Compete with the Private Sector:

Government Recruiting that Attracts Tech Talent

None of us can do our jobs these days without technical support. Whether you're a private business or a public agency, it's simply impossible to function without the use of technology.

Introduction

The challenge is finding people who can support your technical initiatives. Since this talent pool is in such high demand, recruiting for such roles can be difficult. This is especially true for government organizations who compete with private sector employers for talent.

Combine this with budget constraints and special merit rules, and it's no wonder public sector employers, like you, can struggle to recruit tech talent.

But it's not an impossible feat. We've done the research, used our experience, and spoken to key professionals in the government industry to identify what people are doing to overcome this challenge. In this white paper, we'll share some of our key discoveries to help you attract more technical candidates and fill your technical roles.

1. Sell Candidates on your Opportunity
2. Use Alternative Advertising
3. Invest in Talent Retention

Sell Your Opportunity to Candidates
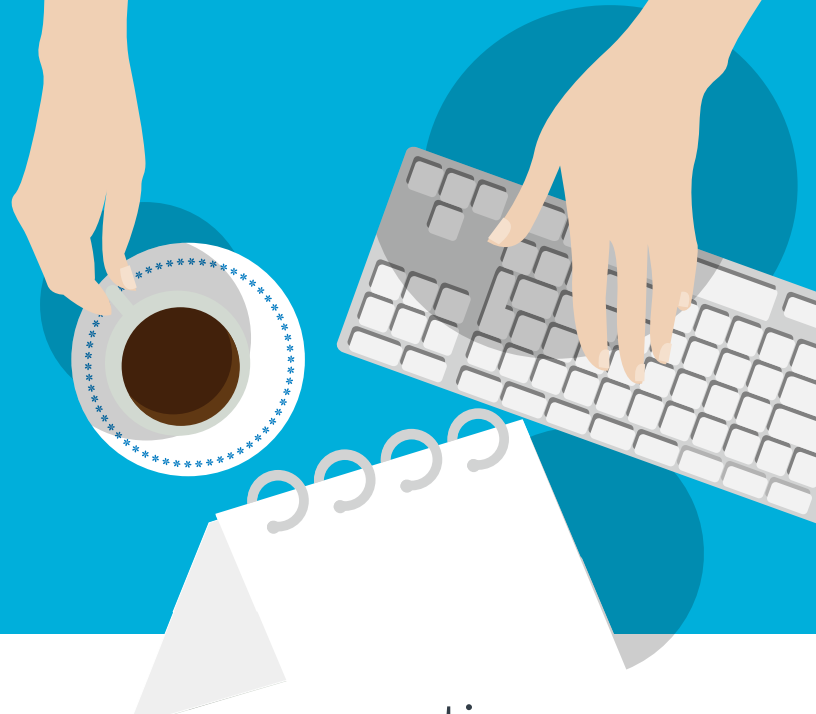
As a government employer, you understand the benefits of working in the public sector. Perhaps, it's what originally attracted you to the job and what makes you stay today.

So how can you entice tech talent to join a civil organization?

Sweeten your offer.

You shouldn't exaggerate your employment opportunity. That's never a good idea. Instead, we're suggesting that you use strategic positioning to make the offer stand out.

To make your offer more attractive to technical candidates, think mindfully about the target audience. What do they care about? What can you offer? What value does your opportunity bring?

> Our base pay may not the lead the market, but our benefits are better. We always try to lead with that to compete with private-sector.

Keely Farrow
Employment Services Manager
Maricopa County

We talk about growth opportunities and no travel. We found that some candidates don't want to commute across the U.S. or work with worldwide clients in different time zones.

Keith Poole
HR Supervisor
City of Phoenix

Focus on the aspects of government or public-sector jobs that other employers can't provide. Highlight what you bring to the table for technically-apt candidates, so you can position yourself as an employer of choice.

How can you position your offer so that it is attractive to tech talent?

Health & Retirement Benefits
Unlike many private-sector employers, you know you've got the best benefits in town. Put high emphasis on the perks you offer to attract more tech talent.

