

HOW TO  
**FIND & RECRUIT  
PASSIVE  
CANDIDATES**  
THAT RAISE THE QUALITY OF YOUR HIRES

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EXACTA RESEARCH LTD.



A LITTLE NOTE FROM

# EXACTA RESEARCH

This paper is intended to provide advice and guidance to internal recruiters. We know you're experts in recruitment so this is certainly not a "how to suck eggs" guide. Instead, we've focused on our area of expertise; finding, engaging and hiring the passive candidate.

Below we have included a short introduction to who we are, without giving you a sales pitch as this isn't a sales brochure. We hope this provides enough information to inform you of what we do and where you can find us if you require our support.

Here at Exacta Research, we have a team of skilled researchers that specialise in finding and engaging with the hard to find candidates by penetrating the passive candidate market.

We work closely with our clients to understand their requirements and design a sourcing strategy to locate the best talent. And then deliver this.

We do this by using a range of techniques that we have tried and tested in the thousands of roles we have handled, across all markets and industries. In simple terms, we know what works and we deliver results.

Our services are divided into 4 key areas:

**Talent Engagement**

**Talent Pipeline**

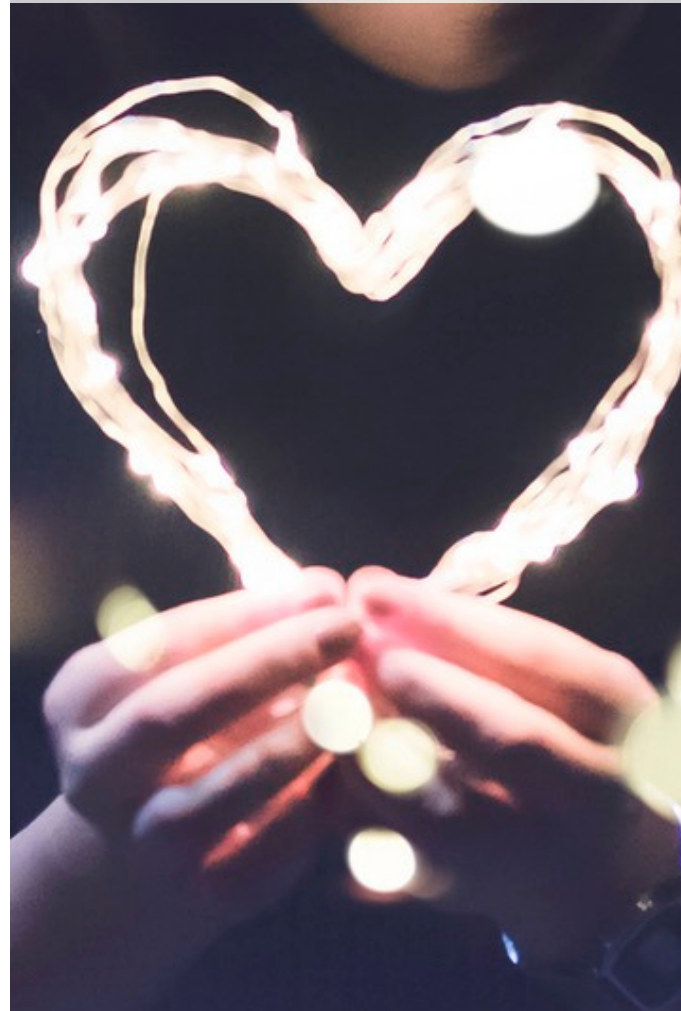
**Market Insights**

**Recruitment Process Management**

For a confidential discussion or for more information please get in touch by calling 0800 085 6618.

*Add a little bit of body text*

PEOPLE ARE THE  
HEART OF A  
BUSINESS



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A satellite image of a powerful hurricane or tropical cyclone. The storm features a well-defined eye and a dense, swirling cloud structure. It is positioned over a dark blue ocean, with a lighter brownish-tan landmass visible in the upper left corner. The overall image has a high-contrast, dramatic feel.

PRESSURE RISE

# FORECAST FOR HR



# PRESSURE DIAL

If you're working within HR or Recruitment at the moment, I imagine the pressure dial is turning up. Recruitment challenges such as talent shortages, the skills gap and increased competition, can sometimes make you feel like you're fighting a losing battle.

But, there is a way.



