



Recruitment as Culture

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Recruitment Strategies survey conducted by The NBRC, AARC and CoARC in December 2022, program directors and directors of clinical education reported average effectiveness of their recruitment initiatives, with recruitment fairs rating as the most effective. However, through further conversation with survey respondents, the best pathway appears to be the development of a recruitment culture strategy.

HOW IT WORKS

A recruitment culture strategy transforms every employee into a 24/7 talent scout. Recruitment is not a discrete tactic that an education program fulfills. Rather, it permeates the entire organization and fundamentally becomes part of the fiber of the respiratory therapy program.

“Recruitment is ingrained in our culture – it is part of our ongoing routine. It is literally part of our day-to-day activities in our department. Together and individually, we are constantly trying to think of different ideas and ways to engage with potential students,” said Jennifer Anderson, EdD, RRT, RRT-NPS.

There is a fundamental willingness to do more to draw new applicants to respiratory care. The respiratory therapy faculty members design and teach interdisciplinary core courses – as well as a freshman-level course on cultural and global understanding that is required for all health science majors. Several applicants who have met the respiratory faculty in those introductory courses have switched their major to respiratory therapy. When recruitment is ingrained in the culture and everyone likes to recruit, creative ways to connect with students emerge, such as engaging respiratory therapist (RT) students in the recruitment process (e.g., professional credits for spreading the word, graded recruitment assignments, student-led educational programs and speaking engagements) and featuring their stories on the school’s website. Bottom line: It is all about building exposure for respiratory therapy, and that means ingraining recruitment in the culture.

When recruitment is part of the program’s overall ethos, everyone wears the value of respiratory therapy on their sleeves. Literally. Some educational programs require their program directors and instructors to wear branded shirts, sweaters, jackets, and vests as part of their daily business wear. When budgets allow, it builds greater awareness when teams become “walking, talking billboards for respiratory care.”

“When you think about RT recruitment, it is all about your mindset, right? We all talk about how much work there is to do, but if you love what you do, and it is your passion, it is easy to integrate recruitment into your daily life. Sometimes other perspectives are helpful to consider. When you think about recruitment from a business standpoint, you are talking about \$50,000 revenue per student. Or put yourself in the hospital executives’ shoes – one more person to reduce the respiratory workload means eight more patients you can care for,” said Justin Misuraca, RRT, RRT-NPS.

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Recruitment as Culture (cont.)



OPPORTUNITY

The most successful organizations recognize that fostering a culture of recruiting throughout the educational program helps build a winning workforce. After all, recruiting is not a passive activity. It requires a non-stop effort that begins by building a culture in which educators, staff, college/university recruiters and students join as passionate talent ambassadors requires a long-term commitment. Here are three easy ways to get started:

1. Start small by offering a platform on which your ambassadors can tell their stories to generate awareness for the profession. Promote RT success stories by publishing PDF stories and videos about your students and graduates. For inspiration, see: <https://news.msutexas.edu/2022/12/amazing-story.php>
2. Consider referral programs. Some say they can save upwards of 40% by hiring a referred candidate rather than spending ad dollars on job boards, paid social, and agency fees. Let's face it, when you educate in a culture of recruitment, your employees are the undisputed champions of sourcing high-quality RT candidates!
3. Share your successes with your program director colleagues at the AARC Summer Forum July 15-17 in Fort Lauderdale and visit moreRTs.com for additional ideas.