Stable Career
Some tech job seekers want to work for an employer, where they don't have to commute across the country or work with clients across the world. Highlight your opportunity to stay put while staying busy.

Flexible Work Schedules
Tech candidates appreciate flexible work schedules. Support the developer culture, and provide time to work on personal projects.

Community Impact
Many tech candidates are looking for jobs where their work can impact a large audience. Market your jobs as a meaningful opportunity to identify key projects and how they impact their community.

1 So, how do you showcase their value?

Justifying the value of community impact or a stable career may be more anecdotal—unless you guarantee a timely raise. But when it comes to measuring your benefits, you can put a price on every perk you offer.

Find out how much additional value your benefits add to employees' compensation. We've broken it down for you, based on a 50,000 annual salary.

Benefit Type	% of Compensation	Additional Value
Social Security, Medicare, Unemployment and Workers Comp insurance	6%	$3,000
Life, Health and Disability Insurance	11.9%	$5,950
Retirement and Savings	9.6%	$4,800
Paid Leave	7.3%	$3,650

Source: U.S. Department of Labor – March 2014 State and Local Government Employer Costs for Employee Compensation Survey

2 Where do you communicate this?

Any place that has potential for tech talent to see it! That means in your introductory emails to candidates, within your job ads, on your career site, in your recruitment collateral and everything in between.

Use Alternative Advertising

You're no stranger to dealing with strict budgets. You understand the difficulty in allocating resources for marketing, especially when it comes to a hard-to-fill role. But you don't have to be a prisoner to expensive advertising. Try thinking outside of the box to find a cost effective solution.

Instead of investing your dollars into the same marketing efforts, try leveraging different mediums that may cost you less—and help get you in front of a technical audience.

• College Partnerships

• Professional Associations

• Custom Career Site

• Recruiting Video

• Social Recruiting

• Career Fairs

> "Leverage the money in your budget by thinking differently about advertising. Pick the right career fairs, partner with your IT department, and take advantage of new opportunities to advertise—like we have with Recruiting.com."

Keely Farrow
Employment Services Manager
Maricopa County

Career Fairs & Other Events

Job fairs and other events may not be the most budget–friendly option, but they can be a powerful tool for connecting with tech talent. Focus your efforts on attending at least 2-3 events a year, especially those dedicated to technical positions. Bring someone from your IT department to help answer questions and speak 'tech' with prospective candidates.

College Partnerships

Fostering a partnership with an educational institution doesn't have to cost a dime! Start by identifying key technical departments, student clubs, faculty members or alumni from colleges in your area. Then, focus on building strong partnerships by informing them of current openings.

You should also consider contacting their career centers. Their goal is to get students placed, so they're always interested in building relationships with great employers like you. Another route you can take is an internship program. Even if candidates leave after their internship, they may return in the future—plus it creates the opportunity for their peers to hear about your jobs.

