

Finding Human Capital:

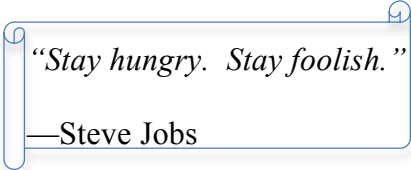
How to Recruit the Right People for Your Organization

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Part One

On Campus



“Stay hungry. Stay foolish.”

—Steve Jobs

My “Three Ps” of business are People, Products, and Profits. People come first for a reason, because without great people, you can’t hope to sell products and make profits. Let’s face it—without people, you don’t *have* a business.

Recruiting the *right* people is about finding talent, using innovation. You need fresh ideas in order to build relationships. When looking for new hires, the perfect place to begin your search is where aptitude, willingness, and the desire to connect abound: at colleges and universities.

Know this: College students are ambitious and motivated and ready to prove themselves, so approach them when they’re primed to impress and excited to enter the workforce. If you look at a lot of large, successful companies, you’ll find that many top executives started in internship programs or were discovered on college campuses. I was recruited when I was a senior at Villanova University; I simply showed up for an open, on-campus interview that had been promoted at my fraternity, and I was hired on the spot. Looking back, I was hungry for a career, and still foolish enough to believe it would be easy. There was much I had yet to learn, but I already understood the importance of capitalizing on opportunities.

Now, as a veteran in the financial services industry, I know just how important recruiting in general can be for a business. But *campus* recruiting is still my passion. Without it, I wouldn't be here telling you about it.

Why Campus Recruiting?

- Has a low **price point** for recruiters.
- Builds **relationships** and familiarity early; college students are your future constituents.
- Keeps a steady **incoming labor force** in an industriesy with a rapid rate of change and turnover.
- Builds your **brand**, generates **publicity**, and boosts **goodwill** for your company.

When recruiting at colleges and universities, it is crucial to present your brand in a way that's **engaging**, **competitive**, and **equally beneficial** for both you or your company and the student or students you want to get involved. Over the years, I've developed some unique models for recruitment based on these principles. That said, the following ideas are just that: *ideas*. Like them or not, the goal is to help you think creatively, and to empower you to generate your own methods for recruiting new talent.

Please Note: All these ideas have, however, been tried and tested, and have proved effective! I will never, ever advise anyone to do something I haven't already done myself.

HALFTIME HALF-COURT CHALLENGE

The half-court shot strategy is one I've run several times, and it's unique in that it combines two important and engaging concepts—**spectatorship** and **competition**—in an upbeat environment.

Surrounded by peers, faculty members, and coaches at a college basketball game, two student spectators will get a chance to win a prize of your company's choosing by attempting a buzzer-beater from the middle line of the court. The half-court shot event is one in which everybody wins: The attendees—especially the shooters—enjoy themselves, and you and your company benefit by achieving the following:

- Generating **goodwill** and **notoriety** for your organization.
- Helping your company to **gain leverage** on campus for the future (*think*: familiarity with professors, classroom presentations, informal interviews...).
- **Impacting your community** by doing something different to generate interest in the activity, the school, and ultimately, your company.
- Overall **networking**—with faculty and students, as well as other adults attending the event.

