

Social Media Recruitment Strategies: Ministry Health Care

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### Abstract

This pilot study examines the social media recruitment strategies of Ministry Health Care. Ministry Health Care is made up of hospitals, clinics, and home based services throughout the state of Wisconsin. It is the largest Catholic health care system in Wisconsin. The researcher is a recruitment consultant for the organization who utilized a qualitative research method to answer three research questions: (1) How often did Generation Y associates use social media and other related technologies in their job search activities, (2) what role did social media and other related technologies play in the associate's job search activities, and (3) if the associate felt that the Ministry Health Care's social media and related technology recruitment strategies were effective in attracting them to their job opportunities. Fifteen Generation Y Registered Nurses (RN) were interviewed to learn about their job search activities. Conclusions were that RNs did not utilize social media or other related technologies in their job search activities that led to their employment with Ministry Health Care. Instead, the RNs utilized the Ministry Health Care website directly. The RNs said their most popular job search activities in order are: the employers website, internet search, word of mouth, or online job boards.

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## **Literature Review**

Organizations need to better understand the use of social media in their recruitment strategies. By understanding how job seekers search for jobs, organizations can better align their recruitment strategies with the resources that jobseekers are using in their search. This will ensure their recruitment strategies are aligned appropriately with jobseeker practices. Most organizations believe that new technologies like social media can create efficiency in work and therefore reduce costs to business operations. There is no cost to having a social media account, so organizations have quickly implemented a social media presence online. Organizations have done this with little academic research to support the success of social media in recruitment strategies. Organizations should determine the value of social media as a recruitment strategy prior to implementation.

Organizations should also understand which generations of job seekers are using social media. When organizations know who is using social media they can determine if it meets their strategic recruiting goals. The purpose of this study is to take a qualitative approach to understanding a generation's use of social media and other related technologies in their job search activities, and determine how often and why they may use social media in their job search activities. When organizations know whom, how often, and why job seekers are using social media in their job searching activities they will be better equipped to make decisions on how to utilize social media in recruitment strategies. By doing so they will ultimately they will be able to examine the possibility of creating efficiencies in work. Organizations will also be better equipped when changes in candidate job search behavior occurs so they can be best prepared to change as technology changes.

Researching recruitment today means looking at a cross-generational candidate pool. Understanding how to recruit today to attract the newest generation to enter the work force is important in this pilot study. Understanding the best way to attract and obtain qualified candidates will help organizations focus their resources to obtain their recruitment goals. This will give organizations an edge in getting connected to the right candidates quicker, and making them more competitive in the markets where there is competition for qualified candidates.

The focus of this study is the social media recruitment strategies of Ministry Health Care. In 2009 the Recruitment Department, which is part of the greater Human Resources Department, started implementing social media recruitment strategies. This prospectus will first look at the literature that will help support the need for research in social media recruitment. The literature review is divided into six sections. The first is a look at the history of human resources and recruitment, second is a look at the generational differences of today's job seekers. The third section looks at organizational technology, and then leads into the related fourth section on social media. The fifth section is the literature on social media recruitment strategies, and finally the sixth section examines metrics of measuring technology and social media in organizations.

This prospectus then introduces the details of the current Ministry Health Care social media recruitment strategies, and provides specific details about the organization. The combination of the literature review and an examination of the Ministry Health Care recruitment strategies resulted in three research questions. The three questions that this pilot study will look to answer are: How often did Generation Y associates use social media and other related technologies in their job search activities, what role did social media and other related technologies play in the associate's job search activities, and did the associate feel that the Ministry Health Care's social media and related technology recruitment strategies were effective

in attracting them to their job opportunities? These three research questions will lead into the final section of this prospectus.

The final section of this prospectus is the methods section. A qualitative research method was determined to be the most appropriate way to answer the research questions. The participants of this pilot study will be 15 Registered Nurses (RN), and that data will be collected through one-hour semi-structured interviews. The analysis of this study will look at the data provided by the RNs to look for themes and patterns that may enhance or improve the current social media recruitment strategies that were implemented at Ministry Health Care five years ago.

This pilot study will be valuable not only to Ministry Health Care, but to other organizations as well. This study would be of interest to researchers in Organizational Communication, Psychology, Sociology, Business, Information Technology, Human Resource Professionals, and other practical users.

The literature review will start with a brief history of human resources and recruitment to examine historical recruitment strategies. This will present a baseline for understanding current recruitment strategies in social media. It will then present information of the multi-generational candidates that make up current job seekers. This will help organizations learn more about the characteristics of the multi-generational job seekers that are in the marketplace. Next the use of technology in organizations will be examined. Understanding how organizations utilize technology in strategic goals will play a major role in understanding social media in recruitment. The technology discussion will then expand into the introduction of social media into recruitment strategies as one of the new forms of technology introduced into organizational goals. Social media recruitment strategies will then be explored in the literature, to gain an

understanding of how others are using social media in recruitment strategies. Finally the literature review will examine the importance of using metrics to measure the effectiveness of technology, and new technologies like social media.