Professional Associations

Take advantage of local and national professional associations who can help connect you with great technical talent. Find key contributors to the associations (whether from chapter leadership rosters, press releases, etc.) and leverage them as a source for candidates or simply as networking contacts. Attend local meetings to build visibility for yourself and your career opportunities. Also, most associations offer the ability to post jobs to their site.
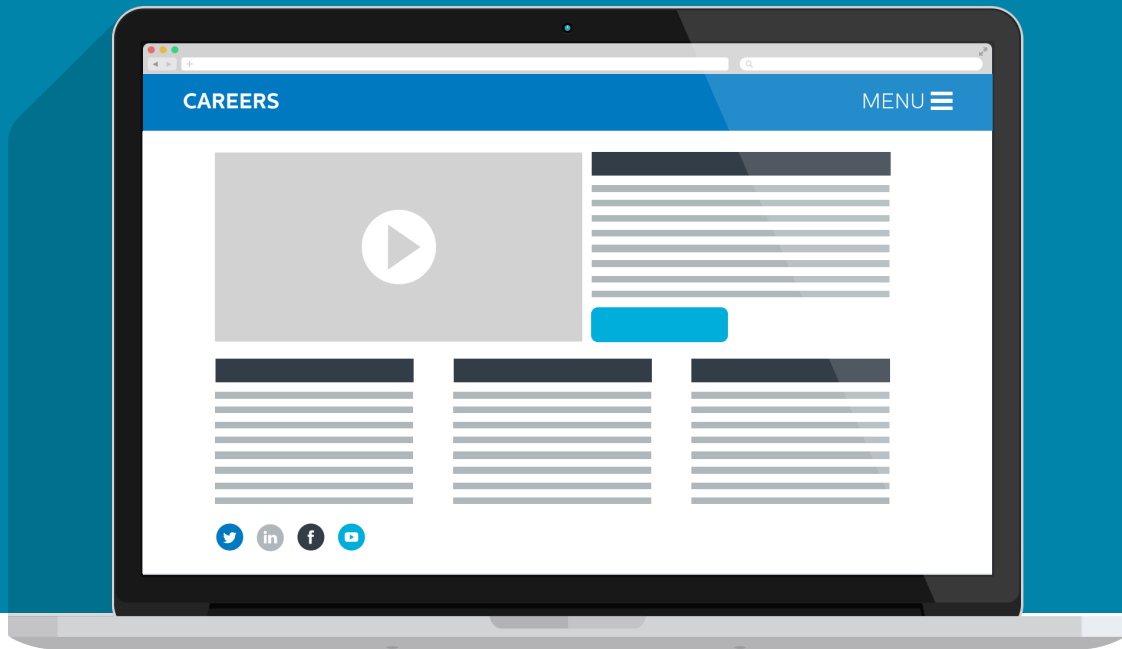
Consumer and Career Site

Your consumer site and career site set the stage for prospective talent. That's why it's critical to update both on a regular basis. If you haven't revamped either in a while, it could scare off potential tech candidates—regardless of the great technology you may use internally. It's all about the representation: If it appears you're not investing in technology for your website, your talent may assume this ideology permeates the entire organization.

Your updated career site is the perfect medium for speaking to tech talent. Dedicate a section of the site to selling your tech opportunities. Start by creating content around each important role, and the work environment you provide. Then, highlight your best benefits to incite more technical candidates to hit "apply".

Recruiting Video

We're not talking about anything fancy (although a professional video would be worth the investment). Grab your iPhone and take some video testimonials from your current tech team. Get them on camera saying why your agency is the best place to work. Then upload the video to YouTube, and send a link with your introductory emails to candidates or share it on social media.

Social Recruiting

Your social efforts don't have to be costly. You can use low-resource platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook to reach more tech talent. Start a conversation in online forms, tweet your open jobs and post new opportunities to Facebook. These initiatives won't cost you a penny, and can take minimal time to implement.

Invest in Talent Retention

Talented tech professionals have so many available opportunities, that it can be difficult to not only get them to join, but also to get them to stay. People will always be beating down the door of top talent to make them a better offer, but there are ways to combat employee turnover.

Promote talent retention by:

- Creating a career path from entry-level roles to mid-level management and beyond.

- Encouraging employees to transfer across different departments.

- Fostering collaboration on technical teams (no siloed tech departments).

- Staying current with technology so employee skills won't go dormant.

- Promoting a healthy work/life balance.

"We've had candidates come to us because they were 'burned out' in private sector jobs—where they got top dollar but were worked to death. We strive to offer peers and backup, so they don't have to be on-call, all the time."

