

workwonders

# Referral Programs

More Creative Referrals



this works wonders!

# Referral Programs

## Make your referrals more creative

- Most referral programs are passive and cash reward driven
- Make them more proactive and value the contributions in a different way
- Nine creative ways of doing this (based on David Sullivan):
  1. Give me 5!
  2. Look for recognition
  3. Make it visible
  4. Other ways of rewarding
  5. Continuously attention
  6. Dare to ask others
  7. Improve your communication plan
  8. Make it work
  9. Other 'payments'



# Referral Programs

## 1. Give me Five!

- Approaches key individuals and ask them directly to help "build the team" by thinking back and providing the names of the five:
  - Best managers they have ever had
  - Best team leaders they have encountered or worked with
  - Best former employees they would like to see return
  - Best out-of-the-box thinkers
  - Best problem solvers
  - Best sales persons that consistently the competition in selling you
  - Best mentors of junior employees
  - Best people that worked well under pressure
  - Best team players/co-workers
  - Best forecasters
  - Best at a particular skill
  - Best professionals with international experience
  - Best people with diverse backgrounds
  - Best customer-service professionals encountered
- Plan a face-to-face meeting, individuals are more willing to provide names



# Referral Programs

## 2. Look for recognition

- Recognition is a powerful instrument.
- Recognition in a newsletter  
List the names of successful referrers prominently in your company newsletter. Where possible, try to write a profile of a few top referrers that includes tips and successful approaches.
- Thank-you calls  
Ask senior managers or even the most sr executive to directly call and thank individuals who made critical referrals
- Lunch with the 'CEO'  
When your people are excited about the opportunities to spend time with senior executives, get the CEO to agree to a quarterly luncheon for those who have successfully referred candidates.



# Referral Programs

## 3. Make it visible

- Post charts

Place charts or “thermometers” in places in and around your building to show the number of overall referrals that have been met.

- Distributing reports

When you have a company with competition, it might fit in your culture to distribute a report to all managers that ranks departmental performance on referrals.



# Referral Programs

## 4. Different ways of rewarding

- **"You may choose"**  
Ask the manager to give successful referrers "the choice " in an area that managers have discretion. This might include scheduling vacation, choice of a co-worker, preferred parking for a week or an opportunity to serve on a key project.
- **Appear in advertising**  
Work with the advertising department to allow individuals who successfully refer an opportunity to appear in regular company product advertising. Some individuals find this exciting; the cost to the firm is minimal.
- **Hold a contest**  
When it fits in your company culture: hold a contest among your employees to f.i. identify the best customer service people who they run across in their daily lives. A small prize can be given to the individual or the team that comes up with the most referral hires.
- **Manager's bonus**  
Make the effectiveness of their team's referral effort part of a manager's bonus criteria.



# Referral Programs

## 5. Continuously attention

- Make it part of any travel reimbursement

Seek out the person who runs your travel function and ask them to include a written statement in their communications with individuals who will soon attend conferences, seminars, or professional meetings. Request that the individual attending the conference accept responsibility for bringing back names of key individuals that they met at the event.

- Banner at the bottom of every email

Ask all employees to place a banner below their emails with a message like "Our company is looking for new employees. Please feel free and have a look at our open positions" with a link to the career site. Or even better specific vacancies or recruitment events.



# Referral Programs

## 6. Dare to ask others

- Ask new hires during orientation

During orientation ask new hires to provide you with the names of key individuals both from their previous firm and from other firms.

- Send a recruiting-culture message during orientation

During the orientation, make it clear that you have a "recruiting culture" and that "every employee is expected to be a recruiter."

- Ask interns

If you're looking for college hires, ask your interns to be "talent scouts" when they return to campus. Ask them to identify the best people in their classes.



# Referral Programs

## 7. Improve your communication plan

- Have a slogan

One of the best ways to excite employees about referrals is to give them a theme or a slogan, just like a marketing or advertising slogan. Slogans remind people of the reason why they're referring.

- Work with marketing

Because great marketing and advertising are critical to referral program success, it's important to build a partnership with these departments. I found that, when asked, they are more than willing to contribute time and resources for free. This is true in part because it gives them a chance to show their creativity and work inside the firm were everyone can see it.



# Referral Programs

## 8. Make it work!

- Build the business case for line managers

The primary roadblock to the success of any referral program is that managers don't see the impact that referrals have on their bottom lines. Work with the CFO's office to develop statistics to demonstrate the dollar impact that higher referral rates have.

- Set targets

Sometimes if it fits in your culture just raising expectations can cause an increase in referrals. For example, if you give each manager a target or quota for their team, quite often that serves as a sufficient motivator to increase referrals from that team.

- Hire an intern to run it

Though maybe not the first choice, let interns manage a significant part of the referral programs. Interns tend to be so excited and enthusiastic that they actually produce better results than recruiters who could see the assignment as a negative.



# Referral Programs

## 9. "Other payments"

- **Provide a cheap gift**  
Rather than a large cash reward, provide employees who successfully refer a \$25 gift card, free movie tickets for the whole family, or something similar.
- **Vacation day**  
Develop a program that gives a free Friday or Monday off for a successful referral on a key position or give the day off after three or five successful referrals.
- **Drawings or raffles**  
Rather than giving individual bonuses, cut down your overall costs by offering a periodic drawing once a quarter for a fabulous trip, automobile lease, or other glamorous prize. This cause much excitement and result in a very good referral rates, provided that the prize is sufficiently exciting and the marketing is good enough to keep everyone aware of the contest.
- **Referral dinner**  
Hold a once- or twice-a-year dinner to celebrate those who have made successful referrals. If you can afford it, allowing spouses or family to attend can also be a nice touch, and you could also ask them to be referral sources.



workwonders



this works wonders!

[info@workwonders.nl](mailto:info@workwonders.nl)  
[www.workwonders.nl](http://www.workwonders.nl)