THE JOY OF FACEBOOK RECRUITING:
Sourcing the Best Candidates with Graph Search
Introduction

If you're anything like us, you've probably read your share of conflicting information on the internet:

- Should you source locally?
- What is the difference between natural and organic?
- When is fortification a good thing?

And no, this isn't a whitepaper about becoming a foodie, so step away from the refrigerator and get back to the computer: we're talking about recruiting on Facebook.

The recent release of Graph Search has given us plenty of food for thought on how you can pair this soon-to-be essential new tool with your social recruiting for maximum flavor (and efficiency).

At Work4, we've been tinkering in the social recruiting kitchen, and not only are we pretty sure we've got the blue-ribbon recipe for social recruiting success, but we also can't wait to dish it out. So sit back, strap on your mental feedbag, and prepare to dig into this delectable little guide to using Graph Search to source the best candidates on Facebook.
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Before you can cook up a social recruiting strategy, you first need to understand your ingredients: What is Graph Search?

Graph Search is a nifty way to search for people and things within your own Facebook network. To use it, log into Facebook, click on the large search bar at the top of your screen, and start typing away.

What makes Graph Search different from any other search experience on the web? To start, it is customized to search each individual user’s network in order to provide the most relevant results. That means that if you search for photos taken in New York City, for example, you will not simply be shown all of the photos tagged in the Big Apple. Graph Search is more likely to show you the most recent photos taken by friends and friends-of-friends whose photos are publicly accessible (and then throw in public photos by others where applicable).

Graph Search emphasizes relevant posts, so you can quickly discover what is most relevant to you. This also makes Graph Search different from a traditional web search—and while it integrates with Microsoft’s Bing to help you continue your search on the web if you are unable to find anything related to your query on Facebook—the search is limited specifically to people, places, and things within your network. This makes it simple to quickly perform a Graph Search for restaurants nearby that your friends like, for example.

Of course, all of this is well and good if you’re trying to enliven a Saturday night by searching a list of movies your friends might recommend on Netflix, but how will this tool help you become more effective at sourcing candidates on Facebook?
Let’s assume that you have a specific hiring initiative to fulfill: you are looking for an engineer who has worked for an enterprise technology corporation, has several years of experience, and won’t need relocation assistance to get to your office in San Francisco. A tall order, perhaps?

You head over to your professional networks and do a quick search of all of the companies you can think of that might fit the profile, and then click the “next” button incessantly as you wade through rosters of potential connections whose profiles mesh with your applied filters and work for said companies.

Perhaps the perfect candidate has his or her professional profile set up and even checks it regularly, but why not search where there’s a better chance of encountering Mr. or Ms. Right-for-the-Job?

We know that there are over 1 billion monthly active users on Facebook already, and that many of them are also employed or have some sort of professional or vocational skill. They’re also connected to an average of 31,000 people in their extended networks (which, by proxy, may contain you). That means you have a pretty big pool of potential talent from which to source.
MISE EN PLACE: ALL-NATURAL LANGUAGE AND SOURCING LOCALLY

The question is: how do you actually find them?

Here’s the secret sauce: Graph Search lets you use natural language to perform your searches, and natural language is what will make your sourcing efforts feel much more effortless.

We imagine that your hiring initiatives are much more complex than just “Similar Previous Job title” or “Location within 50 miles.” Let’s look at the example from the beginning of this section. In order to find our experienced engineer from San Francisco, we would create what is known as a “long tail” search, or a search with many essential keywords.

We can type “Engineers who work for Microsoft (or a similar company) in San Francisco” into Graph Search, or we can get creative and more specific by adding other qualifiers. For example, we can search for “Engineers in San Francisco who are friends of my friends who work for Microsoft.” Or we can search for “Engineers in San Francisco who like my company.”

By using natural language, you can start narrowing down the prospects and sourcing locally. Now that’s what we call sustainable sourcing!
While you’re busy sourcing passive candidates for your hiring initiatives, passive candidates are busy sourcing YOU (only they don’t know it yet).

What we mean by this is: when Facebook’s users use Graph Search to find out about companies, products, services, or brands that their friends like, there is a high probability that your own company Facebook Page or Facebook Career Site will show up in the results if it’s relevant. This is what is known as an “organic search,” or, in other words, “not a paid advertisement.”