Keith Poole
HR Supervisor
City of Phoenix
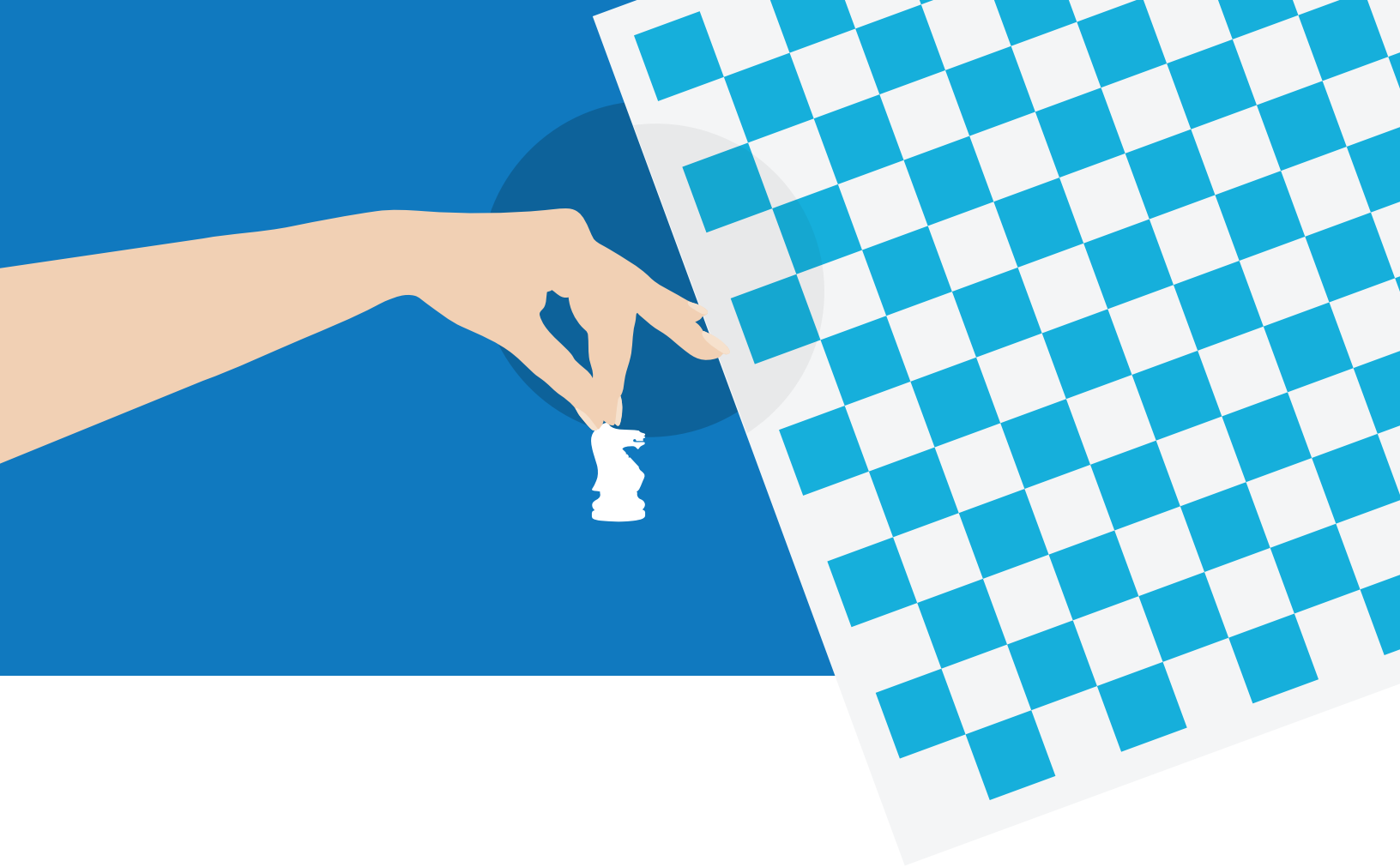
Competing for tech talent starts with strategy

So what's the secret for attracting top technical candidates? Use strategic positioning, leverage alternative advertising, and invest in talent retention to create a strategy that attracts more talent to fill your technical roles.

If you're ready to get serious about technical recruiting, email info@recruiting.com or call 888.637.3895 to connect with an industry expert. We'll get to know you, your organization and your goals, so we can create a solution that meets your unique recruiting needs.

888.637.3895   info@recruiting.com   **Recruiting.com**

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