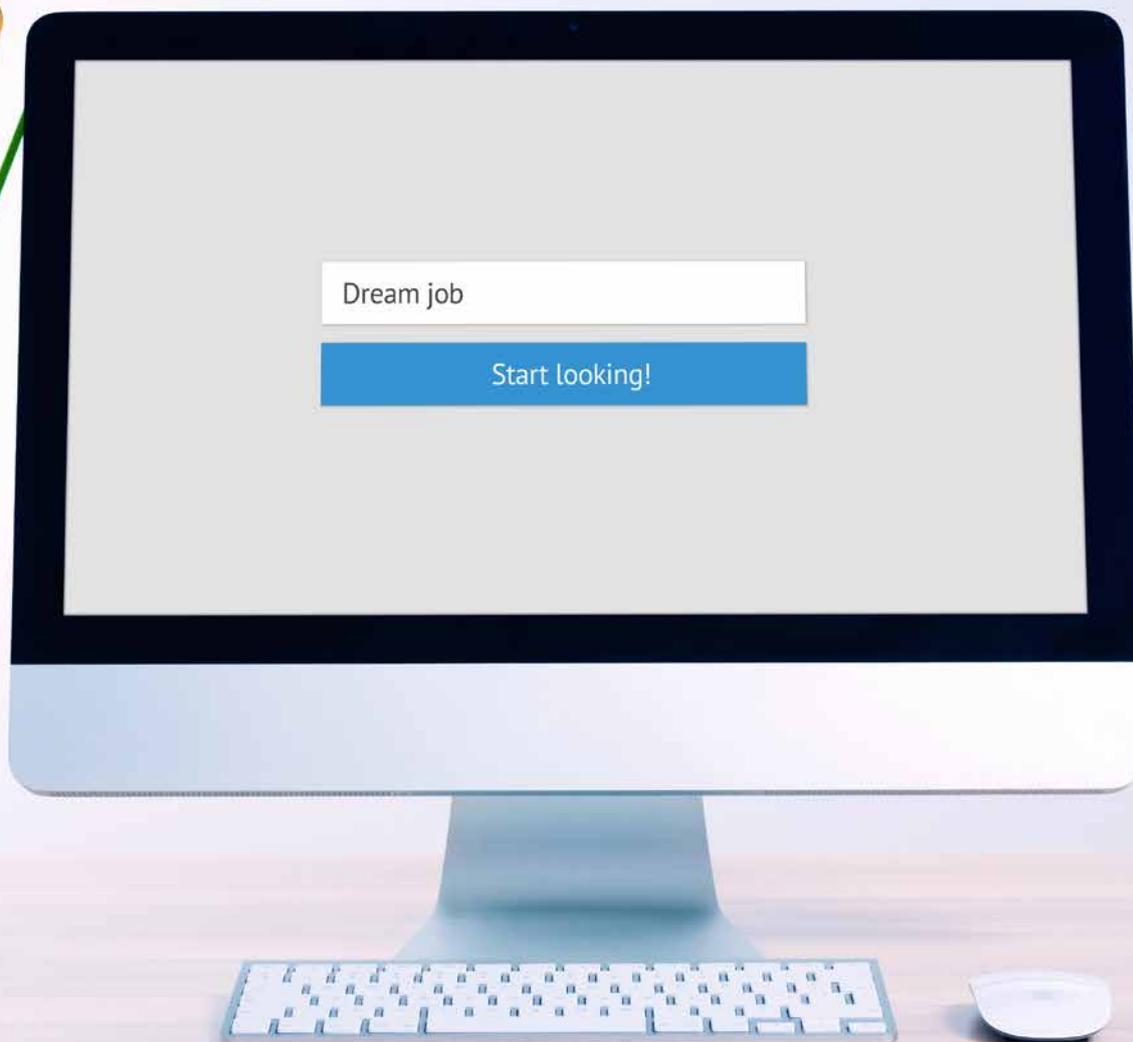# CAREERTEAM

Recruiting in the digital age

How to attract top talents to your business

1. Recruiting in Transition:
Get into the net

Earlier, it was comparatively easy. A company switched on a job advertisement and waited. Applications began arriving, usually sufficiently enough; one sifted through, selected, invited the candidates, conversed with them, took a fancy to them - or not, maybe there were trial days or assessment centers, the boss made a decision, task done. Welcome to the job.