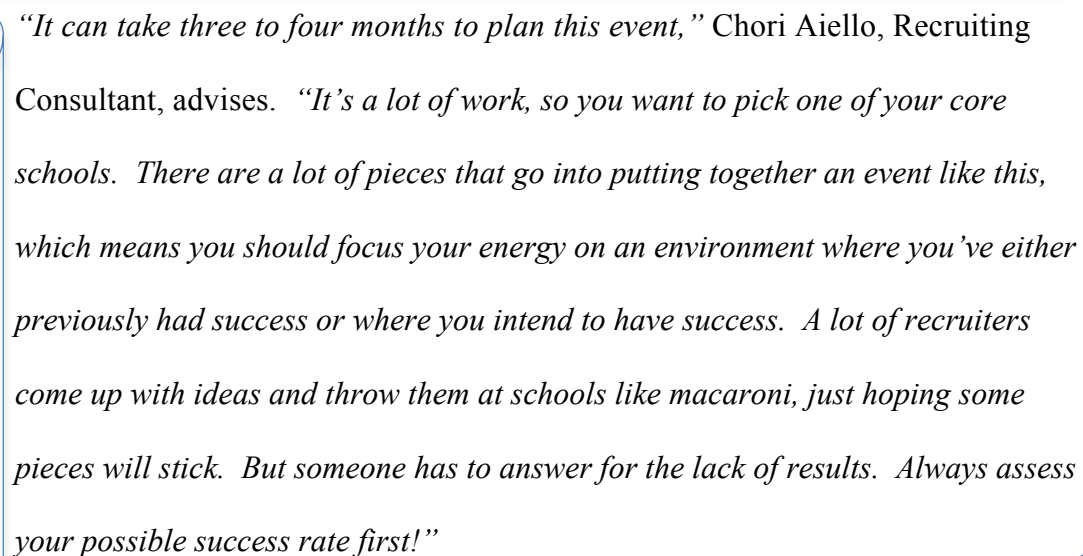
And while the goal may not be for *you* to have a good time, I guarantee that the energy and enthusiasm of the students and faculty members will pull you in to something worth your while, even if there's no evidence of any other benefit right away.

Here's how to get started:

- **Make Contact.** Call the school's athletic department to share your plan and find out game schedules; try both the Director's and Marketing offices.
- **Pick and Secure Insurance Products as Your Prize.** An example is to have available a total of \$10,000 worth of products (a \$5,000 possible insurance award for each of two selected shooters). This is actually an affordable option (i.e. it's cheaper than buying \$10,000 worth of other prizes *and* it's tax deductible—you should consult your tax advisor first, of course) but the number itself will grab the audience's attention.
- **Build Buzz.** Promote the event well in advance to guarantee that the game is well attended. Coordinate a marketing plan with the school to place ads in the paper or on the radio and send out email blasts, and/or work with an outside promotional planning company.
- **Choose Your Shooters.** When students enter the gym, ask each of them to complete a data entry card. During the first time-out of the game, announce two shooters (via a drawing of the cards) and ask them to report immediately to a meeting spot in the gym. After a few qualifying questions and a signed waiver—your company will most likely have some criteria on who can and cannot shoot—the students will be able to take their shots at halftime. While you'll select only two shooters, you will have loads of data cards, and this will be good for prospecting clients, as well.

Bonus Idea #1: Provide T-shirts at the game. Include the school logo and your company's information. To go the extra step, create a few custom shirts (in several sizes) for the two students who will take the half-court challenge (even if they miss). Customization is key! *Please Note:* Do not put dates on the shirts, so you can save any you don't give away for next semester!

Bonus Idea #2: Hold a thirty-minute seminar with the school's athletes prior to the event. The career center can help you to promote this. *Please Note:* Always bring interview sign-up sheets with you to seminars like these. You never know who you might meet.



"It can take three to four months to plan this event," Chori Aiello, Recruiting Consultant, advises. "It's a lot of work, so you want to pick one of your core schools. There are a lot of pieces that go into putting together an event like this, which means you should focus your energy on an environment where you've either previously had success or where you intend to have success. A lot of recruiters come up with ideas and throw them at schools like macaroni, just hoping some pieces will stick. But someone has to answer for the lack of results. Always assess your possible success rate first!"

SALES CONTEST

Let me be forthcoming: I have had a variety of experiences holding sales contests on campuses, and they ranged from giant victories to disappointing failures. But I promise you that the potential for victory with this model outweighs the possibility of failure, however disappointing. Contests differentiate your brand from the bland presentations of your competition, and this helps to generate more awareness about your company all across campus—particularly among the ambitious students you would be looking to recruit.

While you can't prevent every pitfall or misstep when implementing this idea, you can be diligent in your planning. Here is a checklist of pre-contest steps that you could use:

- **Become an expert in the campus culture.** What are the students like? What is the college or university's message? Customize your contest to the environment to ensure it is appropriate for these students. Create unique, eye-catching, information-gathering cards to pass out at all prior career fairs, events, and presentations in order to get to know the students and faculty.

