



Skill and Work Requirements:

Placeholder text for skill and work requirements.



# A Season of Giving: It's Time to Give Gifts to Seasonal Hires (and Retailers)

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Autumn has barely arrived, but retailers are already thinking about the holiday shopping season and the need to hire critical temporary / seasonal staff. The question is—how would you find the appropriate people to work towards delivering 'back to black' and turning in a double-digit holiday season? Using an analog staffing approach in a digital age—calling in associates to cover shifts on short notice, having them punch in and out on timecards, and tying advancement to time-in-grade rather than capabilities or performance—doesn't seem to make sense. This is particularly true because self-directed, demand-driven staffing models can help confirm that you have the appropriate staff on the floor, with the appropriate experience at the appropriate time to deliver excellent service and increase sales.



## GIFT #1: Retailer & Employee Choice

Self-directed staffing models among nurses and flight attendants have been in place for years, and talent in today's retail market is similarly attracted to work options that seek to provide choices in scheduling, shift duration, tasks/activities and wages. Think Uber for retail, without traffic jams of black sedans.

Dynamic scheduling is easier given the transparency enabled by digital and mobile technologies, social media engagement and analytics. The core components of dynamic staffing consist of:



### Self-Selected Scheduling

Allowing talent to select their days of week, times of day and shift activity would mean higher satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, increased customer satisfaction.



### Weighted Wages

It's a market economy. Scaling wages to pay more for the most important times of day, days of week and activities only makes sense for willing, qualified and interested employees.



### Skills Profile

Qualifying talent by assigning proficiency levels would help obtain confirmation for a retailer that candidates possess the requirements for a role / activity.



### Real-Time Evaluation

Digitally enabled real-time customer and manager feedback means that coaching and recognition are continuous. Star-ratings would allow management to set the value of certain skills, and identify employees who could potentially benefit from training to seek to enhance their value.



### Faster/Better Training

When retailers access digital and mobile platforms to communicate with employees and candidates, a new opportunity for more effective training and learning is created.