According to a recent report, 66% of recruiting teams will remain the same size or decrease in 2017. With the hope of adding another recruiter to your team fading away, your work volume certainly isn't fading. In the UK, it is estimated that 58% of teams will see an increase in their hiring volume. However, two-thirds of organisations believe their recruitment budget will not increase this year. The recruitment challenges for HR and recruitment teams are clear to see. More jobs to be handled by the same number of team members and no increase in budget. However, don't go running for the hills just yet, there is a better way.



Not only are HR and recruitment teams under pressure, but the budget is too. A staggering **30%** of budgets are spent on job boards and advertising. Unsurprisingly, **22%** is spent on recruitment agencies. But, when the budget is under so much pressure, are these the best methods to gamble your time and resources?

Advertising and recruitment agencies have one thing in common. They predominately target the active candidate market. These are the candidates that are proactively searching for a new role. They're reading all the job boards, registered with the agencies and are active on social media. Your competition is aware of them, and they're trying to attract them too. You run the risk of spending lots of money attracting them and then losing them through a counter offer from your competitor. It's every recruiter's nightmare and a daily reality for many. Before you put your head in your hands, there is another way.

Target the passive candidate market. It's huge; 75% of the candidate market is passive. It's full of high-quality candidates. And you'll have less competition for these candidates.

You may think that they're passive so that they won't be interested in a new role. Yes, this could be true. After all, they're happy, content and motivated in their current role. However, a LinkedIn Talent Trend survey showed that only 15% of the candidate market are completely satisfied in their role, and wouldn't want to move. Therefore, if you do your research and carefully select the right potential candidates to approach, the chances are they'll listen.

It makes sense that when you are experiencing pressure on time, budget and resources, to use the strategic and targeted approach of looking at the passive candidate market.

Sources; Global Recruiting Trends 2017 LinkedIn Talent Solutions, LinkedIn Talent Trends 2014



WHAT DOES THE TERM

# **PASSIVE CANDIDATE** REALLY MEAN?



Working in recruitment, you will have heard and even used the term “passive candidate” but what does it mean? And more importantly, why does it matter if a candidate is passive or not?

These terms are vital in every recruitment plan. Recruiters, Headhunters and HR Directors need to use alternative techniques, methods, and strategies to find, manage and hire the passive candidate. To do this, a thorough understanding of the difference between an active and passive candidate is required.

The basic definition of a passive candidate is a person who is not actively seeking a new role. Usually, because they are happy and content in their current role. Glossy job adverts in publications or colourful ads on job boards will not be seen by these candidates. A futuristic and attractive website with detailed case studies about how your firm are fantastic to work for, will not be seen by these candidates. The recruitment consultant, promising you five “amazing” CVs by tomorrow evening, will not know about this person.

Passive candidates need to be found, and this is not always easy. They are not attracted (at the beginning of the process anyway).

Active candidates are easier to find. They are actively seeking a new opportunity. They are reading job advertisements and will see your clever branded advertising. They'll be reading your website and looking at the benefits sections with delight. They'll be known by the recruitment consultants and will happily agree for their CV to be sent to you.

They may be active for many reasons; often these are based on factors such as:

- Concerns regarding the stability of the company they work for.
- They desire additional responsibilities or better benefits.
- They are unhappy in their current working environment.

The active candidate is open to new opportunities and proactively looking for a new position. They are easier to find. It may be tempting to focus your recruitment plans on the active candidate market, but by doing this, you will be ignoring 75% of the candidate market. 75% of potential candidates are happy, motivated and content working hard to deliver results for their employers. They're not looking for opportunities, but the vast majority will be willing to talk or consider an opportunity if it's attractive.

If it's attractive. This is a key phrase. What will need to be remembered throughout the recruitment cycle is that you found the passive candidate. They didn't express an interest in you. Your recruitment strategy will need to be formed around this fact. The initial contact with the passive candidate must be professional, appropriate and engaging to create interest, curiosity, and excitement. Asking this candidate to go online and fill in your application form won't work for the passive candidate. It may work for the active candidate.

Breaking the differences down between the active and passive candidate will enable you to create a sourcing strategy for each.

Ignore the passive candidate at your peril.

