Overhauling Recruitment

Advertising Toolkit

About this toolkit

The Overhauling Recruitment Programme is seeking to change the way that the NHS attracts, selects and onboards people into the service.

Attracting talent into our organisations and facilitating seamless mobility is done on a day-to-day basis by all of our organisations and embedding a strategic approach to this is a fundamental tenet.

This pack is designed to support Recruitment Teams and Resourcing Leads in NHS providers and systems develop an effective advertising approach which:

- Sets out new and different approaches to attracting new, different and diverse people into the NHS.

- Improves the ways in which we communicate our value proposition through social media to specific audiences.

- Details how to write effective copy to ensure bias reduction.

- Explores targeted advertising to age groups, across media channels to increase applicant diversity.

This is one of several tools, part of the overhauling recruitment series.
Model documents, case studies and other helpful resources can be found on FutureNHS.

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What your organisation needs to do to attract diverse, top talent *1 of 2*

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Advertising to recruit a diverse, talented workforce, that reflects the community it serves, is crucial to help the NHS adapt to the changing workforce and healthcare landscape. The NHS requires a wide range of skilled and support staff to support its services and communities, locally and nationally. Advertising is crucial to raising awareness about job opportunities to help attract talent, that may have not otherwise considered working in the NHS. NHS organisations are key local employers that represent different cultures, communities and experiences of their staff and the patients they care for.

Three stages

1 **Context: Understand your current advertising practices**

Before exploring alternate advertising and widening access practices, it is important to look at what your organisation is currently doing, and the available data to accompany it. Understanding your current challenges is key before changing your approach and measuring outcomes. **You might want to consider:**

Advertising

- Where are you currently advertising or promoting roles?
- Is it free or paid-for advertising? i.e. NHS jobs
- Are you using additional resources i.e. NHS Employers Inspire, Attract and Recruit resources
- Have you planned your campaign? Indeed
- What measurement are you using to demonstrate success?

Data from your e-recruitment solution, such as:

- Protected characteristic demographics for applicants.
- Post codes and locations where candidates are applying from
- Applicant success rates and candidate demographics
- The drop-out rate of applicants throughout each recruitment stage

Feedback

- Information from candidate experience surveys.
- If you don't conduct these then consider surveying some recent applicants, joiners or even those who don't apply.

What your organisation needs to do to attract diverse, top talent *2 of 2*

2 Align advertising to wider attraction strategy goals

Now that you've got supporting data, current campaign information and the organisation's accompanying attraction strategy, you can work to align your organisation's goals with objectives against the wider workforce challenges and alongside your current advertising practices, creating a plan for alternate routes to market.

3 Attracting a diverse workforce in a competing market

The areas you seek to focus on and promote in your advertising will potentially need a different approach to target your ideal candidates and to aid your recruiting objectives.

As an example, if you are trying to recruit new to care healthcare support workers your campaign will look and feel different to promoting a campaign internally to the organisation for a promotional opportunity or a role in a different area.

Although you are advertising both these opportunities, those new to the NHS will want different information to those currently working within the organisation.

Employee Value proposition

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An Employee Value Proposition (EVP) is the promise you make as an employer to your employees in return for their commitment.
This promise includes the total, tangible and non-tangible, benefits and rewards an employee receives when they work for you.
For most people, the things that make up a compelling EVP include compensation, work-life balance, stability, location, and respect.

It can be used to attract, retain and motivate employees. An effective EVP should be relevant to the needs and aspirations of both current and potential employees.

Three stages

1 **How does this impact my campaign?**

Being clear about your target audience will help ensure you are promoting the right materials, messages and benefits to your intended audience in the right way.

