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The Strategic Evolution of Talent Acquisition in the Consumer Products Industry

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As consumer demands change and globalization builds, HR leaders must play a broader role in hiring strategy.

The consumer products industry has undergone remarkable transformations in recent years. Technological advancements empowered companies to ride the waves of growing demand—and as consumer expectations and global market dynamics shift, industry leaders are continuously finding innovative ways to keep customers engaged. In this ever-evolving landscape, talent acquisition has emerged as a critical factor for [thriving amidst uncertainty](#).

Consumer products leaders are certainly not alone in their hiring focus. At the start of 2023, HR executives across industries allocated the [largest budget increases](#) to talent acquisition—a testament to the immense recruitment and retention challenges of recent times. However, consumer-facing businesses are uniquely compelled to swiftly shape their talent strategies according to the demands of modern shoppers—especially as global markets intertwine.

The right approach to hiring will inevitably ebb and flow with consumer priorities. Entering the future of talent acquisition, consumer products firms must align their hiring strategies with rising customer demands and globalization trends to stay competitive.

The Traditional Approach to Talent Acquisition

Talent acquisition in the consumer products industry has historically relied on well-established practices, from job postings and resume screenings to in-person interviews and promotions. In this traditional approach, HR professionals played a clearly defined role in the hiring process—identifying candidates with relevant experience and skillsets—that largely involved administrative tasks.

This straightforward methodology was effective in an era defined by linear career paths, localized recruitment, and dependable employer leverage. However, recent years have led to seismic shifts in the fundamental nature of work. Remote work has granted top talent more flexibility and leverage, and high-demand roles—which require [increasingly complex](#) specializations—are rapidly increasing the value of skilled human capital. [Gartner](#) reports 50% of HR leaders expect increased talent competition in the near future. Effective and innovative recruiting is now a business-critical priority.

Consumer products businesses that continue to use the traditional, limiting approach to talent

acquisition will experience a number of challenges in the coming years. First, they'll struggle to keep up with the globalization of the industry, which requires companies to effectively source and manage talent across borders. Second, they'll face a shortage of candidates with specialized skills—particularly as [above-average churn](#) persists in fields like supply chain management and digital communication—potentially leading to delayed growth and declining consumer trust.

Without significant shifts in talent acquisition strategies, companies will also remain laggard when it comes to meeting changing consumer preferences. Consumer products businesses must proactively attract, hire, and retain agile leaders who can adapt to new trends (such as sustainability and social commerce) while increasing profitability.

The Modern Evolution of Talent Acquisition

The growing challenges to established talent acquisition practices have prompted business leaders to shift their hiring approach. Consumer priorities are directly influencing the direction of modern talent acquisition.

Take the demand for diversity and inclusion, for instance. As consumer demographics grow more diverse—with women, seniors, and other historically disadvantaged communities gaining spending power—shoppers are purchasing more from companies that reflect who they are. As a result, major CPG companies are [elevating women and minority leaders](#) into senior executive positions to better understand and connect with their diverse customer base. Across the consumer products industry, companies are moving away from traditional talent acquisition strategies—which left more room for unconscious biases—and implementing inclusive hiring practices, like leveraging recruitment technologies and diverse interview panels.

Consumer products businesses are responding similarly to the demand for sustainability. They're recruiting professionals with expertise in sustainability, responsible sourcing, and environmentally friendly practices. According to the [World Economic Forum](#), over 35% of organizations agree new jobs will be created as consumers become more vocal about environmental issues, which speaks to the change in talent acquisition priorities.

The way consumer products firms approach talent acquisition will change, too. To tap into a broader talent pool, companies will increasingly become open to hiring remotely and sourcing talent from different geographical locations. This will not only provide access to diverse skillsets but also promote cost-effectiveness.

Consumer products firms will also move toward skills-based hiring—and they'll look beyond technical competencies. Employers will increasingly seek candidates with strong soft skills. In particular, [McKinsey](#) reports consumer goods businesses will seek executives with strong analytical skills. Creative thinking and agility, which help leaders navigate ever-changing challenges, are also [core skills](#) for employers seek today.

The Role of HR in the Future of Talent Acquisition

Moving into the future of talent acquisition in the consumer goods industry, HR professionals will be at the forefront of these changes. They're no longer just administrators in the hiring process—they're [strategic business partners](#) who understand how to deliver workforce planning insights to organizational leaders. HR leaders must become data-driven decision-makers who use analytics to identify market trends, forecast talent needs, and measure the success of recruitment efforts. Strategic decision-making within HR departments will proactively empower firms with the talent they need to achieve long-term business goals.

HR professionals will also lead employer branding efforts, strengthening the spotlight on DEI and sustainability initiatives, as well as other efforts that align with consumer and employee demands. In fact, [60%](#) of in-house recruiters expect employer branding investments to increase. With a positive reputation, employers can better attract top talent in a competitive job market.

Broadening talent pools will also be a priority for consumer products firms. As a result, HR leaders develop new global talent acquisition channels, adopting innovative strategies like partnering with educational institutions to proactively nurture future talent. Some HR departments will also leverage outsourcing. Partnering with executive recruiting firms will streamline the search for top talent, enabling HR leaders to focus on internal business strategy.

In the current consumer products landscape, which is rapidly changing to meet customer demands, talent acquisition will evolve just as fast. Companies will increasingly leverage technology, emphasize soft skills, tap into a global talent pool, and promote diversity, inclusion, and sustainability. HR departments are playing a pivotal role in driving these changes by embracing data-driven decision-making, building strong employer brands, and developing innovative recruitment strategies. As the industry continues to evolve, talent acquisition will remain a critical component of a company's ability to adapt, innovate, and thrive in the ever-changing consumer landscape.

What strategies will you implement to stay at the forefront of talent acquisition in the consumer goods market?