Tip: You might encounter resistance from schools—some institutions have specific objections to contests with prizes. Do your research early to make sure your target school isn't one of these institutions. And if your target or core school *is* one? Don't discount this institution just because you can't give a prize. Instead ask what kinds of rewards the school *will* allow and work with staff to come up with a solution that makes everyone comfortable and happy.

- **Hone in on the right students.** Campus career centers may or may not be your ideal starting point, so save time and headaches by going straight to the source of future interns and employees: classes on business, entrepreneurship, or marketing (or courses that combine two of these concentrations), and business and/or sales/marketing fraternities. Also, don't be afraid to approach fraternities, sororities, or clubs *not* associated with these majors. Students majoring in other disciplines may still have talent to offer the financial, entrepreneurship, and marketing industries.

Tip: When I interview students, I ask them who their most impactful faculty members are, and then I request permission to contact these professors, advisors, or coaches. This is often how I've been able to easily choose the class or organization best suited for a sales contest.

- **Build interest in competition.** It's helpful if you can make a presentation to the right class or organization about the contest beforehand (*think:* PowerPoint or a short video). The presentation, fueled by your presence, will inspire students to brainstorm and research, and will get them excited to participate in the contest. At the same time, your prompt will challenge them to think about the real-world on-the-job situations that professors often gloss over.

Tip: Follow up with email blasts and class announcements to sustain interest.

Bonus Idea #1: Ask for permission to have the department chair present at all classes and groups that are business, sales, marketing, or entrepreneurial orientated.

Bonus Idea #2: Ask to have an information table in the student center to promote the contest on *at least three occasions* prior to event.

Bonus Idea #3: Ask all the potential participants to take an online test before the contest. For a narrower pool of contestants, choose only the students who score best to compete.

Now that you have a handle on the *who*, it's time to figure out the *what* of your contest. *Whatever* you decide to do, it should incite creativity, and the prize should be enticing enough that students will be eager to work toward trying to win it.

Sample Contest #1:

- Pick a product and have the students give sales presentations on said product.
- Select a Leadership Team to score the presentations and choose a winner.
- Award a prize with monetary value or prestige (*think:* \$1,000 cash gift card or one to be used at the college bookstore or local restaurant, tickets to a sporting or pop-culture event; invitation to your agency leaders' dinner).
- On your company's website, show clips of the participant presentations so students can (1) see firsthand their involvement in your company, and (2) retain interest in learning more about your company's career opportunities.

Sample Contest #2:

- Ask students to create an ad or commercial for a product.
- Have the entire class vote for the winner.

- Award a prize that gives the winner notoriety or résumé-boosting material (*think*: posting the winning ad or commercial on your office’s website or YouTube channel). The student now has a tangible example of his or her work to include in his/her portfolio.

Bonus Idea #1: Offer all contestants a free résumé review from a recruiting professional.

College students are always looking to beef up and improve their CVs, and from the review, you can also assess if any of the students are worthy candidates for an impromptu or scheduled interview.

Bonus Idea #2: For any student who exceeds expectations and shows serious potential as a future intern or employee, consider awarding an interview as the prize.

Bonus Idea #3: Contact the school news channel or radio station about playing a clip of the winning presentation. If the contest is a big success, you can also use this video and/or audio to promote your next contest the following semester or year.

It’s paramount for recruiters to remember to leave the ball in the court of the candidates (in this case, the students). You want to put opportunities out there to be snatched up by the willing and able—not to persuade anyone to like the career, or your company. Ideally, you still want young candidates to convince *you* to hire *them*.

“Recruiting should be done with a ‘velvet rope appeal’. If we truly understand how great this career is, and how large the marketplace is...then we shouldn’t be in the position of ‘selling’ the career to any candidates. They should be in the position of selling us on why they believe they have what it takes to succeed.”

—Geoffrey Passehl, District Director

FRATERNITY AND SORORITY TALKS

For years, I have worked with fraternities and sororities, and as I mentioned earlier, my career began with my involvement in my own fraternity. Students who participate in Greek life tend to be social, adventurous, and loyal—the relationships formed in fraternities and sororities are long-term and recognizable across the country. A candidate pulled from this pool of individuals, then, is likely to bring these core values and personality traits to the workplace.

