

# RECRUITING NEEDS TO PIVOT FOR THE DOWNTURN AND UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Google searches for “**recession**” are at their highest level since the last recession ended (11/09)  
**10%** of surveyed economists see a recession this year, **but 42%** see one in 2020 (NABE survey)

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**LET'S BEGIN WITH A "BIG PICTURE" PERSPECTIVE**

**IN A RECENT SURVEY...**

**CEO'S WERE ASKED...**

**"WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT ?"**

**WHAT ISSUES DID CEO'S RANK AT THE TOP ?**

# CEO's Most Pressing Business Issues (2019)

**Purple lines** are talent issues (4 of the top 5)

**Pale blue lines** relate to business issues



Bus. strategy & beating the competition

The Predictive Index

## We Will Cover These 6 Topics



1. Even if the recession is a while off... **there aren't many drawbacks to thinking ahead** (preparing for retirement or to buying Christmas presents early)
2. **Three likely TA pivots** (the downturn, TA tech and the Talent Advisor role)
3. **Negative consequences you might experience** in a downturn
4. **Business case elements** for maintaining your TA budget
5. **Next job alternatives** when recruiting jobs are scarce
6. An **action checklist** for preparing for pivots

# The Organizers Asked Me To Spur Action So Please Jot Down A Few Of Your Takeaways

*Action items - things that I might try*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



**THEY ALSO WARNED (PROMISED)  
ME THAT YOU WERE A VOCAL GROUP...**

**AND THAT YOU WOULD OFFER QUESTIONS,  
EXAMPLES OR COMMENTS AT ANYTIME**

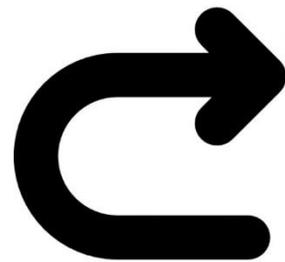
**IF THAT'S TRUE... LET'S HAVE A LIVELY 2-WAY CONVERSATION**

# Let's Start With This Foundational Premise On VUCA

**THE WORLD WILL CONTINUE TO BE A  
RAPIDLY CHANGING PLACE**

And to thrive in a volatile environment you must...

**be adaptive, agile, scalable & able to quickly pivot in a new direction**



(Googliness)

# So What Is A... Pivot Opportunity?

A pivot opportunity is...

**The ideal time** when it's “not too early, nor too late” **to rethink your current approach...**

And to begin **planning for a significant change** in direction or scale...

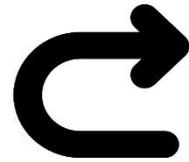
**Because a dramatic change is forecasted in the foundation assumptions** of your strategy

(i.e. shifts in economic / **business growth**, unemployment rates and emerging technologies)

# Let's Highlight 8 Benefits From Planning For A Pivot

1. A **reduced stress level**
2. It builds **your image as being strategic**
3. Provides time **to adjust your TA strategy... to fit the economy**
4. Forecasting provides **time to prepare for upcoming problems** and opportunities
5. **Time to build a strong business case** (to fight budget cuts)
6. Time to **assess your individual job security**
7. An opportunity to **update the capabilities** and skills that will increase your security at your current firm
8. Or an opportunity to **move to a more stable firm** and build seniority<sub>9</sub>

# The First Pivot We Will Cover Is...



**A pivot to prepare for an upcoming business downturn**



**CONSIDER THIS...**

**HOW MUCH MUST RECRUITING CHANGE  
/ PIVOT DURING A DOWNTURN ?**

**RAISE YOUR HAND...**

**IF YOU SURVIVED THE 1981 OR**

**THE 1990 RECESSIONS?**

**OR THE 2001 OR THE 2008**

**RECRUITING WASTELANDS**

(Do you see the 7-10 year pattern?)

## Prepare For These 10 Big Picture Pivots

1. Executives don't want **binge & purge** hiring to ever return – the pain of laying off valuable employees that managers fought to hire... leads to an **bitterness that high-volume permanent employee hiring should never return, so TA can be decimated**
2. A **fluid workforce** – this layoff pain also renews a demand for having a **quickly scalable up and down** contingent workforce... which means when hiring... most will not be permanent hires
3. TA wants to be **labeled as essential** vs marginal – after the “throw them under the bus HR attitude” **bitter TA leaders** will focus on being considered “essential”... & **shielded from politics**
4. **Cost-cutting leads to automation** – extreme cost-cutting pressure for automation, which permanently reduces a recruiter's hours **spent on admin**

