DA

Y
7

Format: Call

Objective: Address any concerns or questions they may have.

Break the mold of a standard email-heavy nurture track by reaching out to candidates over the phone. This doesn't have to be a long conversation, but a quick call to ask how candidates are doing and if there are any questions you can help answer will bode well for your employer brand.

At the end of the call, set expectations for when you'll be in touch next. While this touchpoint should be leveraged predominantly for the candidate's benefit, use it as a time to confirm that they are still interested in the opportunity.

DA

Y
14

Format: Email/Call

Objective: Communicate your decision.

Let candidates know your decision. Thank those that did not receive an offer for considering your company and for their patience during the process. Encourage them to join your talent community by connecting with your organization on social media and subscribing to your newsletter for updates on other job openings.

Give short-listed candidates the courtesy of a personal call. This will leave a lasting impression and increase the likelihood that they'll reapply for another position down the line.

Four-Week Track

The process of nurturing candidates over the course of a month is relatively similar to how you should approach a two-week track. You'll notice there are only two additional touchpoints in the track below. These outreach methods help foster and maintain a strong relationship with candidates over a longer period of time, without overwhelming them.

Because you're still a ways off from making a decision regarding next steps, you should aim to vary your approach; a standard email will start to read flat and disinteresting to candidates. Nurture them across different platforms and through various mediums in order to keep them engaged.

DA

Y
1

Format: Email

Objective: Set expectations.

Thank the candidate again for applying to your open role and considering your company as a potential employer. Let them know when you expect to make a decision and that you'll keep them informed throughout the process. For tips on how to craft a thank you email, use our [recruiting email templates](#).

DA

Y
5

Format: LinkedIn request/message

Objective: Stay top of mind and strengthen your connection.

Send the candidate a request to connect over LinkedIn. After they accept, send a private message. Mention that you know they recently submitted an application and share a resource on your website related to their interests or a topic you discussed during a previous conversation.

This touchpoint helps establish a personal connection between your company and a prospective employee, and encourages them to join your talent community. Like and comment on the posts they share, and congratulate them when they celebrate a birthday or milestone.

Even if it doesn't work out, support candidates on their endeavors by acknowledging their accomplishments. This fosters goodwill and builds a positive reputation.

DA

Y
12

Format: Email

Objective: Keep them interested in the role.

Send the candidate content specific to the role they applied for. A roundup of employee spotlights featuring current team members sharing what they enjoy about the role or the work they do is a simple yet effective way to keep candidates engaged.

DA

Y
17

Format: Email/Call

Objective: Address any concerns or questions they may have.

Check in with candidates to see how they're doing. This will help convey your reputation as an empathetic employer who cares about their people. Thank them for their patience, and keep the lines of communication open by encouraging them to reach out if any questions come up.

For short-listed candidates, reach out over the phone; a quick call to ask how they're doing and if there are any questions you can answer will bode well for your employer brand. In either case, set realistic expectations regarding when they can expect to hear from you next. Furthermore, use this time to confirm they're still interested in the role.

DA

Y
28

Format: Email/Call

Objective: Communicate your decision.

Let candidates know your decision. Thank those that did not receive an offer for considering your company and for their patience during the process. Encourage them to join your talent community by connecting with your organization on social media and subscribing to your newsletter for updates on other job openings.

Give short-listed candidates the courtesy of a personal call. This will leave a lasting impression and increase the likelihood that they'll reapply for another position down the line.

Six-Week Track

A six-week nurture track should include more touchpoints geared toward selling your employee value proposition (EVP). This is a summary of all you have to offer as an employer in terms of your perks and benefits, culture and values, both professional and personal.

Because candidates can't get a sense of your EVP firsthand during an onsite interview, it's important to go out of your way to recreate the experience. This track includes a video-conferencing touchpoint which is intended to offer candidates the opportunity to interact with other employees, ask questions about your culture and get a glimpse into your remote work strategy.

DA

Y
1

Format: Email

Objective: Set expectations.

Thank the candidate again for applying to your open role and considering your company as a potential employer. Let them know when you expect to make a decision and that you'll keep them informed throughout the process. For tips on how to craft a thank you email, use our [recruiting email templates](#).

DA

Y
8

Format: Email

Objective: Keep them interested in your company as a potential employer.

Send your candidate timely content. Consider sharing an article about how you're responding to COVID-19, either internally with additional support for your employees or through your contributions to the surrounding community.

Additionally, make your company culture a focal point by sharing photos of your office, your employees' remote setups or a recap of some of the creative remote team-building activities you've implemented. Candidates don't have the opportunity to experience your culture firsthand, so go out of your way to show it off.

DA

Y
24

Format: Email/Call

Objective: Address any concerns or questions they may have.