You can use organic search to your advantage. It not only decreases your relative overall recruiting spend (because you can use this in addition to Facebook ads to augment your traffic-generating efforts for free), but it also helps you spread your employer brand and recruiting message further for little to no extra long-term investment.

But don’t just assume that because you have a Facebook Page you’re ready to be found by potential candidates.

To stand out in organic search, you must first optimize your Facebook Page for recruiting with Graph Search:

1. **Be Searchable**
2. **Be Like-able**
3. **Be Shareable**

**Be Searchable**
The long and the short of it is: searches work by locating and returning relevant keywords. If your profile doesn’t contain those keywords, you’re not going to appear in the search results.

Here are a few places to make sure you have the right keywords:*

* **Category, Topics, and Subcategories**
  This is where Facebook gives you blatant control over which keywords you’d like to target. Your category is the main descriptor of your business. Whether you’re a company/organization or a local business, you can let people know whether you’re bottling sodas or creating biotechnology.

**Topics** are three keywords that you think best describe your company. If you’re a software company, perhaps your words would be “software engineering,” “programming” and “internet software.” Think about what keywords your ideal candidates might be using to describe you.

**Subcategories** appear if you’ve entered your address properly. A subcategory tells people where they can find you. This is important for local businesses especially, because it helps people locate your business offline. Facebook intends...
for Graph Search to help its users find local businesses without having to rely on an external site like Yelp! for recommendations, which will work in your favor: if your business is local to a potential candidate, it is more likely to appear in his or her search results.

*Descriptions, Overview, Mission, etc.*
Facebook gives you plenty of opportunities to strut your company’s stuff. Include keywords in your company description, company overview, and mission. This is not, however, carte blanche to include a long string of keywords. Graph Search is about relevance, remember? So write a thoughtful description of your company that includes those keywords. This way, when candidates click to learn more about your company, they’re not greeted by a list of words that offer them no real value.

*Awards and Products*
These two sections may not be as relevant to your own recruiting message as something like your company’s description, but they can still help you show up in searches.

Facebook users who may be searching for similar products or services, or who might type in a keyword related to an award you won, can be converted into passive candidates if they realize you’re hiring. (It’s helpful, therefore, if you have a link to your career site or a prominently displayed app that leads to your Facebook Career Site and jobs list.)
Be Like-ble

Facebook is a truly social network, in that the algorithm that determines who sees your posts or finds you in search is directly tied to how much people engage with your page.

In other words, the more people who “like” you, the more likely Facebook will show you off to others.

That being said, you can grow your “likes” by planting the seeds of engagement early and often. Build a page that isn’t just an empty placeholder with an office address. Dress it up with a compelling cover photo and make sure you keep your page updated. If you offer a product or service, you can also incentivize “liking” your page through contests or offers.

But you don’t have to sell something to convince people to click. Sometimes, all it takes is a suggestion: put a Facebook button on your corporate site or blog, or link back to Facebook on your other social channels. You can run targeted Facebook ads directed at people who fit your target market or friends of people who already “like” your page. Don’t be afraid to have a call to action in your next status update:

“If you liked this post, make sure to “like” our page for more great updates!”
**BECOME YOUR OWN SOUS CHEF: SHOW UP IN ORGANIC SEARCH**

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**Be Shareable**

In the same vein as “Be Like-able,” the more people who share or interact with your posts, the better Facebook makes your search visibility.

This means investing a little bit of time and effort into creating engaging posts that your fans will comment on or share with their friends. You can use photos and visuals to increase the amount of engagement you get with your posts, because research shows that photos get 53% more likes, 104% more comments and 84% more clicks,\(^3\) which, in our opinion, is worth more than a lot more than 1000 words!

Give the people what they want—and what they want is something they can share with their friends. Ever re-posted an article that made you feel like you were providing your network with valuable information? Or shared an adorable photo of a cat because you knew it would make others feel just as warm-and-fuzzy as it made you feel? Think about what motivates you to post, and then use that motivation to drive your content creation.

One type of content that easily builds engagement is job postings. Members of your talent community may see a job that could interest their friends and “share” it on their own Timelines. If they have a friend in mind who would be perfect for the position, Facebook allows them to post directly to a friend’s Timeline. Use creative language or visual job descriptions in your job posts to further drive engagement and encourage sharing.
Hashtags: Breakfast of Champions?