### **Human Resources Recruitment History**

To better understand how to recruit today, an exploration of the history of human resources and recruitment is necessary. It is important to look back and see how the profession of human management started. By looking at what was learned in the past, will help determine where it should go in the future.

The history of recruiting differs depending on what source is reviewed. Spangola (2010) says that recruitment can be recorded back to ancient Egypt, and was used for the creation of military groups. While Chukwononso (1995) and Kaizenlob (2006) both say that it started with Mary Wood. Mary Wood was a woman who was tasked to recruit women for personnel type duties in the first World War. The one thing that can be agreed upon is that the armed forces needed the assistance of human resources to help assess abilities and IQ's and other human factors (Chuckwonson 1995, Kaizenlob 2006).

The birth of the modern recruiting industry did not take place until the 1940s due to the second World War. Recruiters would try to solicit those not going to war to fill the void left in the workforce by those who were going off to war. This was a time when new skills were needed in the work place, so out of this necessity organizations needed to call on the assistance of outside resources to find workers with these specialized skills. This created a new industry called headhunting. In the beginning headhunting agencies worked for the job seeker until the 1970's, when a strong economy and a flood of applicants emerged in the workforce. Then it shifted to headhunters working for employers. During this time in history employers would out-

source their hiring, but when labor laws were introduced over the next twenty years, it became more difficult to maintain that relationship, primarily due to the liability under the definition of an independent contractor (Spagnola, 2010), and headhunting again changed and decreased as employers turned to internal resources for staffing positions. Today headhunters are referred to as third party search firms, or executive search firms, but regardless of the change in name, the service they provide is the same.

Another change in the recruitment industry has occurred within the past 15 years. Prior to applicant tracking systems organizations found it difficult to store paper applications and have an efficient way to track qualified candidates for future consideration. Wheeler (2001) wrote an article where he describes the introduction of applicant tracking systems. He said many organizations followed the change, and introduced an applicant tracking system into their organization. Organizations were interested in no longer having file cabinets full of paper applications. They were relieved that they could retrieve resumes electronically. He says what the applicant tracking system really did was allow for an alternate way to store resumes but he argues that tracking applicants themselves is what is important and not the tracking of resumes. He goes on to say that if the relationship between the organization and the candidate is the most important thing then screening candidates for skills, cultural fit and general abilities really becomes the key, but most applicant tracking systems do not allow for that. What Wheeler is suggesting is putting the focus more on the applicant or perhaps even finding the right recruitment tool that better allows recruiters to find the right candidate to fit their needs, and take the focus of a technology that may not deliver what is really important.

Even though the human resources role has changed over the years, in many ways the recruitment process itself has not changed significantly over the past 40 years. What usually

occurs is that first a job need is posted, then second an applicant fills out an employment application, third the applicant is interviewed, and finally the applicant is either hired or rejected. There has not been much creativity in the physical process of recruitment. There have been creative ways of posting jobs, but the actual recruitment steps are almost always the same. It is also important to understand recruitment strategies that may be evolving past the traditional strategies of the past 40 years.

More recruiters are realizing that with the need to replace skilled workers once the Baby Boomers retire they need to start building relationships with candidates well before there is a job need. Organizations have created unique strategies to attract top students from top schools and Fortune 500 companies. These strategies include tickets and trips to ski resorts and professional sporting events, including flying candidates into corporate offices from across the country (Armour, 2007). These recruitment strategies are aimed at attracting highly skilled candidates to their organization. When organizations are competing for the same type of skilled candidate creative recruitment strategies are used in hopes of becoming the preferred employer of choice. Some organizations have created programs where they are guaranteeing a leadership position within five years through job rotation and other internal leadership training programs. Organizations have even purchased billboards to attract candidates by placing their job marketing information in strategic locations, like near a large competitor (Armour, 2007). Most of these students and young professionals from Fortune 500 companies are the newest generations to join the workforce, so it is important to understand who they are.