Check in with candidates to see how they're doing. This will help convey your reputation as an empathetic employer who cares about their people. Thank them for their patience, and keep the lines of communication open by encouraging them to reach out if any questions come up.

For short-listed candidates, reach out over the phone; a quick call to ask how they're doing and if there are any questions you can answer will bode well for your employer brand. In either case, set realistic expectations regarding when they can expect to hear from you next. Furthermore, use this time to confirm they're still interested in the role.

DA

Y
36

Format: Video conference

Objective: Highlight your company culture and build stronger relationships across your company.

An onsite interview is an integral part of the candidate experience; it gives prospects a chance to evaluate a potential employer. As a substitute, set up a 30-minute video conference with candidates and various members of your team to highlight your company culture.

Give employees some talking points to address — your core values, committees, initiatives, etc. — but encourage candidates to come prepared with questions. Be on the call to help facilitate the conversation and reassure candidates as a familiar face. Clearly communicate that this is not an interview and won't be used to evaluate the candidate. Rather, it's an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions and learn more about your culture.

DA

Y
42

Format: Email/Call

Objective: Communicate your decision.

Let candidates know your decision. Thank those that did not receive an offer for considering your company and for their patience during the process. Encourage them to join your talent community by connecting with your organization on social media and subscribing to your newsletter for updates on other job openings.

Give short-listed candidates the courtesy of a personal call. This will leave a lasting impression and increase the likelihood that they'll reapply for another position down the line.

Eight-Week Track

As you can imagine, the eight-week nurture track combines all the elements of the previous examples. This track is intended to provide a varied, strategic approach to your communication with candidates. The first few touchpoints focus on soft-selling techniques meant to keep them interested in your employer brand and lay the groundwork for a long-lasting relationship.

Toward the end of the eight weeks, your nurturing efforts should be more targeted to the specific job opportunity and aim to keep them interested in the role. However, the touchpoints are purposefully limited to avoid bombarding candidates with information and sales tactics. Because of that, you must work diligently to create meaningful connections that will entice candidates and keep them interested in the role over a two-month disruption.

DA

Y
1

Format: Email

Objective: Set expectations.

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DA

Y
15

Format: LinkedIn Message

Objective: Build the foundation for a long-term relationship and stay top of mind.

Send the candidate a request to connect over LinkedIn. After they accept, send them a private message. Mention that you know they recently submitted an application and share a resource on your website related to their interests or a topic you discussed previously.

This touchpoint acts as a soft-sell by establishing a personal connection between your company and a candidate. It also encourages them to join your talent community. Even if the role doesn't work out, support candidates on their other endeavors and congratulate them on their achievements.. This fosters goodwill and builds a positive reputation.

DA

Y
22

Format: Email/Call

Objective: Address any concerns or questions they may have.

Check in with candidates to see how they're doing. This will help convey your reputation as an empathetic employer who cares about their people. Thank them for their patience, and keep the lines of communication open by encouraging them to reach out if any questions come up.

For short-listed candidates, reach out over the phone; a quick call to ask how they're doing and if there are any questions you can answer will bode well for your employer brand. In either case, set realistic expectations regarding when they can expect to hear from you next. Furthermore, use this time to confirm they're still interested in the role.

DA

Y
38

Format: Email

Objective: Keep them interested in the role.

Send your candidate content specific to the role they applied to. A roundup of [employee spotlights](#) featuring current team members sharing what they enjoy about the role or work they do is a simple yet effective way to keep candidates engaged.

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Y
45

Format: Video conference

Objective: Highlight your company culture and build stronger relationships across your company.

An onsite interview is an integral part of the candidate experience; it gives prospects a chance to evaluate a potential employer. As a substitute, set up a 30-minute video conference with candidates and various members of your team to highlight your company culture.

Give employees some talking points to address — your core values, committees, initiatives, etc. — but encourage candidates to come prepared with questions. Be on the call to help facilitate the conversation and reassure candidates as a familiar face. Clearly communicate that this is not an interview and won't be used to evaluate the candidate. Rather, it's an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions and learn more about your culture.

DA

Y
56

Format: Email/Call

Objective: Communicate your decision.

Let candidates know your decision. Thank those that did not receive an offer for considering your company and for their patience during the process. Encourage them to join your talent community by connecting with your organization on social media and subscribing to your newsletter for updates on other job openings.

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Conclusion.

Keep in mind that every candidate is unique, regardless of where they fall in the recruitment cycle; each individual will require specific nurturing tactics to stay engaged. **Templatize and automate your candidate nurturing efforts when you can, but remain flexible and agile** — you'll need to adjust your approach to meet the needs of each candidate.

This doesn't mean you should overhaul every email and interaction. Rather, add personalization elements and details from past conversations to show candidates you paid attention and value their consideration.

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