For those new to care or to the NHS areas to focus on promoting would be:

- Job security
- Professional development
- Flexible working hours
- High levels of job satisfaction
- Public service and the greater good
- Diverse workforce

For existing NHS workers, you would like to attract into posts that would benefit from their experience and expertise you would focus on promoting:

- Their pride to be part of the organisation
- Alignment to organisation values and behaviours
- Reward and recognition
- Career development opportunities and benefits
- Aspirational staff stories

Employee Value proposition

2 **Encouraging diversity**

People like to see people like themselves, representatives of their community in an organisation. For an organisation as diverse as the NHS with 350 different roles to promote people want to see:

- **Representation of diverse groups** in advertisements to demonstrate inclusion and appeal to a wider audience.

- **Inclusive language and imagery** that is inclusive and appealing to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc.

- The **celebration of diversity**, highlighting the unique qualities and differences of diverse groups in your organisation.

- The use of **positive messaging** that promotes diversity, unity and equality.

- **Partnering with community** organisations to reach diverse audiences.

3 **Other factors to consider when trying to reach diverse audiences**

- Are you intending to reach a specific audience?

- Is the advert relevant and does it appeal to all audiences?

- Advert fatigue – does this look the same as all the other adverts or campaigns?

- Does the means of advertising demonstrate applicant usage patterns and responsiveness?

So, you need to be clear:

- What messages you are trying to promote to what audience?

- What is the employee value proposition?

Social media

Social media has revolutionised the way that organisations can target, approach and connect with potential employees. It allows organisations to message and reach a wider candidate pool across age groups, target specific demographics or communities and it can showcase the organisation's culture and commitment to diversity and inclusion.

It is important to understand the behaviours of your target audience and the media channels they are most responsive to, enabling appropriate messages.

Social media channels

Each social media platform has its benefits, but it is best to focus on one or two channels at a time to ensure the organisation is getting valuable responses and is not trying to juggle too much content.

Research conducted has demonstrated that people of different age groups display very different patterns of behaviour on social media. These age group-specific insights refer to the characteristics, behaviours, and attitudes of different age groups, and how they interact with technology and social media. It also shows differences in their choice of channels used, time spent, and intent for use, when online.

Websites and mobile apps enable users to create and share content or participate in social networking. Examples include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube amongst others.

	Pros	Cons
Facebook	• Best for business • Targets specific demographics	• Privacy issues • Very Ad focused
Twitter	• Easy to use • Interface with Trac	• Not great for showcasing visual content • Short message capability only
Instagram	• Simple to use • Appeals to a wide audience	• Limited integration capabilities
LinkedIn	• Allows networking and sharing • Can post blog long articles	• Limited audience as Business to Business (B2B) focussed • Ads can be poorly targeted
YouTube	• Worlds 2nd most popular search engine • Connect more directly with audience	• Need quality editing • Greater time and money investment than other platforms

Generational Insights *1 of 2*

Generational insights can have a significant impact on the way social media platforms are designed, marketed, and used. Research into these areas has shown that different generations of users have different usage patterns, attitudes, behaviours and preferences which will affect the way they use social media. These insights can offer advertisers the ability to better target specific populations in their tailored advertising approaches.

How can generational insights help

Using generational insights in social media to tailor marketing and campaign strategies enables a more diverse reach. Not only because you are considering unique characteristics, behaviours and preferences but because content and messaging will be applicable to audiences of different age groups by selecting the appropriate channels they may be receptive to.

This information responsibly used in conjunction with inclusive promotional activity will help ensure campaigns reach their intended audience.

What do generational insights tell us?