### **Multi-Generational Job Seeker**

Recruiters and organizations alike should understand the different generations of job seekers that make up the candidate pool. Specifically to this pilot study it will be important to

understand their job search activities. The three generations that make up most of the candidate pool are Baby Boomers who were born between 1943 and 1960, Generation X, who were born between 1961 and 1981, and Generation Y who were born in or after 1982. Most researchers use these dates published by authors Howe and Strauss in the book *Millennials Rising* (2000). The dates used to define the generations are not consistent in the research. Most researchers will agree that in the research the dates used to define the generations are different, usually only within a few years. Baby Boomers have also been identified as being born between 1946 and 1965, Generation X between 1966 and 1980, and Generation Y being born between 1981 and 2000 (Catalyst, 2012). For the purposes of this study the dates established by authors Howe and Strauss will be used. It is important to also recognize the other name Generation Y may be referenced as in the event an alternative name is used outside this study. Millennial is the most popular alternative name to Generation Y, but other names include, Baby Boomlet, The Internet Generation, Echo Boomers, Nexters, Nintendo Generation, The Digital Generation (Raines, 2002), (Cole, 2002), (Paul, 2001), and (Howe and Strauss, 2000), Raines (2002) says that in Canada they are referred to as the Sunshine Generation.

The newest generation to enter the workforce is Generation Y. Generation Y are those job seekers born in or after 1982. Unlike the previous generations they grew up entirely on the internet. Their relationship with technology is very unique (Kohut, 2007). Generation X and the Baby Boomer Generation are becoming a smaller portion of both the workforce and the candidate pool as the Baby Boomers retire. It is important to understand that Generation Y is just as large as the Baby Boomers population was at their peak (Cole, 2002). Making Generation Y a significant population of job seeker.

The most influential years for Generation Y were the 1990s and 2000s. They are the first generation to grow up surrounded by digital media (Raines, 2002). They recognize the positive aspects of technology and expand their social networking to maintain family and friend relationships. Generation Y is more like the Baby Boomer generation than that of its predecessor Generation X. Raines (2002) agrees with Stauss and Howe that the characteristics of Generation Y include being confident, hopeful, goal and achievement orientated, civic minded, and inclusive. Raines (2002) also shares that federal reports show that Generation Y are more economically secure than any earlier generation.

Understanding the characteristics of the different generations helps recruiters and organizations develop recruitment strategies that are specific to the needs of a specific generation job seeker. Generation Y will probably look for their employer to be socially responsible. In the workplace Generation Y will flourish in an environment where they have direct say on how work is done and be given the ability to innovate (Cole, 2002). Generation Y is quick to adapt to changes in organizations like new communication technologies or a more global workforce. Understanding the characteristics of Generation Y will help organizations and recruiters in their recruitment strategies. Knowing their preferences in their job seeking activities, and their preferences once they are part of an organizations will help organizations develop the right technological communication tools for both their attraction and retention goals.

The other generation that is important to understand in recruitment strategies, and currently makes up a large portion of the current workforce, is Generation X. Cole (2002) says that Generation X is acceptant of change and diversity in the workplace and use of technology to process information. Cole (2002) also states Generation X are survivors who do not expect to conquer the world in the workplace that means they accept that advancement opportunities are

probably not in their future. Generation X looks outside of work for fulfillment Cole (2002).

Generation X does not find their identity in work or find it self-fulfilling. Work is a means to an end, but Generation X does work hard to survive (Cole, 2002). To Generation X success is measured by pure survival. As long as they have a good time, are able to make their own decisions and make enough money to enjoy material things then they are happy (Cole, 2002).

Generation X is as different from Generation Y as they can be (Raines, 2002). Paul (2001) agrees, but when it comes to career expectations both Generation Y and Generation X are in agreement that work is not the most important part of their lives. Cole (2002) suggests it is possible this may have an impact in the future. These generations will most likely look for more flexible work schedules that fit their needs for work/life balance. The research does indicate that work is just not as important to Generation X or Generation Y as it was to the Baby Boomers. The focus for Generation X and Generation Y is placed on the importance of family and other non-work relationships. The years that Generation X and Generation Y grew up shaped the way they view the world. The way in which they were raised by their parents impacted their views and expectations as well. Understanding this is important to recruiters and organizations so that they understand what expectations these generations may have with their job search activities.

Cole (2002) surmises that what seems to be certain is employers, economists, legal scholars and others need to understand the huge wave of Generation Y that is poised to impact the American workplace in a dramatic way. Although Generation Y is not the only generation in the candidate pool they are the early adopters of new technologies. It is important to understand all the generation's characteristics when evaluating recruitment strategies. To understand each generation's interest in applying for jobs, and specifically, how they want to learn of job openings is key to developing the best recruitment strategies. It is important to understand their

preference in job posting detail, how they prefer to express interest in a job opportunity, and how they want to be contacted by a recruiter or organization. It will also be important to understand how they want to experience the interview process. Their preference could be a traditional interview process, a job shadow, a realistic job preview, or even something completely unknown. It is important to understand what leads them to ultimately accept a job.