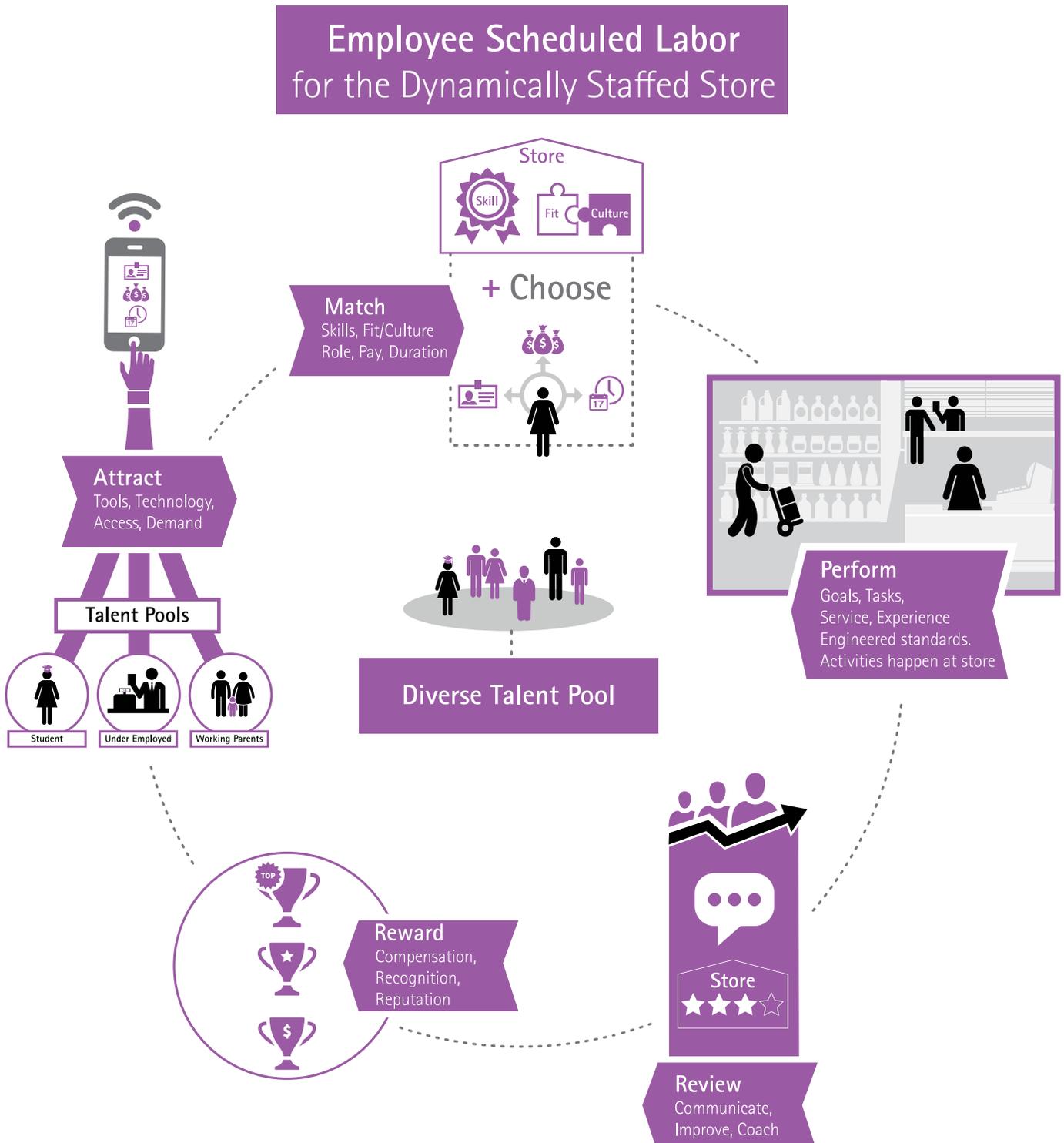


### Shared External Talent Pools

Top talent can be shared across a retailer's brands. Increased flexibility for workers also means improved nimbleness for retailers to better manage their SG&A line.

Taken together, these components make for a more transparent, open approach to staffing and development. Employees and managers alike are constantly engaged in discussion about what kind of effort is needed, where, when and why. Accenture research found that this kind of collaboration is required to develop retail talent that adds to growth and operating excellence. (See figure 1: The Dynamic Staffing Lifecycle).

**Figure 1: The Dynamic Staffing Lifecycle**





Skill and Role Recommendations:

Placeholder text for Skill and Role Recommendations.





**GIFT #2:**  
**Employees Do  
What They Like**

Dynamic staffing has both general and specific appeal to employees. On a broad basis, all employees could potentially benefit by finding roles that interest and excite them in work environments appropriate for their lifestyle and pay requirements. When workers guide their own destiny in terms of the role they play, the skills they use, the hours they work and the wages they require, they are happier and more engaged.

This approach could be a boon for workers that were previously excluded from retail work characterized by rigid 6 or 8 hours shifts and work activities not matched to employee strengths or interests. More working parents, students on extended break, and underemployed breadwinners would gravitate to positions in retail in an employee-driven, flexible model.



**GIFT #3:**  
**Retailers Attract  
Top Talent**

Retailers would stand to gain as much or more from dynamic staffing as workers. First, they source better talent faster and cheaper, allowing improved delivery of the customer experience. Current retail companies like GigWalk and Field Agent already tap into new pockets of talent through distributed workforce models to conduct activities like floor-level observations or audits. (See sidebar on Distributed Workforces.)

Mainstream retailers could emulate these approaches, identifying talent that has a knack for store operations, visual creativity or customer engagement / service. Second, retailers could open up schedules much closer to actual workdays. Dynamic scheduling could free up managerial time to focus on higher value activities and changes the conversations among managers and staff.

## Distributed Workforces— they're in the air, on the ground, and on a street near you

Alternative labor models sound futuristic but they have field tested their value in a range of industries and environments. Most people know about Uber's model – drivers using their own vehicles to provide transportation services during hours they control with pay rates reflective of demand. What gets overlooked is that TaskRabbit launched the same type of demand-driven approach almost a decade ago: a broad pool of 'taskers' specifies their skill range and bids to perform tasks, the difficulty or uniqueness of which helps set their wage. And, although we don't see them, air traffic controllers have used a bid system for years, one which factors in seniority and differential pay to help verify coverage on less desirable shifts and allows for shift swaps among bidders. All these arrangements match demand and supply in ways that would work for both the principle organization and the individuals doing the work for them.





**GIFT #4:**  
**More Attractive,  
Competitive Work  
Environment**

As retailers shift to dynamic staffing, they would recast their work environment for the digital, smart, fast-learning workforce. The new environment would consist of:

- Intuitive roles and tasks that work towards easy integration into the work day, developing 'good retail athletes' as they fill shifts. As the season progresses, this model would deliver employee development and a better experience for the customer. Social, real-time feedback mechanisms to seek to improve employee performance and strengthen immediate dialogue. Together, these work towards building a retailers' reputation as an employer of choice among talent.
- Fun places to work, with clear operating procedures and enabling tools such as mobile technology or walk-up user interfaces that help with stocking, selling and even mobile POS.



**GIFT #5:**  
**Retail Careers  
as First Choice  
vs. Last Resort**

Finally, embracing dynamic staffing allows retailers to work towards expanding the conversation from one based on hours and wages to a broader discussion of work/life integration and economic dynamics. Dynamic staffing could be more collaborative, more efficient and more thoughtful. Retailers could be current with attracting top talent and providing opportunities that could last more than a season.

Given the competition for talent, deploying one or more of these strategies can make the coming holiday shopping season a happy and productive one for retailers and workers alike.

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