



Still churning through talents

Find a more strategic RPO provider.



Introduction

Scaling up recruitment often means implementing an RPO solution.

It is cost-effective, speedy and it gets the job done.

But not every RPO provider takes a strategic approach. There are many providers who continue to deliver RPO with a transactional mindset, focused on getting candidates from application to offer as fast as they can. It tends to be a one-size-fits-all way of working, with the emphasis on being process-first, cost-conscious and target-driven.

The challenge of working with a process-driven RPO is that it can be detrimental to your long-term success. Pushing talent through a standardised process can be detrimental to the candidate experience. It can damage your employer reputation and harm your chances to attracting the very best. It can put hiring managers under pressure and lead to poor hiring decisions, which can mean those candidates you bring through the system just as quickly exiting again.





RPO as a strategic solution

One of the key challenges that many Talent Acquisition teams have faced throughout 2025 is that recruitment needs have reduced, teams have been scaled back and corresponding budgets have been cut.

Starting from a point of reduced capacity, it becomes even harder for these Talent Acquisition teams to scale their recruitment efforts quickly when the business needs them to. As economic uncertainty continues, and organisations find it difficult to forecast and plan for the future, Talent Acquisition teams are leaner, less able to respond quickly to change, and under more pressure to be agile.

It is a culture that tends to foster short-termism and it is creating a significant opportunity for RPO providers to play a more strategic, transformative role. They should set out to offer their clients a different perspective, helping to challenge and change this short-term mindset and put in place the process, resource and infrastructure to build a long-term plan for talent.



What makes an RPO “strategic”?

A strategic RPO partner is not merely a recruiter-for-hire. Instead, it serves as an extension of your talent acquisition team, bringing advanced tools, diverse expertise, and long-term planning to the table. Key hallmarks of strategic RPO include:

- » Scalability and Flexibility: Adapting to rapid growth needs without compromising quality.
- » Technology Integration: Leveraging AI, data analytics, and applicant tracking systems to optimise hiring outcomes.
- » Brand Alignment: Enhancing employer branding and ensuring consistent messaging across every candidate touchpoint.
- » Diversity and Inclusion: Embedding DEI strategies into recruitment to improve representation and performance.
- » Candidate-Centric Approaches: Prioritising candidate experience as a driver of retention and brand equity.





Creating a better talent solution

The best RPO providers create a solution that suits candidates, hiring managers and TA teams – rather than forcing stakeholders through an existing process that is not built for their business. Solution-building in RPO is often supported by a wider breadth of services that would not fall under the guise of a traditional RPO. These services could include market insight and research, employer brand development and recruitment marketing, as well as different cost models that enable clients to adapt to market changes and control their outsourcing costs more quickly and easily.

Elevating the Candidate Experience

Candidate experience isn't just a soft metric—it's a critical factor in employee retention. Candidates judge a company by their recruitment journey. If it's slow, impersonal, or disorganised, top talent walks away—or worse, accepts an offer and leaves soon after. Unfortunately, many RPO models still focus narrowly on SLAs and KPIs, prioritising time-to-fill over human connection. Strategic RPOs buck this trend. They invest in understanding the client's culture, tone of voice, and values, crafting a personalised experience at every stage—from tailored communications to thoughtful rejection notes. This approach fosters trust, builds employer brand loyalty, and increases offer acceptance and retention rates.