Want your social sourcing strategy to grow up to be strong and healthy? Consider fortifying it with a serving of hashtags.

Hashtags are made up of two elements: the number sign (#) and a keyword. The purpose of a hashtag is to highlight a keyword or signal that a keyword is searchable. On Facebook, when you use a hashtag, the keyword you enter becomes blue, and if you click on it, you will be able to search every post in your network where this keyword has been recently used (You’ll also be able to see posts by people outside of your network if they have their updates set to public).

For example, you could hashtag the word #job, and you’ll see every recent post related to that hashtag. This is all well and good for status updates, but how does this help you leverage Graph Search for sourcing?

Considering the facts that a) Graph Search lets you search keywords, and b) people in your extended network are actively highlighting their keywords to make them searchable, you have a recipe for sourcing success. For example, you could search for a hashtag like #hireme or #Ineedajob. Believe it or not, there are people out there who are hashtagging for work!

Think of other hashtags that you might want to search for. Looking for a #programmer or #financialanalyst? Good news: they’re tagged and searchable. Want to find out who is following pages that post about #contentstrategy or #businessdevelopment? You’ll be able to expand your network by targeting the networks of like-minded posters. And if office culture is your thing, you can even run a search for the people who will beef up your company #kickball team (But hopefully that’s not the basis for your hiring decisions...if so, we may need to have a little conversation).

A healthy hashtag strategy puts you just one keystroke away from expanding your network.
“Hold on a second, Work4,” you say. “We think this Graph Search thing is nifty, but what about privacy concerns? Will people get upset if I’m contacting them on Facebook?”

Good question. When it comes to privacy, Facebook’s gotten pretty savvy over the last several years. They’ve made it more apparent where the privacy controls are, and they even make sure to give users a pop-up reminder whenever they make changes.

By this point, users should know what they’re sharing with friends and what they’re sharing with the public. Moreover, they have the ability to monitor their Activity Logs and limit, review, or hide the posts, photos, and videos in which they are tagged.

Graph Search is not about exploitation, but about responsible sourcing. You are only privy to posts by friends or friends of friends, as well as posts made completely public. You are also not allowed to spam people out of your network with messages—Facebook has taken care of that by creating an “other” inbox, which filters potentially unwanted messages or requires you to pay a small fee to reach an out-of-network contact.

What you can do is use your network to get introductions to the people whose credentials match your searches. Graph Search is a great way to get to know the people closest to you who can help make your talent search easier, both now and in the future.
Whether you intend to add just a pinch of Graph Search to your sourcing strategy or you plan on making Facebook the centerpiece of your recruitment, this incredible new sourcing tool will make your social recruitment worthy of a four-star review.

To recap:

- Graph Search helps you source relevant candidates who match your job descriptions
- Graph Search makes your recruitment message visible to potential candidates
- Graph Search lets you source both in and out of your network with hashtags and natural language
- Graph Search protects candidate privacy, while revealing the right information to you

If you’re considering adding Facebook to the menu, and you’re ready to start sourcing the best quality candidates on the world’s largest social network, then Work4 can give you a hand.

Our master chefs have just revealed the secret ingredient for Facebook sourcing: Graph Search Recruiter, which makes sourcing simple by connecting your jobs list to Graph Search so you can match profiles and job descriptions in 1-click!

Want a taste? Make a reservation by contacting Work4 today!
SOURCES

1. http://techcrunch.com/2013/05/17/facebook-growth/
Work4 powers social recruiting by making everyone a recruiter and everyone a candidate.

We help thousands of companies, including many of the Fortune 500, find, engage, and hire top talent with our all-in-one recruiting solution for Facebook. Work4 allows employers to reach candidates through a Facebook Career Site and on mobile devices, take advantage social networks to drive employee referrals, and target Facebook’s 1 billion users with intelligent recruiting ads. Work4 brings cost-effective, efficient sourcing and hiring to the world’s top companies by leveraging the reach and scope of the world’s largest and most powerful social network.

Established in 2010 and backed by top tier investors such as Matrix Partners and Yuri Milner, Work4 has offices in San Francisco and Paris.

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