### **Technology**

Organizations are now looking to technology to help them connect to the different generations that make up the candidate pool. To better understand what organizations are doing today, it is important to understand the impact technology has had on organizations over the past twenty years.

Research done in 1995 found that organizations were implementing 50 percent of their capital investments in information technology (IT) (Mooney, Gurbaxzni, and Kraemer).

Today it can be seen how important it was for organizations to invest in IT, as technology has continued to grow, evolve and change rapidly in organizations since. Organizations can now be virtual or mobile through the introduction of technologies like the smartphone. Research done with the Pennsylvania Justice System (Sawyer, Tapei, 2005) examined the articulation as it relates to new technologies. In the study articulation refers to the way communication occurs through the use of technology. The research suggested that organizations often overlook the time and effort put into new technology issues that can actually make a technology less efficient. For example, if given a smartphone for work, organizations may overlook the loss of cell signal or battery life or charge that may interfere with the ability to use the technology in an efficient way. The organization may not account for the inefficiency of work when the technology does not work as it was intended. Members of an organization may

be more accessible by having a smartphone, but how much time is wasted trying to get a cell phone signal or charging their phone in order to use that technology. The researchers conclude that with any new technology comes added work, which could mean added costs to the bottom line if other resources are not made available.

The smartphone technology changed job-searching activities. From a recruitment standpoint this means that candidates are mobile now, so candidates have the freedom to conduct their job search activities from the palm of their hand. An article published by USA Today (2013) warns that organizations could be missing out on top candidates if their websites and application platforms are not optimized for mobile devices. The article shared that job boards like Indeed.com and CareerBuilder.com have reported that mobile device searches have more than doubled. Many organizations are falling behind this trend, since only two percent of Fortune 500 companies have tailored employment applications for mobile device users. This means if the employment application is not smartphone friendly applicants will become frustrated and give up on completing the application. It is important not only for organizations to make themselves mobile, but also to be sure a customized application is available for mobile users so they do not lose out on top candidates, because their technology is lagging behind the needs of the candidates. The Ministry Health Care Marketing Department identified that 38 percent of traffic to their webpages was through the use of a mobile device.

It is important to understand how technology also impacts the quality of communication within organizations and between organizational members. The discipline that has the biggest body of research on the subject of technology use in organizations is Sociology. Sociology has developed a growing body of studies related to work, technology and interaction in organizational environments (Heath, Hubert, Knoblauc and Luff, 2000). The researchers

studied the social interactions of workplace activities through the lens of technology and how massive the role of socialization is in an organization as it relates to the use of technologies. The research uses an artifact analogy to help connect the socialization of people to the understanding of how socialization occurs among people with the presentation of technology. In this research the artifact represents the tool used in the workplace, like the computer or the smartphone. The symbolic artifact in this research replaces the physical artifact with the digital artifact of technology like email or the instant message. The integration of new technologies is not always successful, possibly due to the way in which technology is integrated into social systems in an organization. This research suggests that the advances in technology, and specifically communication technologies, have had an impact on socialization among organizational members. This paradigm shift is important to understand, as new technologies are considered for implementation with organization. It is best to be able to determine first if the new communication technology will create efficiencies in work or communication and if there will be any adverse impacts. From a recruitment standpoint it is important in understanding how organizations will build relationships outside the organization with stakeholders, customers, and job seekers. If an organizational goal is to attract Generation Y job seekers, then it is especially important to understand which communication technologies work best for these job seekers, and then determine how to fit that into recruitment strategies.

Sias, Pedersen, Gallagher, and Kopeneva (2012) support the idea that technology has the potential to integrate as successfully into organizations as face-to-face communication. These communication scholars agree that the successes of technology use of communication tools in an organization is related to the connections in socialization. What they conclude is that even with the successful use of a new technology like email, texting, or instant messaging,

when it comes to building and maintaining relationships in the organization face-to-face communication still remains the optimal form of communication. Researchers have long looked for the effectiveness of communication technologies that replace face-to-face communication. With the increase of technological communication tools within organizations that are replacing face-to-face communication it is important to research the effectiveness of these tools among its organizational members.

A recent research study conducted looked at the impacts of technology overload and the adverse impacts (Misra, Stokols, 2011). This study involved tech savvy college students, but is appropriate to this study to ensure that organizations do not put too much focus on improving recruitment technology. Too much technology could result in technology overload for job seekers, leading to adverse impacts on the recruitment strategies. The research conducted did find a significant relationship between the overload of technology use and increased stress on a technology user. Assessing the adverse impacts of the use of technology communication may be of value to the reader who may be looking at adding new communication technologies. The researchers found an increased cost in healthcare and workers compensation claims related to communication overload. This impact would result in the opposite result organizations look for technology to accomplish. Organizations would most likely see the loss of efficiency in communication delivery if organizational members experienced technology overload.