## Prepare For These 10 Big Picture Pivots

5. **With little hiring, external recruiters will be expected to focus on intra-placement** – recruiters accelerate internal individual and team movement and redeployment
6. **With all overhead budgets being cut, measuring and showing your business impacts become critical**
7. **You won't be able to increase your business impacts, unless you shift to 100% data-driven decision-making within TA**
8. **As the competition for talent decreases, the need for fast time to fill decreases**
9. **With high unemployment, the need for retention decreases dramatically, and that means fewer open positions for TA**
10. **Many vendors will go under, so make double sure to protect access to your TA data**

## Based On History... Here Are The More Tactical Pain Points

### Likely change area

1. **Hiring freezes / layoffs...**
2. **Employee turnover...**
3. **100% in-house recruiting...**
4. **Contingent hiring...**
5. **The recruiting budget...**
6. **The number of recruiters...**
7. **Recruiters on contract...**
8. **# of approvals for a req....**
9. **Technology purchases...**
10. **Vendor data reliability...**

### Expect these tactical impacts

sometimes it means zero hiring down 2/3, so replacement hiring ends  
RPO's can mean zero internal hiring  
85% of new-hires / 40% of all workers cut by at least 1/3... to an ugly number at least in half and no RC's over 50%  
must be approved by a deity  
non-automation purchases may slow  
becomes a major concern

# Avoid Ugly Surprises...

## Learn How To Predict Upcoming Cutbacks In TA Budgets

### **8 warning signs of impending TA budget cuts at your firm**

- 1. Recruiter hiring is frozen**
- 2. Travel freezes are implemented**
- 3. Pay increases, promotions and overtime are frozen**
- 4. The “don’t even buy paperclips” memo is sent**
- 5. Contingency workers are let go**
- 6. “First mover firms” in your industry freeze hiring** (See their web page)
- 7. A hiring freeze is announced at your firm**
- 8. First furloughs, then early retirement offers and then layoffs**

## **Also Expect These Shifts In Recruiting Metrics During A Downturn**

### **Expect these downward shifts in TA metrics**

- 1. The power shifts, so concern for the candidate experience drops**
- 2. Managers spend significantly less time on recruiting**
- 3. Employer brand strength decreases (due to layoffs)**

### **Expect these upward shifts in recruiting metrics**

- 1. A literal flood of applicants from desperate people**
- 2. With recruiter cuts... req. loads go through the roof**
- 3. Time-to-fill lengthens... because unemployed candidates will wait**
- 4. But offer acceptance rates go up (candidates have very few choices)**



# **WAS THAT MOMO LEVEL SCARY?**



# The Downturn Will Not Hit All Industries The Same

**Fortunately in the past... some industries and firms suffered less**

- Healthcare
- Biomedical
- Defense
- Green technologies
- Amazon, Apple and social media firms
- Machine learning
- Cybersecurity
- Quantum computing
- Virtual reality
- Video games

## Recruiters Should... Know Their “Next Job” Options

# **UNDERSTAND THE OPTIONS** **FOR A RECRUITER REMAINING** **EMPLOYED DURING A DOWNTURN**

1. Get a job in a completely new field or start a business
2. Build the budget of your recruiting function
3. Be the last recruiter standing at your firm
4. Switch to an another job... within HR
5. Switch to a business side job... within your current firm



**UNFORTUNATELY MANY OF THE HISTORICAL  
EXTERNAL "NEXT JOB" OPTIONS  
FOR LAID-OFF RECRUITERS  
ARE NO LONGER PRETTY**

# Real Estate Opportunities Have Changed Dramatically



Robot realtor

# Selling Cars Has Changed Also



# Retail Jobs Are Getting Scarce Thanks To Amazon



Amazon go store in Seattle with customer facing employees

# Forget That Barista Job



# Forget Making Burgers @ Creator In Sf

This robot can slice toppings, grill a patty, assemble, & bag the burger without any help from humans



# Forget Delivery Jobs



# And Even That Uber Job... Will Be Gone Soon



# External Business Jobs



**Option 1 – External job and entrepreneurial possibilities** (they are limited because everyone will be looking)

1. Salesperson (outside of retail)
2. Sales trainer
3. Go back to school
4. Become a data-driven **“science of job-search”** advisor
5. Start your **own specialized recruiting agency**

# With A Stable Budget...

## You Might Be Able To Keep Your Recruiting Job

### Option 2 - Action steps for bolstering your TA budget

1. Work with CFO to convert TA results into \$'s of revenue impact
2. Reveal the **cost of a vacancy** / **slow hiring** in revenue & critical jobs
3. Show **top performers and innovators have a high ROI**
4. Show the need for speed makes **re-training employees a weak option**
5. Show the **costs of across the board hiring freezes** (targeted hiring)
6. Convince executives to **cherry pick** using **counter-cycle recruiting**
7. Make a business case for **intra-placement recruiting**
8. Prioritize your recruiting based on **internal political power**
9. Be **adaptive, agile, scalable & able to quickly pivot**