Today the whole deal has become more complex - a consequence of the digital transformation that is already underway and has profoundly changed both the economy and society. The associated transformation processes confront companies with significant trials and tribulations, which everyone knows about, but it does not make any difference: If you want to remain successful in the long term, you must rise to this challenge and master it.

> **(!) SHORTAGE OF SKILLED PERSONNEL**
>
> In 2015 alone there were **43,000 vacancies for IT Professionals**.

Skilled Personnel Shortages and „War for Talent

One of these challenges is to have appropriate employees who help shape this very important process. Competent, motivated, dynamic employees, at all levels, from trainees to management, and in various professional fields, from IT professionals such as software developers, security experts, and project managers, to online marketing experts, just to name some of the most important. Even recruiting is affected.

Only: Where do we get them? Applicants no longer come in droves. Rather, businesses in some areas are finding barely enough suitable candidates.
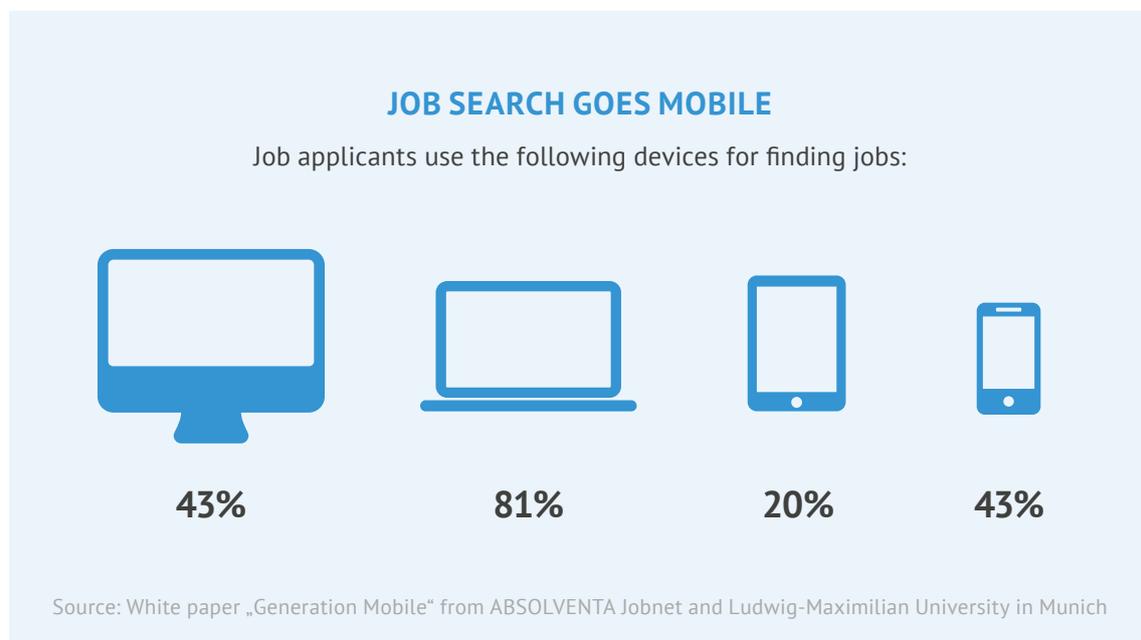
On the one hand it is here where the shortage of skilled personnel is made apparent. Especially in the digital industry more specialists are currently needed than the market has to offer, and can present as talent. In addition, in the process of digitalisation there are always new professions appearing and it is necessary to fill new jobs and positions that did not even exist a few years ago, and for which there is no systematic training.

So the few good ones in the industry are fought over and it does not look as if this will change a lot in the near future. On the contrary: The „war for talent" could get even worse.