### **The newest use of Technology: Social Media**

One of the newest ways organizations utilize technology is through the use of social media. Organizations are eager to understand and implement new technologies into their organization with the hopes of creating efficiencies. Historically, organizations have not been able to implement technologies quickly due to lack of time, resources and cost. Social media

technology has changed that. Now, social media technology allows organizations to quickly implement with very little time, resources, and cost. It is important to understand how social media has penetrated today's organizations and how organizations are using social media. Organizations like Wells Fargo are tying their strategic goals to their social media strategies (Roberts, 2012), while other organizations are using it for organizational education and training. Anytime organizations introduce new technology it is important to ensure appropriate integrations of technologies by ensuring support not only from key stakeholders, but from the organizational members as well. British authors Ravenscroft, Schmidt, Cook, and Bradley (2012) in an information technology journal suggest that incorporating social media tools into education curriculum is a revolutionary step in which all learning methods evolve, but it is highly complex when it comes to the constraints of the learners (Zielinski, 2012). Many organizations use Facebook, LinkedIn and other social media sites for external activities like branding, marketing, and recruiting, often with positive results (Roberts, 2012). According to a survey conducted by The Society of Human Resource Management in 2012, 55 percent of responding employers planned to increase the use of social media in recruitment in the next 12 months, but only 21 percent of them plan to utilize a tool to measure the return on investment (Zielinski, 2012).

New technologies including smart phones, and social media sites like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are all potential new ways to connect with an audience outside of the organization. Organizations are using social media to stay connected to their customers, build a brand or attract top talent into their organization. Recruiters continue to look for new ways to use social media in their recruitment strategies, primarily because social media is low cost with the potential for high returns (Overman, 2007). Organizations have

paid close attention to the popular business journals as they relate to their strategic social media business initiatives, but little academic research has been done to support the popular opinion. The goal of this study is to get a better understanding if Generation Y is using social media in their job search activities, and then to determine how often and why they use social media in their job search activities. Owyang (2012) found that many organizations are using the “fire, ready, aim” method of implementation of social media strategies. This implies that organizations are jumping to social media without looking to find what the return or the value will be in using social media for their organizational needs first.

Organizations are also using social media to keep virtual and telecommuting teams connected, perhaps in hopes of building stronger teams and creating efficiencies. Organizations are using social media as the new platform for building these relationships. Thanks to technology and the development of new social media technologies members stay connected to each other from across time zones and distance. Sias, Pedersen, Gallagher, and Kopeneva (2012) looked at workplace friendships among telecommuters and found that face to face work should be provided whenever possible, but that information communication technologies (ICTs), such as email, telephone, and texting are also essential in their communication with their co-workers. Social media platforms like Yammer allow teams to share documents, projects, ideas and thoughts in an interactive environment. Yammer is an interactive cloud technology that gives organizational members access to the same materials when they cannot all be together in the same physical location. This interactive environment is just one of the ways organizations are using social media outside of recruitment (Zielinski, 2012). Zielinski shares that Pitney Bowes adopted a Yammer business plan that costs \$5 per user per month. Pitney Bowes has found that Yammer builds a sense of community. Eileen

Spring from Pitney Bowes says, “It (Yammer) enables this global group to come together and feel like a team (Zielinski, 2012 p. 44).” For telecommuters and teams that work outside of the corporate office, social media is allowing workgroups to still be social and work together.

Social media helps the paradigm shift along. Virtual and Telecommuting teams find alternatives for the loss of face-to-face communication through new technologies provided by social media.

Understanding how organizational members stay connected through communication is not only important to organizational members, but it is also important to new members joining the organization. Setting up expectations for the candidates on how they may will be socialized into the organization is important. Candidates research the organization just as thoroughly as recruiters and the organization research the candidate’s skills and abilities. Qualman (2009) discussed in an article called *The Socialnomics of Social Media* that Generation X and Generation Y are breaking down the “Social Schizophrenia” wall. In the past most people have maintained one identity for work and one identity for their personal lives. With social media people now have friends, family and co-workers connected together, and they are moving towards maintaining one identify.