Keep in mind, though: *The Greek-life talks you give don't necessarily have to be about actual jobs!* Your discussions can be about interview skills (*think*: “Ten Things Not to Do During an Interview”), building a résumé, and other more universal and helpful topics.

And here's the *how*:

- **Go internal.** Ask your reps and employees if they were in a fraternity or sorority.
- **Make connections.** Contact the president of a local chapter and ask to sponsor the fraternity's or sorority's next monthly meeting.
- **Pick a location.** Sponsoring a meeting often means securing a spot that's fun and impressive (*think*: country club, executive club, restaurant, bowling alley, the picnic area at a minor league ballpark).
- **Hold your talk; then do reconnaissance.** Whatever your topic, make it engaging and interactive—student participation is wholly important. Then, distribute and collect your creative information-gathering cards in order to generate a file of potential future candidates.

Bonus Idea #1: In advance, inform the fraternity or sorority president that you're looking to secure at least two members from that specific chapter to join your company's team.

Bonus Idea #2: Bring an iPad to your talk, and offer students the Culture Index (www.cindexinc.com) test. You can index results instantly for the chapter members, allowing you to pinpoint the best candidates for interviews.

Bonus Idea #3: Take the sales contest ideas and bring them to the fraternities and sororities. Open a contest to one particular group, or make it a competition between two chapters (*think*: one sorority vs. one fraternity, and the winning group gets a pizza party, for example).

Ultimate Bonus For a one-winner sales contest in which students truly excel, reserve an internship space for the winning candidate.

INTERVIEWING OR RÉSUMÉ SEMINARS

One of the most well-attended events you could host on campus is a seminar on interviewing or résumé building. Offering career-enhancing strategies through interview-simulation or résumé-critiquing classes motivates students and helps them to become more formidable prospective candidates.

Your first step is to contact Career Services at the institution of your choice to set up the event. From there on out, use all or some of the suggestions that follow, depending on the topic(s) you choose:

- Conduct a workshop to teach students how to interview and/or how to write a résumé. Go over all the skills and techniques they need to have a successful interview, including appearance and body language.

- Organize role-playing. Ask sample interview questions.
- Provide and ask students to brainstorm ideas on how to create an outstanding résumé. Show them some samples of résumés that impress.

Bonus Idea #1: You may feel like you're giving without getting, but it's likely that in a class of twenty or more college students, you will discover some potential. Stay observant and take notes on the mock interviews, résumés, or ideas that stand out to you. If at all possible, set up same-day interviews with viable students, or schedule them for the near future.

Bonus Idea #2: If you're interested in offering interview practice or résumé-building sessions to a wider audience (*think*: not just targeting one class, but opening up the opportunity to all Marketing majors, for example), take out an ad in the school paper, or request that an *article* about your seminar appear in that same paper. This will generate publicity and build interest among the student body.

GOOGLE HANGOUTS

These virtual conferences, a feature of Google+, can allow you to interact with students whether you're offering information (e.g. a résumé critique) or conducting interviews, both one-on-one and in group settings.

So what's in it for you, and what's in it for them?

- You can participate in a "Hangout" from your office, eliminating travel costs—especially if you're involved with a school that is not local.

- Hangouts are recordable, allowing you to analyze and refer to them after the fact. These recordings remain accessible and are useful to everyone involved, including the students, their professors, and you and your company.
- Hangouts give everyone the opportunity to utilize an up-and-coming conference technology, which simultaneously boosts your brand and gives the students relevant business experience.

But how should you initiate a formal and fruitful Google Hangout? Ask a professor to recommend five or fewer high-quality students (*think*: hardworking, driven, and social). While the Hangout can support up to ten users, too many participants can create chaos. To further streamline your first conference, assign one student as the leader. Hold a Hangout once or even twice per month, giving each student you've invited to the group an opportunity to lead. Always be looking to interview standout students in separate, private Hangouts immediately following group conferences. This way, you can get the recruitment ball rolling without ever moving out from behind your desk.