WHERE TO FIND THE

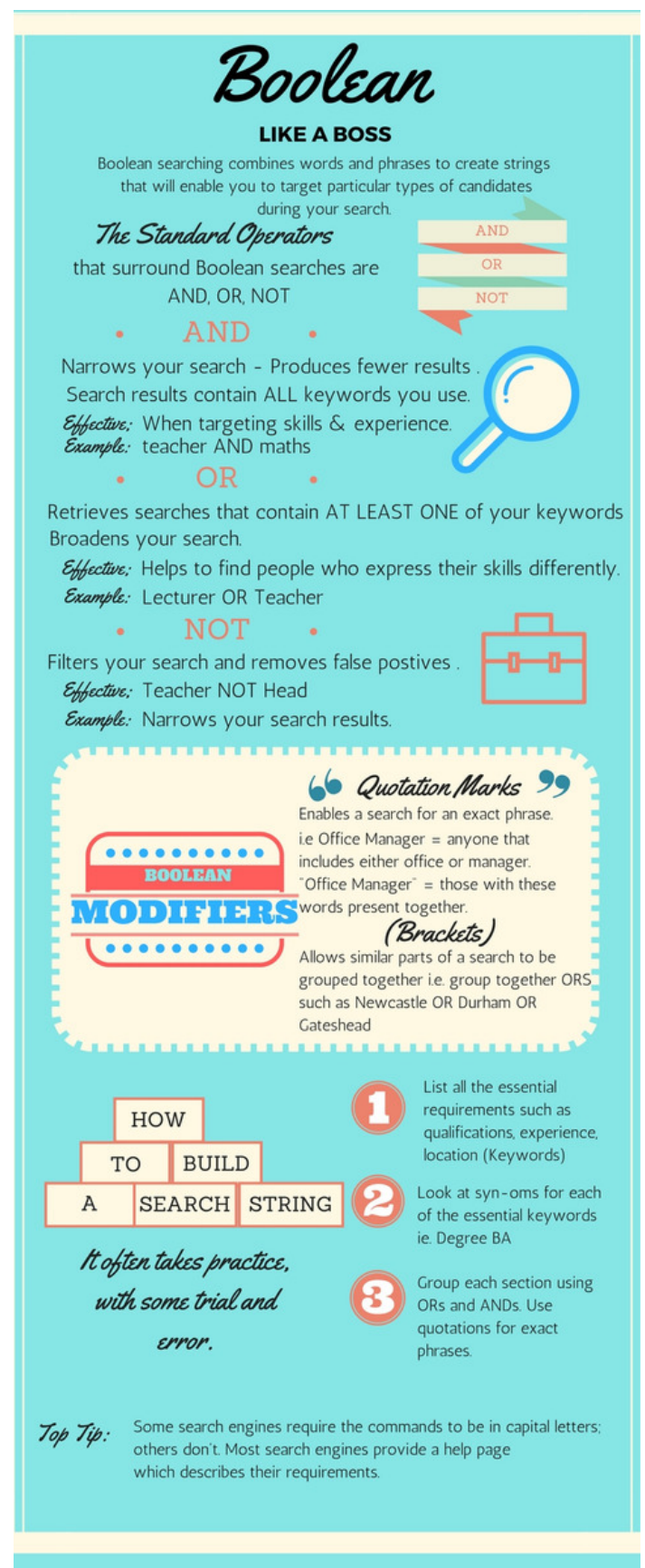
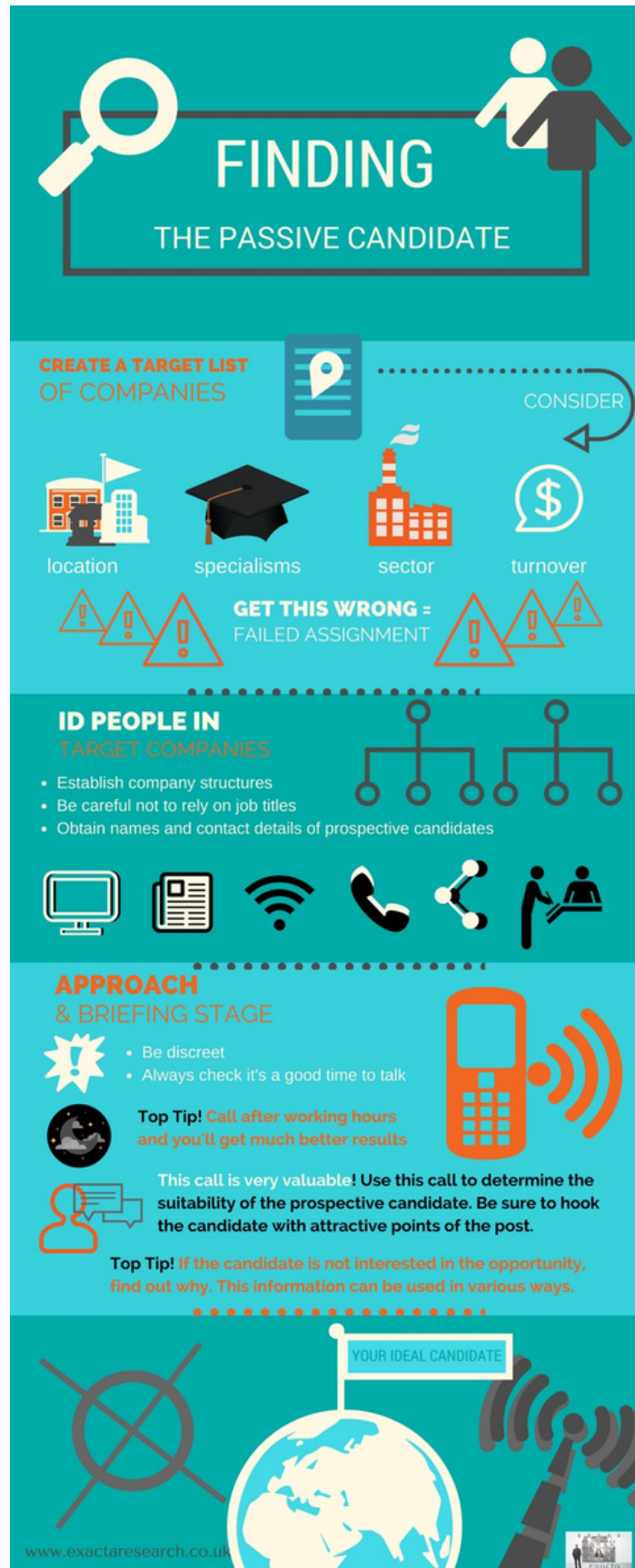
# PASSIVE CANDIDATE