### **Recruitment Strategies for Today**

Organizations are always looking for new ways to attract top talent to their organizations. Today many articles are related to the latest phenomenon, social media. Social media was introduced in the early 2000’s, and it has only grown since then. Organizations today use social media not only as a strong marketing initiative, but also as a recruiting tool. Job seekers are testing the waters by tossing their personal networking net into the virtual social networking pool. Job seekers are extending their network into the social network. Popular professional

journals are confident that today's job seeker is turning to social media and leaving traditional job boards. Experince.Com, a college placement firm, says 88 percent of entry-level positions in the United States are now listed only online (Payne, 2011). It is believed that job seekers are moving away from the traditional job boards like Monster and CareerBuilder and moving towards social media where they feel more comfortable and in control (Russo, 2011). This shift in job search activity has raised the LinkedIn market share from 4.7 percent in 2010 to a projected 12.2 percent by 2013 according to Evercore Partners (Russo, 2011). In June of 2013 LinkedIn was fourth, behind Twitter, in market share based on the amount of visitors to its site (Kallas, 2013). Facebook was number one and YouTube was number two. Fortune 500 companies like GE and PepsiCo are also embracing social media. 42 percent of Fortune 500 companies now have a Facebook or LinkedIn page (Russo, 2011). Recruiters who plan to use social media in hiring rose from 83 percent in 2010 to 89 percent in 2011, with the highest usage going to LinkedIn at 87 percent (Russon, 2011).

The need to attract top talent into organizations is unchanged, but the way in which talent is attracted into an organization is changing. Organizations across the nation are becoming more creative in attracting candidates (Armour, 2007). The competition to find talent has become fierce and to add difficulty Generation Y also has some of their own expectations when it comes to looking for employment and what they expect from an organization. For example, "Students are asking more about what you have to offer. Students today, more than in the last 10 years, want it all." (Armour, 2007). This means recruiters and organizations have to be prepared to answer a few interview questions from the job seeker as well. Today's newest job seekers should be viewed as a consumer. Meaning organizations need to be prepared to meet their needs in order for them to consider a job offer.

The Pew Research Center released data directed by Andrew Kohut (2007) on *How Young People view Their Lives Futures and Politics*. The researchers found that in regards to internet use Generation Y's use was 86 percent and Generation X's use was 91 percent, so there was little difference between the generations when it comes to internet usage. The research did find that for those in Generation Y that did not attend college the internet usage fell to 77 percent. The study went on to ask about real-time technologies like texting and when asked if they had sent or received a text in the past 24 hours Generation Y said yes 51 percent of the time, where only 26 percent of Generation X had sent a text in the past 24 hours. The researchers then asked the participants if they had a social media page created, and 54 percent of Generation Y said they did and 44 percent of Generation X said they also had a social media page, but when it came to posting on someone else's wall Generation Y, more than any other generation said they had in the past 24 hours. When the researchers asked about the usage on a social networking site 38 percent said they had used it on a daily basis.

Organizations need to continue to understand the rapid change in technology and how it impacts both organizational members and job seekers. When organizations understand how technology impacts their operation they can react to and address concerns that may arise and adjust accordingly to ensure the strategies of the organization are still consistent with the introduction of the new technology. The need for organizations to adapt to new technologies is relevant when looking at research like the research done by Kohut (2007). The research looked at all the potential effects of technology including the internet, instant messaging, cell phones, text messages, and iPods and the views on new technologies. When asked 70 percent of people said new technologies made people lazier and 65 percent said it makes people more isolated, but the study also showed that 65 percent of those asked also said these tools make people more

efficient and 56 percent say it brings people closer together. Sixty-four percent of Generation Y and Generation X believe new technology can help strengthen the ties with old friends.

Generation Y is the generation most concerned that the technology makes people lazier. That is only six percent less than the general public's view on technology as it relates to laziness. The research on technology impacting productivity showed few differences by age. Sixty-nine percent of the public believes email in the workplace has done more good than bad, but with new technology only 45 percent of the public view new technology like online job posting favorably. Generation Y and Generation X, more than any other generation has embraced it.

CareerBuilder issues a candidate behavior study every year and in their 2013 study they released some interesting results. The 5, 518 respondents of the study were from both the United States and Canada and the data was collected during a 40-day period in early 2013. The results that are related to this study include their findings that Generation Y's top job searching categories include Google at 84 percent, career sites at 82 percent, and job boards at 84 percent and then social media at 70 percent. Interestingly enough Generation X and the Baby Boomers used job boards and social media sites far less than Generation Y, but all three generations were only percent points different in the Google and the career site categories. The report found little significance in the difference between male and female search habits. When they looked at the use of social media across the different job types they found that nursing used it the least at 54 percent and industrial used it the most at 78 percent. Those in information technology fell behind accounting and general clerical by reporting only using social media in their job search 61 percent of the time. When the study looked at the use of social media based on education there was little difference, but those with bachelor's degrees utilized social media the most in their job search at 65 percent. Those who were looking for positions over \$100, 000 used it two

percent points more than those looking for positions under \$50,000 at 63 percent. Keep in mind this research is done by CareerBuilder and respondents are CareerBuilder users. All respondents in this research study were also employed.