On the other hand a seemingly unbridgeable gap has also emerged: Many companies are no longer reaching the young target group, since they appear to no longer speak their language. Even established businesses find that vacancies, even apprenticeships, are not optimally filled or even filled at all, because there are hardly any responses to the relevant adverts, or the applicant does not have the necessary qualifications. *„A job advertisement causes, in the long run, almost more work than it saves."* says Christian Bicker from the recruitment agency Career Team in Berlin. In the end, you also have to concern yourself with these candidates, and then at least turn them down.

Job search in the Internet

You cannot do this today with classical methods such as job advertisements in print media or having a stand at a job fair. It no longer attracts the coveted talent; it does not even reach them. And why? Because it does not correspond to their every day reality, their lifestyle. This generation is constantly online, always mobile reachable, and networked all over. Unlike many companies they are already living the digital transformation in their daily lives: They exchange online - via WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and the like. They inform themselves online, go shopping online, utilise streaming music and movies, find their homes online, book tickets and travel online, and all this is no longer just using a computer, but also increasingly from smartphones and tablets. They often even work online. **Is it then not surprising that the young talents, especially those in the digital industry, also search for jobs online?** They honestly expect that businesses make their jobs accessible online and that the process runs smoothly and is as simple as possible.

JOB SEARCH GOES MOBILE

Job applicants use the following devices for finding jobs:

43%	81%	20%	43%

Source: White paper „Generation Mobile" from ABSOLVENTA Jobnet and Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich

Most companies are not this advanced. While there are pioneers who have understood this and are already implementing it, especially digital market leaders such as Facebook, Amazon or Google, many still urgently need to catch up. Because the trend is clear: The entire job application process is shifting increasingly into the Internet, which the above-mentioned white paper „Recruiting Trends 2016" shows.

This is not enough, as it is currently still to be seen that proven offline methods are simply transferred unchanged into the Internet, and placed as a job advert with an online job portal. Often it is not even enough to publish the vacant positions at the same time on the company's website, and perhaps to spread it about via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Xing. You can indeed do all this, but something crucial is missing: Whosoever wants to attract the best person today for a vacant position, has to be actively networking. He should go to where the candidates are, whether on- or offline, engage them in conversation, speak directly to them; in short: use Active Sourcing; and he should work on his image as an employer.

> **! ACTIVE SOURCING**
>
> is the name for the direct approach to interesting candidates, maybe via CV database, social media and other networks.

Paradigm change: Companies as candidates

Without question the correct approach is important, but this will not work if the company image is poor. Employer Branding, therefore, becomes more important when trying to reach qualified young people. Here it is important to think differently, and, indeed, radically differently. This is because young talents come from a generation that is much pickier than previous generations ever were. They have different values, needs and demands, which should not be ignored by an employer, if he wants to win over the target group for himself. More on that later.

Here it is first important to understand that a company in the battle to win good people is not only on the „supply side", but also on the „demand side". **Today, it is not just the job seekers who are candidates for an employer, but also the employer - and herewith the whole company - who is a candidate for the job seeker.**

Although this is difficult for some to understand: Thither is the way. There are startups now that have already developed job portals that serve exactly this. The digital industry is a dynamic one.

Whosoever has internalised that companies need to give significantly more effort today to be at all interesting as an employer for the coveted target group is already ahead of the field. Often it is precisely this insight that is lacking. *„Even large companies are surprised that they are no longer attractive to specific audiences,"* says Hamburg Internet entrepreneur Thomas Promny of Velvet Ventures. *„This is particularly obvious to computer scientists. They are no longer much impressed by a big business brand."* With these other topics are of more importance: development opportunities in the job, creativity, work-life balance.

Match the actions to the target group

In order for employer branding and other recruiting measures to work, they must be tailored to the needs of the target group. A computer scientist puts values on things different to those of a marketing expert. Recruiters should therefore know their target group well.

It is advisable to deal more intensively with the so-called Generation Y. This has less to do with generalisations, but rather to learn to understand what drives them, and why. In addition, recruiters are well advised to familiarise themselves with the current state of technology in the Internet and to use it as much as possible within their means. Then they can meet the candidates at eye level and achieve a rapprochement.