Bonus Idea #1: Post the best clips from your Hangouts on the office website and/or YouTube channel; they'll be perfect for your recruitment or internship sections.

Bonus Idea #2: Let the Hangout students know there is a "prize" for the strongest participant, and give the winner you choose a spot in your Office Open House, in which he/she can shadow a new rep, a veteran rep, or even a managing director. (Be sure to tell candidates who don't "win" that you may still want to invite them to further interviews.)

OFFICE OPEN HOUSE

For a real eligibility test, and still without leaving the office, take students out of their campus environment and invite them into your professional world. Many young candidates can thrive among peers in the comfort of their classrooms and clubs, but open up your workplace to these same potentials, and you'll get a more accurate picture of who, if anyone, will be a good fit for your company. By allowing students to shadow current employees, sit in on business presentations, and experience a day-in-the-life of your organization, you'll be giving them the chance to explore their options while giving *yourself* the chance to handpick high-caliber recruits.

To maximize your efforts:

- **Make it invite-only.** Handpick students for your open house by sport, major, class, or whatever other criteria you choose. Be realistic, and keep your numbers in check with your company. For every current employee participating in the open house, allow two to three students. Any more than that, and you'll have a three-ring circus in your office.
- **Select students from various pools.** It's always best to coordinate your open house with multiple schools (and, likewise, with multiple departments, athletic teams, and clubs) using multiple channels of communication (*think*: social media, current interns, former interns, and interviewees from the past two years). As a recruiter, this selection process will allow you to get to know and choose from a variety of candidates with different academic experiences, skill sets, and personalities. It will also allow the students you pick to interact with peers outside of their usual social and academic bubbles.

- **Plan to inform; be a mentor.** Prepare informational packets and hand them out at the open house. Answer students' questions, pose your own, and create an atmosphere in which they can envision themselves working not just for you, potentially, but for your organization as a whole.

Bonus Idea #1: Offer interviews on the spot—or, at least, schedule all attendees for initial interviews before they leave the building.

Bonus Idea #2: In advance, ask coaches or professors to offer rewards (*think:* extra credit in class, less running during practice, fifteen-minutes-late passes) to students who attend your open house.

RECRUITING PROGRAM FOR INTERNS

If you can bring them to your work, you can also send your work to them. So why not set up programs at colleges in which student interns can help you with some of your recruiting? You can, for instance, coordinate with schools so that students receive course credit in exchange for their internship. This is a valuable practice for two key reasons:

1. Students are rewarded with both networking potential and experience.
2. Your company gains free or inexpensive temporary labor and, possibly, some new long-term recruits in the recruitment interns themselves!

Charge your interns only with duties that will be of actual benefit to your company, but that they are also already fully qualified to complete (*think:* administrative work). Precisely *what* should you ask these interns to do?

- Mine the internet, create postings, schedule initial interviews or campus events.
- Set up talks or seminars in classes or clubs.

- Invite other students to complete profiling surveys.
- Conduct brief initial phone interviews.
- Write articles for the school paper about recruiting tips or recruiting in general.
- Help you identify where on campus to target your marketing dollars.

TAKEAWAYS! *FROM PART ONE*

“I rate enthusiasm even above professional skill.”

—Edward Appleton, Nobel Prize Winner

If you utilize only one piece of advice from this section, make it this: Get involved at colleges and universities, and build goodwill. Does the campus you’re targeting have a newspaper? A news channel? A radio station? Speak on a college panel about interviewing. Hold a workshop on networking. Just a single profound on-campus appearance, and students and professors will know you, endorse you, and refer you. Anything you can do to raise awareness of your company is an effective recruitment strategy. Positive, personal interactions with youth are even better, and will extend your overall reach on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. So when you become active in campus communities, you increase your footprint. You distinguish yourself, you enhance your credibility, and you inevitably recruit the next generation of employees for your company. *“As we age we can look back at our self-improvements and pinpoint someone who made us better,”* says Joanna L. Cole, Director of Campus Selection at Northwestern Mutual. *“Gravitate toward students who are going through the same journey, and who now need you to help guide and teach them.”*