Bullhorn Reach published their results of a study, but this study was from the recruiter's point of view. It is based on how United States employment recruiters were utilizing social media for talent acquisition. They looked at the top three social media sites, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. The study found that 24 percent of jobs are posted on at least one social network site, where 34 percent are posted on at least two, and 21 percent are posted on all three. LinkedIn was the most used, followed by Twitter, and then Facebook. The industry posting the most on the social media sites was the restaurant industry and healthcare was at number five of ten on the top 10 list. The study revealed that the healthcare industry was number five of ten for posting jobs on Facebook and number nine posting on Twitter, but healthcare did not make the LinkedIn top ten even though LinkedIn was identified by this study as the most used social media job posting site. Of all 50 states plus Washington D.C. Wisconsin was number 19 of 51 that uses social media the most to post jobs. Wisconsin fell to number 31 for using LinkedIn, but gained use with Twitter at number 22, and number 15 for using Facebook to post jobs. Maine was atop all four lists when it came to posting jobs on social media, and the Northeastern region was the region using social media the most to post jobs, more than the South, Midwest, West, and Alaska and Hawaii.

The research that has been done on candidate behavior on the use of social media is often linked to the branding of the organization and decision-making. The study put out by Uggerslev, Fassina, and Kraichy (2012) is just one example of the types of research that has been done on recruitment. Most research studies look at the decision making process in recruitment and how a

candidate arrives at a selection. This type of research helps organizations learn how candidates go through the steps that ultimately lead them to apply for their positions. In the CareerBuilder study they have four steps they use in their model: orientation, consideration, action, and engagement. There are no research studies as of today that are theory based specifically on the use of social media used in the job selection process based on generation type.

Overman (2007) says recruiters continue to look for new ways to use social media in their recruitment strategies. One of the main reasons organizations and recruiters are looking to use social media as a recruitment strategy is because most social media mediums are low cost, and have the potential for high returns. Taylor (2006) spoke with the HR director of a hospital who said, "Most people learn about us by word of mouth." The competition for top candidates is fierce and employers cannot afford to be behind technology and the times. Employers need to be out there using all of the tools available to attract top candidates, and using new technology is a great tool. Organizations also need to ensure that appropriate integrations of technologies occur in order for them to be successful. They also need to ensure buy-in from key stakeholders. Before implementing any new recruitment strategies it is important to ensure the decision making process is methodical and includes the appropriate stakeholders (Ravenscroft, Schmidt, Cook, and Bradley 2012).

Mooney, Gurbaxzni, and Kraemer conclude in their 1995 research that, at the time, there were few solutions to assess the business value of IT. This is important in understanding the evolution of recruitment tools today, including technological tools used within human resources. The return on investment (ROI) of a technological tool is important to understand. This will allow organizations to determine the value of continued use of that tool. There must be measures in place so the continued value can be supported. One way to ensure that new communication

technologies are both efficient and effective is for organizations to develop procedures to measure what efficient and effective communication means to their operations and why it will be important for that organization to be able to measure the success of those strategic goals.

### **Metrics**

With the increased technological tools available, organizations continue to find themselves intrigued with any new technologies. The potential that a new technology could improve the bottom line through either a reduced workforce, or by creating efficiencies within workgroups is important to organizations. With the increasing number of technological communication tools within organizations it is important that organizations understand the value or potential value of tools before implementing. There were early indicators of return on investment (ROI), for social media use in recruitment, described in an article by Payne (2011). Payne shared that the food service company Sodexo did some recruiting on Twitter. They saved \$50,000 in salaries and investment time of traditional recruiting, and at the end of six months filled enough open jobs to cancel their \$350,000 monster.com budget, a ROI of 6,000 percent. The United Parcel Service (UPS) is known for leading the way in rigorously tracking and measuring performance and has also started a new lead in measuring the return on the use of social media related to its recruiting efforts (Zielinski, 2012).

As organizations start to think about measuring the return on investment of their use of social media sites they also want to track metrics related to recruitment. Organizations want to be able to tie each applicant back to a specific source. Zeilinski (2012) in a separate professional journal suggested that self reporting primary source tracking is flawed and he and others suggest that organizations should look for “why” the applicant chose your organization instead of “what” social media site led the applicant to the job posting. The applicants will self report their specific

source, so the potential for a flawed primary source may occur with self-reporting. One popular suggestion is to track why the applicant chose the organization versus what really lead them to the job posting (Zielinski, 2012).