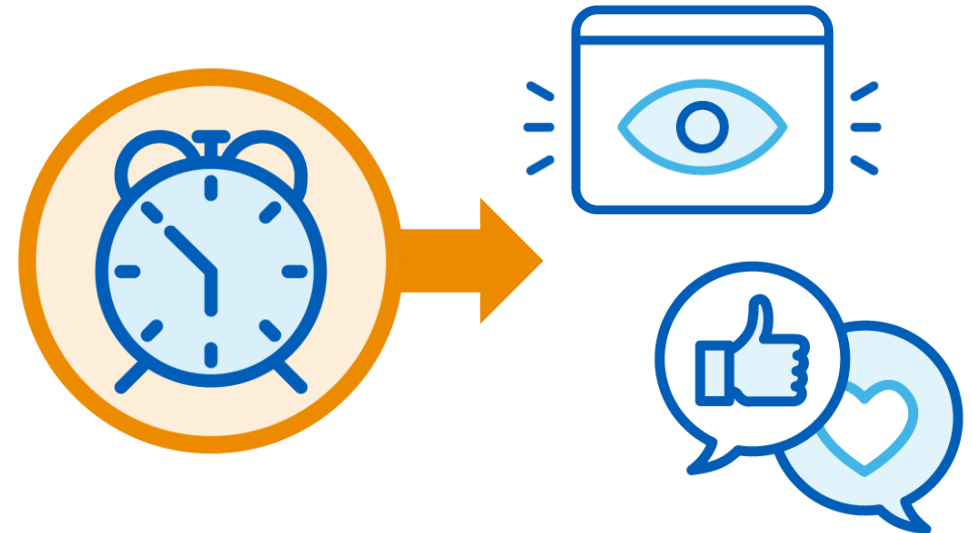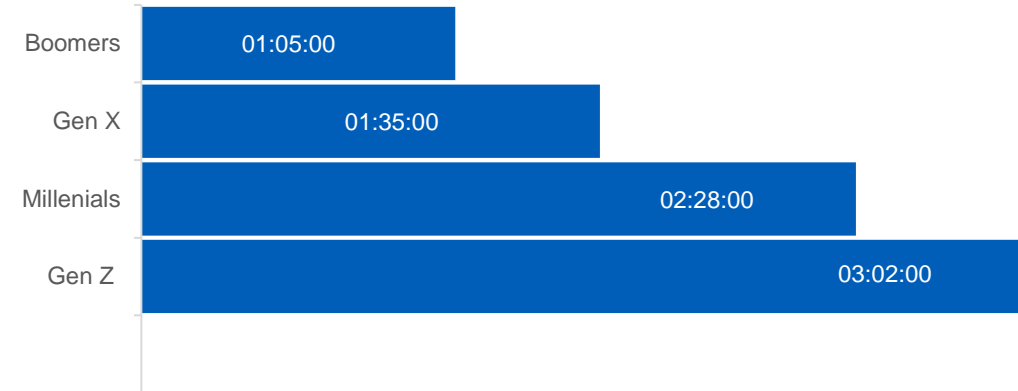Some of the interests and behaviours that these generational insights show:

- **Baby Boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964)** are less likely to use social media and tend to use it primarily for staying in touch with family and friends and for keeping up with news and current events. So although they didn't grow up engulfed in technology they are large subscribers to **Facebook** and **YouTube**

NHS England

- **Generation X (people born 1965 –1980)** are less likely to adopt new social media platforms. Their social media usage is practical, for staying in touch with friends and family, and professional networking. They value privacy and security and are more likely to be sceptical of social media's impact on society. Popular social media platforms among Gen X include **Facebook, LinkedIn,** and **Instagram.**

- **Millennials (people born between 1981 and 1996)** also use social media extensively, but they tend to use it for professional networking and to stay connected with friends and family. Like Boomers they are most likely to use **Facebook** but are digitally curious and so use **Instagram** too.

- **Generation Z (people born between 1997 and 2012)** is the most digitally native generation and is known for its heavy use of social media platforms such as **YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat**. They are also more likely to use social media for entertainment and to follow influencers and celebrities.

Time spent on social media in hours and minutes daily

Generation	Time
Boomers	01:05:00
Gen X	01:35:00
Millenials	02:28:00
Gen Z	03:02:00

Advertising: Writing effective copy

Whether writing copy for job descriptions or single-entry social media posts, the message needs to be compelling, with a call to action to attract potential applicants. To advertise effectively to a wide pool of applicants it is crucial to understand the needs of our potential recruits to appeal to their interests, and to demonstrate alignment to their values and beliefs.