Employer Branding That Attracts—and Keeps—Top Talent

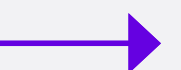
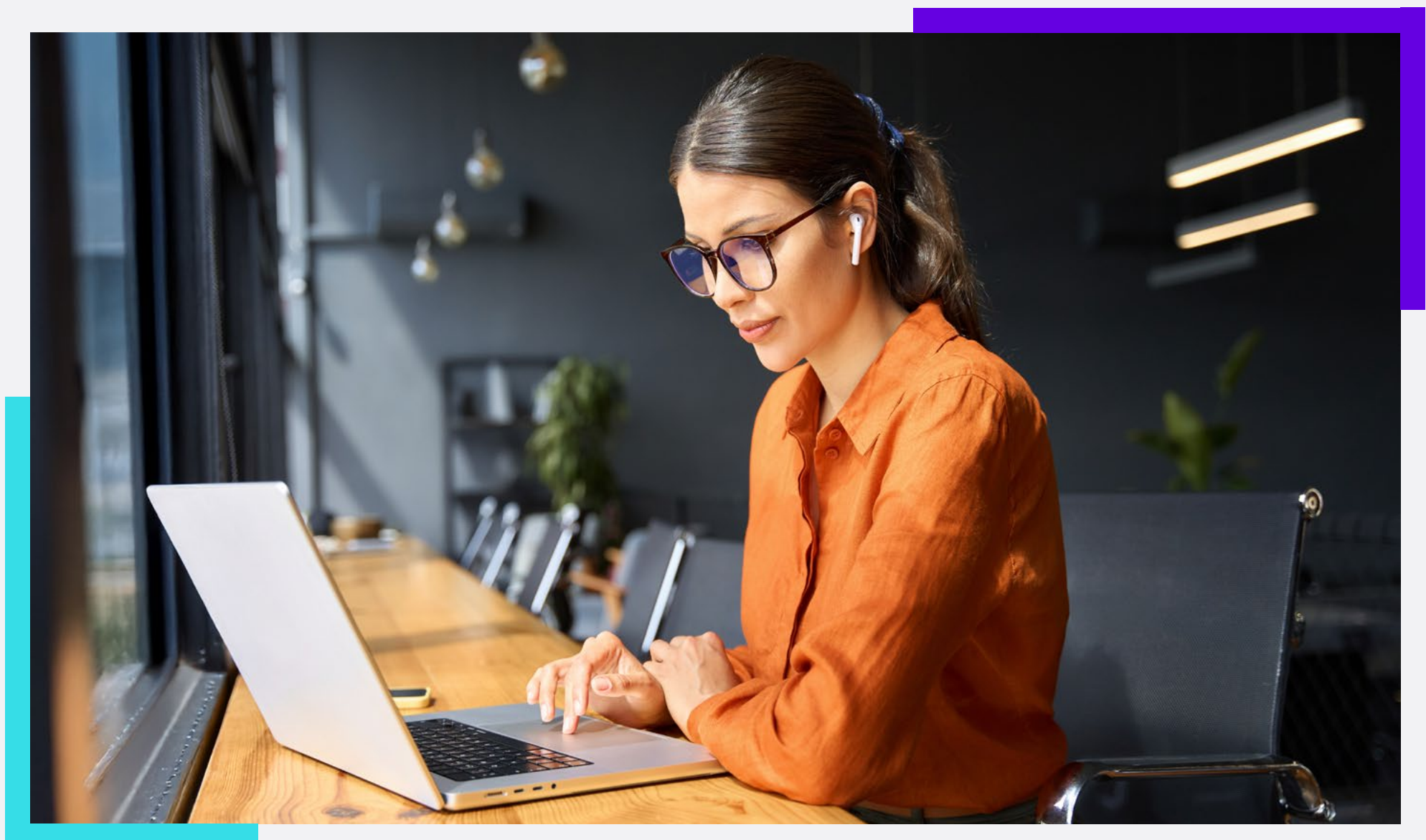
Your employer brand sets the tone for the kind of talent you attract and retain. Yet many organisations treat it as a one-off marketing campaign. Strategic RPOs take a different approach: they embed brand strategy across every stage of the recruitment lifecycle. They use candidate feedback, market insights, and EVP development to craft compelling narratives and ensure consistent messaging. In doing so, they not only attract the right candidates but also help organisations retain them by reinforcing cultural alignment and engagement.

Building Talent Communities for the Long Term

Another way strategic RPO prevents churn is by shifting focus from one-off hires to long-term talent pooling. Rather than discarding unsuccessful candidates, these RPOs nurture relationships over time—through content marketing, CRM engagement, and regular check-ins. This talent community approach ensures a ready pipeline of warm, qualified candidates, reducing time-to-hire and improving cultural fit when roles arise. It also reinforces brand loyalty and reduces the need to “start from scratch” with every new vacancy.

Data-Driven Continuous Improvement

Churn thrives in opacity. Without feedback loops and analytics, hiring teams struggle to see what's working and what's not. Strategic RPOs bring transparency through robust data tracking and reporting. They measure not just time and cost, but candidate satisfaction, retention rates, and source-of-hire effectiveness. By surfacing these insights, they enable iterative improvements to process and strategies—reducing mis-hires and keeping the recruitment engine running smoothly.





Conclusion

The world of work is shifting—driven by changing expectations, new technologies, and talent shortages. To remain competitive, organisations need recruitment solutions that are not only efficient but human-centric, agile, and aligned to long-term goals.

Strategic RPOs meet this need by blending operational scale with thoughtful engagement. They help employers move from reactive to proactive, from churn to retention, and from transactional hiring to talent strategy.

Rather than spinning in the cycle of attrition and rehiring, organisations that partner with strategic RPOs build a more resilient, loyal, and high-performing workforce—one that's ready to drive growth for years to come.





To find out more about our offering, or to discuss how we can support your business, **please get in touch.**

Website: talent-works.com

Email: stuart.white@talent-works.com

Calendar link: lp.talent-works.com/meetings/stuart-white