# The #1 Future Goal Of Recruiting Will Be To... Impact Business Results

So currently... what % of hiring managers are satisfied with recruiting's impact on the business? (25%, 35%, 45%, 65%, 75% or 100%)

**Only 35% are satisfied** with recruiting's business impacts



**OW!**

## Smart Firms... Plan Ahead For Better Times

**So convince your exec's to fund an “explode out of the blocks” plan**

- Which is... **the capability of “ramping up recruiting”**  
immediately as the downturn ends
- This will put you **far ahead of other firms with decimated recruiting capabilities**
- Also show that **rebuilding a TA function is more expensive** than maintaining it

# The Future Of Recruiting Will Be Different

Even with a strong company performance... expect major changes in TA

- Managers will do most recruiting with... **self-service mobile apps**
- **Robot vs. human choices for work** will mean fewer people hires
- All recruiting and **all recruiters will be data driven**
- **Employer Branding** may be owned by corporate product branding
- **Competitive intelligence** becomes a critical role for recruiting
- **Measuring quality of hire** & business impact will become standard
- **Expect churn** simultaneous hiring & releasing even in good times (GM)
- **MLB's star poaching sabr model** replaces mostly actives corp. model



**ACTION STEPS FOR BECOMING...**  
**THE LAST RECRUITER STANDING AT**  
**YOUR FIRM**

## Option 3 - Action Steps For Keeping Your Current Recruiting Job

1. Recruit for **strategically critical jobs** (AI, cybersecurity & quantum computing)
2. Recruit primarily for **growth business units**
3. Be an expert in all aspects of **selling** (the future of recruiting)
4. Focus on landing **purple squirrel candidates**
5. Help to **create predictive metrics**
6. Be **“the go to person”** when serious TA problems arise
7. Be the expert in **buying / implementing TA technology**
8. **Be recognized externally** and be visible as an expert
9. Get **promoted to recruiting manager** (often the last to go)
10. Maintain the **alumni network** (key for boomerang rehires later)
11. Be the **cost-cutting & business case expert** (business acumen)
12. Be willing to **work on a 9 month contract basis**

# Action Steps For Individual Recruiter Security

**Differentiate yourself by being the top performer in these areas**

1. Produce the highest **quality of hire** (on-the-job performance of new-hires)
2. Be the **most requested recruiter** by senior managers / executives
3. Have the highest **hiring manager satisfaction ratings**
4. Hire the most **global, diversity or executive** recruits
5. Build the best **talent pipelines** (NP 43% prior to the position opening)
6. Have the capability of recruiting **across a wide spectrum of jobs**
7. Have the highest **value added to salary cost** ratio
- 8. Keep a high requisition load** compared to your peers
9. Produce **marketing approaches that everyone copies**
10. Be the fastest **continuous learner** on the bleeding edge of TA

# Being Extremely Aggressive Might Also Help



tinder



**We are hiring engineers!**



**amazon  
web services™**



**This is not a Scam, we are actually from AWS Recruiting trying out this method  
To find top Engineering Talent. Please swipe right if you are open to learning  
more about Engineer positions at AWS!**

**You can also E-mail us at [SeattleJobs@amazon.com](mailto:SeattleJobs@amazon.com) with your resume and  
contact info for consideration! Thank you and Happy Tindering!**

# Being Creative Might Also Help



## Consider Getting Another Job Within HR

### Option 4 - Shift directly into an HR job at your current firm

#### The most common job shifts into HR

- Become an **outplacement** specialist (if it's done in-house)
- Become a **retention or onboarding** specialist (problematic)
- Become a **intraplacement internal movement recruiter**
- Use your assessment skills to **ID redundant employees for layoffs**
- **Leader identification** and assessment for the leadership group
- **Develop HR metrics** for them based on TA metrics
- **Workforce planning** for a fluid workforce

# Getting Another Job Within Your Current Firm

## Option 5 – Shift directly into a job in the business

**The most common job shifts into the business side**

1. Customer service jobs (Southwest Air)
2. Sales jobs
3. Business development
4. Your last job before you became a recruiter

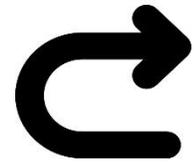


**AND FINALLY...**

**LET'S EXAMINE TWO TA PIVOTS...**

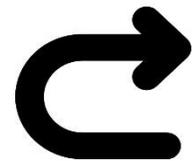
**NOT CREATED BY ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

# Is It Time To Develop Your Plan B Because Of 2 Additional TA Pivots?



**A technology pivot shifts the current focus of recruiters**

This automation pivot will eventually force...