Two stages

1 **Social media by generation continued**

Whilst the NHS is a diverse employer and welcomes candidates from all forms of worked and lived experience, to adapt to the changing workforce landscape, it is crucial to attract Generation Z into the workforce for the following reasons:

- They are the largest and most diverse generation that will soon make up a significant proportion of the workforce.

- They are the first generation to grow up with technology and social media as integral to their lives

- They are known for being innovative and entrepreneurial and bringing fresh ideas into the workplace

- They have grown up multi-tasking making them well suited to a pacey, rapidly changing environment

- They value work life balance and flexibility which can help to attract and retain top talent

- They are more diverse and inclusive than any other generation and most likely to align themselves to organisations representative of their own values

- They value corporate and social responsibility

Advertising: Writing effective copy

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2 **Writing effective copy**

	Top Tips
1	**Create a clear job title:** Keep it simple and create a good first impression. Avoid using jargon and bias coded language that may prevent potential applicants from applying.
2	**What's in it for them:** Get into the mindset of a candidate. Why should they join? What's in it for them? Is the role flexible?
3	**Create the hook:** What is unique about this job. What is the employer value proposition. Set out what your organisation has to offer to new people.
4	**Skills needed:** Be specific in skills required or that may not be required. Try widen access and to increase your pool of emerging and future talent.
5	**Actions speak louder:** Describe day to day tasks with regard to competencies; describe training and development and benefits. Tell potential candidates how to apply.
6	**Be creative:** Cut down on wording and pull snippets of copy for social media posts. Imagery and video etc should be used alongside conventional copy.

Further advice can be accessed within the Healthcare Support Worker Recruitment Toolkit – available via the Overhauling Recruitment FutureNHS site.

De-biasing advertising content

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Biased advertising can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and discriminate against certain groups of people. This can lead to limiting opportunities for marginalised groups and reinforcing discrimination. By removing bias from adverts, organisations can help create more fair and equal opportunities and ensure that people from all demographics may feel empowered to apply for posts.

Two stages

1 **De-biasing content and text editing tools**

There are several ways to try and ensure sufficient debiasing of content and materials.

De-biasing approaches	
1	**Diversity and Inclusion Training**.
2	**Style guides:** on how to produce unbiased and appropriate content
3	**Debiasing toolkit:** de-biasing toolkits including the "NHS Practitioners Guide - If Your Face Fits" are available from the NHS England website.
4	**Text editing tools:** Allow for software to sift through language used in advertising copy or job descriptions to determine if biases or coded language are in the text. Examples for available software: • **Textio** - software to decode cultural signals hidden in language to remove bias • **Gender decoder** (free tool by Kat Matfield) helping identify coded language and offering alternatives. • **Data people** - job description writing software • **Grammarly** - assistance with natural language processing • **Unbiased Me** - reducing unconscious bias in search sites like LinkedIn or Twitter for reviewing potential suitable candidates.

De-biasing advertising content

NHS England

2 **Testing for bias**

Ensuring balanced and debiased advertising content may require a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to get a comprehensive view of impact. It would also require constant monitoring and updating to ensure that bias is not reintroduced.

A number of potential means for testing for bias are listed in the information box:

Audience engagement: organisations can track metrics such as click-through rates, conversion rates, and dwell time to measure how well their ads are resonating with their target audience or even widened audiences.

Demographic data: teams can analyse demographic data such as age, gender, and income to ensure that their ads are being shown to a diverse audience and are not disproportionately targeting certain groups.

Brand sentiment: organisations can measure the sentiment of customers towards their specific brand, and track changes in sentiment over time to see if debiasing efforts have had a positive impact.

Social listening: external companies can monitor social media and other online platforms for mentions of their brand and ads to gauge the public's perception of their debiasing efforts.

Surveys and interviews: organisations can conduct surveys and interviews with consumers to gather feedback on their advertising and ask about the impact of bias on their application decisions.

Advertising: Measuring success

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Once the advertisement, copy or campaign messaging has been published, the success of the activity will need to be measured. These measures will help the organisation understand the effectiveness of their campaign and will enable data-driven decisions about future advertising. Linking campaign objectives to your determining measures of success is key to help you identify and replicate successful elements and identify areas for improvement.