To find the passive candidate, a strategic and targeted approach needs to be adopted.

Before you jump in, make a plan and keep your targets and objectives in mind.



A combination of desk-based research, telephone and online research will enable you to take a thorough look at the passive candidate market.

These infographics will give you further guidance.





MAKE IT

**ROSY**  
EVERYTIME



At Exacta, we are in quite a unique situation as we get to talk to the passive candidate market, every day.

Why does that matter, I hear you say. Well, these are people who aren't reading your job adverts, visiting your careers page or registered with the agencies on your PSL. So chances are you might never speak to them. However, aren't you curious as to why they're not beating your door down with a stick to work for you? Sure, they might be happy where they are, but perhaps, just perhaps there are other reasons.

When we talk to passive candidates, quite often, with a little work, we get to the route of what the passive candidate's perceptions are of your roles and company brand, and possibly, your competitors too.

This information can be an eye opener. Moreover, it can help you understand why a role has been particularly hard to fill. Armed with this information, you can make changes such as to the salary, responsibilities, career progression and so on. However, lately, we have noticed that the role has not been the issue. The role could be all singing and dancing, but candidates can still be put off throwing their hat into the ring. Quite often, this is down to candidate management.

Let me explain further by outlining a discussion one of our Research Consultants had a couple of weeks ago, with a passive candidate.

Our Researcher was working on finding candidates for a very specialist role, and she described these candidates as "gold dust". She had identified a small pool of suitable candidates and had progressed to the approach stage.



As we all know, engaging the passive candidate can be tricky, but our Consultant does this every day and is well skilled at this, but even she was shocked by the response of the first candidate.

When we told the candidate the company we working on behalf of, he suddenly changed direction and was no longer open to a conversation.

What was the reason for this? The candidate had interviewed with that company many years ago, just after graduating, and had never heard back from the interview, in which he had travelled over 100 miles to.

Whether you think that is a good reason or not to dismiss a job opportunity is a moot point. It had annoyed him so much that he had formed a negative opinion of that company and brand. Years later when he possessed the skills the company was crying out for, he wouldn't consider them.

In this technological age, people's opinions, thoughts and experiences are often shared online, where your brand can be further damaged.

Poor candidate management can affect your recruitment and brand perception for years to come.





# THE **CANDIDATE'S** JOURNEY

Providing a first class recruitment experience for your candidates is vital, as we explored in our last blog ([read here](#)). Brand reputation and future recruitment opportunities can be severely affected by a poor process, and the damage can be irreversible.

For our roles as Research Consultants in the recruitment industry, we talk to candidates every day and we hear their positive and negative experiences. We've pulled this information together to give you our 5 top tips to help ensure that all your candidates have a positive experience during your recruitment processes.