**With less recruiting, recruiters will pivot toward the Talent Advisor role**



## THE 3 FOUNDATION TACTICAL RECRUITING STEPS



Currently when it comes to a recruiters time... these 3 steps are relatively equal

# Shifting The Focus Of Human Recruiters

**BUT BE AWARE THAT THE EMERGING  
TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS IN TA AND THE  
DOWNTURN**

**WILL OVER TIME DRAMATICALLY  
CHANGE THE FOCUS OF HUMAN RECRUITERS**

## Prepare For These Changes...



**Sourcing** - when almost everyone can be found on the Internet

- **Automated sourcing tools will scour the Internet & our candidate database...** and **matching software** will slot individuals into jobs
- **Chatbots** using algorithms will convince the best to apply
- **Immigration/travel restrictions** will limit bringing candidates to the US
- **With remote work** your talent pool greatly expands globally
- Unemployment means **a flood of applicants** so the candidate experience becomes less critical
- **The desire for job security** will mean that the best technologists will be less interested in leaving
- How you treated employees during the virus **will severely impact your employer brand image**

# Prepare For These Changes...



## Candidate Assessment

- **Remote video interviews will become the norm**
- **Virtual reality simulations** that continually improve via machine learning will assess the technical, soft skills & the fit of top candidates
- **Automated scheduling software** will schedule the final interviews
- As the unemployment rate rises **time to fill** becomes less of a competitive issue
- **The ability to work remotely** becomes an essential skill
- With limited hiring, internal movement becomes a major focus **and internal candidates will be considered first**



## Selling The Finalist

- **Convincing finalist candidates to accept an offer** requires a skilled recruiter... because it is the one remaining personalized step that cannot be done effectively with software. When hiring is reduced, selling high demand candidates becomes essential
- After the current virus scare, **employee safety and job security will become major selling points**
- With the downturn and its impact on housing prices, **fewer candidates will be willing to relocate**

## Automation Forces Recruiters Into The Talent Advisor Role

**AND WHEN SELLING BECOMES THE ONLY  
REMAINING HUMAN RECRUITER ROLE**

**TO THRIVE... RECRUITERS WILL BE FORCED  
TO BECOME MORE STRATEGIC... AND MOVE  
INTO THE BROADER TALENT ADVISOR ROLE**

# TA Technology Creates The Need For The Talent Advisor Role

**The final TA pivot... is into the Talent Advisor role**

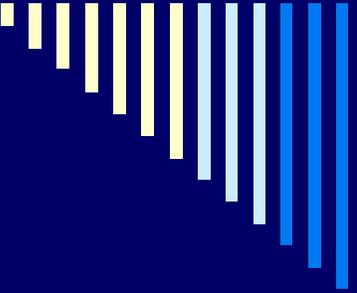
**The broader roles of a Talent Advisor can include:**

- **Advice** – proactive data-driven **talent advice to line managers**
- **Retention** – **preventing turnover** in key jobs
- **Movement** – proactive targeted **internal movement** within the SBU
- **Development** – finding short-term **project work** for key employees
- **Productivity** – advice on **increasing productivity and innovation**
- **Planning** – long-term **talent planning** for a manager's team
- **Talent identification** – **projecting the promotion trajectory** and **leadership potential** of teammates and new-hires



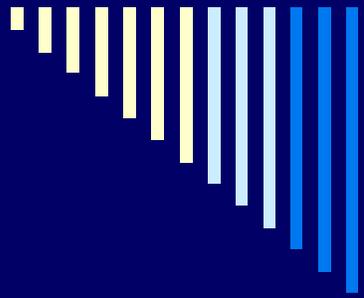
## Some firms are already expanding into the Talent Advisor role

1. Waste Management
2. SAP
3. Target
4. Adidas
5. CH2M
6. EA Games
7. Booking.com
8. Nestle
9. ESPN
10. GM



## A Reminder Action Checklist

- Begin assuming there will be a downturn
- Begin planning for department-wide downturn actions
- Begin planning for increased personal job security
- Improve your recruiting performance on KPI's
- Broaden your rec. capabilities into “must-have” jobs
- Begin building powerful selling skills
- Strengthen your network at the most stable firms
- Begin learning about the Talent Advisor role



**Did I make you think?**

**and...**

**Did you write down 3 takeaways?**

Please take a minute... and connect / follow Dr. Sullivan on [LinkedIn](#)