Two stages

1 **Objectives to the campaign**

Before determining the success of an advertising campaign, it's important to have clear objectives in mind. These objectives can ensure the successful evaluation of a campaign in the wider context of your organisation's attraction strategy.

Some objectives that may link in with your strategy are:

- **Increasing brand awareness:** The campaign should aim to increase the visibility and recognition of the brand among the target audiences.

- **Generating candidate leads for talent pool:** The campaign should aim to generate leads, which are people who have expressed an interest in joining the organisation.

- **Improving brand sentiment:** The campaign should aim to improve the way the target audience feels about the organisation brand.

- **Increasing website traffic:** The campaign should aim to drive more traffic to the website.

- **Enhancing customer engagement:** The campaign should aim to increase candidates interacting with the brand on social media and other online platforms.

- **Building loyalty:** The campaign should aim to encourage customers to become loyal to the brand.

- **Converting** applicant leads to recruited staff members

Advertising: Measuring success

2 **Measures to determine success**

Examples
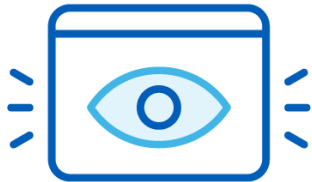
Reach:
Determines how many people were exposed to the campaign. It can be measured in terms of total audience size, demographics, or geographic location.

Engagement:
Determines how well the campaign resonated with its audience. It can be measured in terms of likes, shares, comments, and other forms of social engagement.

Conversion rate:
Determines how many people took a desired action, such as applying for a role or booking in for an open day.

Return on investment (ROI):
Determined by the cost saving generated from the campaign in relation to the amount of money spent on it.

Website traffic:
Determines how many people visited the website because of the campaign.

Lead generation:
Determine the number of potential applicants generated by the campaign, by measuring the number of people who have expressed an interest

Advertising: Measuring success in social media posts

NHS England

To measure success on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, you can also use a combination of advertising metrics and specific platform metrics to determine the performance of single, standalone posts alongside more developed collateral and campaigns. These media platforms are also far more agile than conventional advertising methods and can be easier and quicker to review and refine based on outcomes.

1 **Examples of unique social media platform measures**

Facebook

- **Reach:** Number of people who saw the advert or post.
- **Engagement:** Number of likes, comments, shares, and clicks on the ad.
- **Video views:** Number of views on a video ad.
- **Conversion tracking:** Number of conversions from the ad, or post such as short form applications or lead form submissions.

Instagram

- **Reach:** Number of people who saw the ad or post
- **Engagement:** Number of likes, comments, and clicks on the ad.
- **Impressions:** Number of times the ad or post was shown.
- **Story views:** Number of views on an Instagram story ad.
- **Followers:** Number of people who follow the Instagram account.

YouTube

- **Views:** Number of views on the video.
- **Watch time:** Total amount of time spent watching the video.
- **Audience retention:** Percentage of the video watched by viewers.
- **Subscribers:** Number of people who have subscribed to the channel.
- **Click-through rate (CTR):** Number of clicks on the ad divided by the number of times the ad was shown.

TikTok

- **Views:** Number of views on the video.
- **Engagement:** Number of likes, comments, shares, and views on the video.
- **Followers:** Number of people who follow the TikTok account.
- **Video completion rate:** Percentage of viewers who watch the entire video.
- **Audience demographics:** Information about the gender, age, location, and interests of the viewers.
- **Sound engagement:** Number of times the sound in the video was used in other videos.
- **Hashtag performance:** Number of views, likes, and shares on videos that use a specific hashtag.
- **Influencer metrics:** Number of views, likes, comments, shares and engagement rate of influencer's content

Thank you for taking the time to view this pack.

This is one of a number of tools as part of the overhauling recruitment series. Model documents, case studies and other helpful resources can be found on FutureNHS.