### **1. Keep in touch**

This one sounds simple and obvious, and it is, but when you have a hundred pressing matters to deal with it can be too easy to put it off until tomorrow. We all know the predictable saying, tomorrow never comes. Thought needs to be given to what stages of your processes would be appropriate for touch points. For example, it would be impossible to keep contact with every individual that has applied or expressed an interest in the post. A quick phone call to the five people you have interviews arranged with, a couple of days beforehand to check they have all the information needed, etc. .

### **2. Make them feel valued**

With targets to reach, demanding hiring managers and deadlines looming, it can be very easy to focus solely on the business needs. It's all too easy to put aside the thoughts of the candidates spending hours researching your company, pulling together presentations and taking time out from their jobs, friends or families to prepare for your recruitment process. Candidates need to be made to feel valued and appreciated. Provide an experience that leaves all candidates, successful or not, feeling that it was a positive experience and worth their time and effort.

### **3. Walk in the candidate's shoes**

To understand how candidates feel as they move through your recruitment experience, you have to walk in their shoes. Apply for a job through your organisation and work through the process. This will give you excellent insights, and you'll be able to experience any parts that cause negativity, issues or highlight areas to improve. Of course, this can be challenging, as you can feel precious about your processes but it's important to leave all biased opinions at the door and look through the eyes of your candidates.

### **4. Ask candidates for feedback**

I'm sure many of you have read or seen the argument in the press for feedback from employers to become law. We visited this in our last blog and discussed why feedback is vital for both parties. However, feedback can and should be a two-way process. Ask the candidates their feedback on your organisation and recruitment process. This is an excellent opportunity to gain valuable insights and gather the candidate's perceptions. Grouped together and evaluated, this can be extremely useful.

### **5. Be time critical**

This is a bugbear for many candidates, and we see this often too. We understand that in business, things can change. Priorities can shift, and roles become on the back burner.

Understandably, this can be hugely frustrating for a candidate, especially when they've been told that they'll receive a phone call or contact within a specified period. It's important to manage the candidate's expectations and advise them what will happen next, and when. If this changes, let them know. Keep them in the loop, not in the dark.

Providing an exceptional recruitment process can be tricky at times. It needs to be standardised so that it is fair to all, yet each candidate is an individual and may view things differently from their peers. It is also true that the process may have been seamless, but if a person was expecting to get a job and was pipped to the post, they may still feel negative about the journey. The best we can do is to try to provide a recruitment experience that will leave the majority of candidates feeling satisfied, valued and appreciated.





WHEN YOU NEED

# EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Although many businesses have skilled recruiters in-house, it is still advisable to consult with or work with an external source who is a specialist in this area. The benefits of this include;

**Market knowledge.** Those working in the recruitment field often leave and breathe recruitment. They constantly have their ear on the ground and network continually to ensure they have the latest market knowledge and data.

**Extended reach.** Top talent can be difficult to find. The best people aren't looking at company websites, job boards or reading job advertisements. Therefore the passive candidate market must be penetrated to find the best.

**Strategic skills.** Most in the recruitment industry invest in the latest technology and training to ensure staff have access to the best tools. By working with them, you can access these tools and skills on a short term basis, without carrying the burden of the cost.

**Time Resource.** In-house recruitment teams often have a varied and busy workload. Use support to relieve some of that burden and deliver candidates to you that match your specifications instead of spending a lot of your time dealing with those candidates that don't.

There are a range of options to consider when consulting support. One size may not fit all so it's important to carefully consider what would work best for each particular role. The options include;

**Recruitment Agencies** There are a range of agencies from small boutique agencies to large high street agencies, consisting of recruiters running their own desk. They manage the full cycle of the vacancy and often handle multiple vacancies at one time. They usually charge a placement fee if they fill the vacancy which is calculated on a percentage of the role's salary.

**Head-hunter** This is usually a person who is retained to fill a specific, high-level role. They work similar to recruiters as they usually manage the lifecycle of the role but often actively target the client's competitors to find candidates.

**Executive Researcher:** A specialist researcher works within an Executive Research team. They are skilled in finding and engaging with the passive candidate. Those candidates that are not listed on databases, talent pools or replying to adverts. Researchers are skilled in data retrieval and work by understanding the client's needs and designing and implementing a strategy to locate and identify them. Researchers usually work on a daily rate basis.





Exacta Research Ltd.

[www.exactaresearch.co.uk](http://www.exactaresearch.co.uk)

0800 085 6618

[info@exactaresearch.co.uk](mailto:info@exactaresearch.co.uk)

36-40 Scotswood Road  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE4 7JD

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