When it comes to the exploration of technology metrics it can be complex. On one hand technology has the potential to be good for an organization. Technology can improve the work within an organization and the communication among teams, both on-site and telecommute. On the other hand most organizations too quickly adopt new technologies without enough understanding of them or preparedness to train their work groups on the use of them. The results of implementing technologies like social media need to be explored before and after to ensure the technology is meeting the organizational goals. The question of how technologies should be evaluated has been asked for over a decade now. Organizations are implementing new technologies at an accelerated rate; it only makes sense that evaluations of these tools occur. (Drake, Yuthas & Dillard, 2000).

Organizations always seem to be very eager to understand and implement new technologies into their organization with the hopes of creating efficiencies, but most times technology is not introduced quickly due to time, resources, and cost. This has not been the case with social media. With social media there is little to no cost to implement. The only costs associated with social media are based off the salaries of the organizational members sourcing candidates through social media or by managing these accounts. Organizations should ensure that the eagerness to adopt new technologies does not come with unknown consequences or costs. They should also give consideration to their preparedness to adopting low to no cost technologies. The excitement of low to no cost efficiencies may leave organizations forgetting how the organizational members may accept the new technology in the organization. Not having

organizational member buy-in may come at a cost if all new technologies are not adopted into an organization successfully. Organizations need to ask if the new technology is adding value to the organization, and maybe even more importantly, are there any current technologies in the organization that are adversely impacting their strategic goals.

### **Ministry Health Care Social Media Recruitment Strategies**

Social media recruitment strategies began at Ministry Health Care (MHC) in 2009. The first social media strategies began with the creation of a recruitment team Facebook Ministry Health Care Careers page. Ministry Health Care had an organizational Facebook page prior to the recruitment page, but the organizational Facebook page is administered by the marketing department, and is primarily used in branding, marketing, and public relations. The recruitment director believed having full control over a Facebook page was the appropriate alternative to having to work with marketing to post recruitment activities. After the recruitment team developed a specific Facebook page just for recruitment efforts they referred to it as the “careers’ Facebook page. Each week a recruiter was assigned as the administrator of the page and would post two to three status updates related to job fairs, positions available or tips for job seekers. A secondary Facebook initiative also began. To leverage the use of social media in recruitment each individual recruiter was also asked to use a Facebook page to build up a following of friends. The intent was to find low cost ways to fill positions within the organization. Recruiters could either use an existing personal Facebook page, or use it for personal and professional use, or they could develop a secondary Facebook page and use it just in their recruitment activities.

Another social media recruitment strategy was the use of LinkedIn. Each recruiter also has his or her own professional LinkedIn page. LinkedIn was designed as a professional network, so recruiters did not have to create a secondary account. They could use their LinkedIn

profile for all their professional social networking needs. In 2013 the recruitment team called upon the services of The Arland Group to manage the Ministry Health Care Careers LinkedIn Group. A group on LinkedIn is like a Facebook page, where status updates and information about recruitment activities is shared with those that follow the group on LinkedIn. The Arland Group is an outside firm that handles all the social media marketing for LinkedIn. Although most LinkedIn services are free, and it is free to create a LinkedIn account, the social media professional giant offers employer packages for a cost. Organizations can purchase additional access and job posting capabilities.

Twitter was also attempted for several months without significant data or research to support the continued use in recruitment and was eliminated from recommended use by the recruitment director.

A Ministry Health Care Careers YouTube account was also created in 2009. It was used to post 30 second to two-minute videos of associate and leader testimonials or realistic department previews. The recruiter could create a link to the YouTube page and imbed it in an online job posting or advertisement. When the initiative was rolled out, the expectation was that each recruiter would create three YouTube videos per quarter. After a few years, the requirement was reduced to one per quarter, and is currently used only at the discretion of the recruiter.

The recruitment department also continues to use traditional technology recruitment strategies. This includes job boards like Monster and CareerBuilder, and niche job boards. Other online resources include government and education based website postings like WI JOB Net and TechConnect. The only time the recruitment team would use a newspaper, television, or radio job postings would be in a rare and unique circumstance. Other recruitment strategies of Ministry Health Care include the exploration of texting candidates through Microsoft Outlook

software, creating specialized internet sites for a specific department of the organization, like Pharmacy or Nursing. The recruitment team has also used Apple products like the iPad and iPhone for Facetime, Skype, videoconferencing, and other audiovisual platforms for distance interview purposes.

### **Research Questions**

According to popular business journals, organizations are adopting social media practices in their recruitment strategies too quickly. The research on new implementation plans is still undeveloped outside of popular business journals, and when it comes to academic research there is little that has been published. There is a gap in the literature assisting organizations in implementing new social media recruitment strategies successfully.

The goal of this pilot study was to examine Ministry Health Care's recruitment strategies and see what they are doing well and things that they could improve upon. Has Ministry Health Care done enough research to support their strategies? This pilot study was developed to help answer those questions. Interviews with employees at Ministry Health Care were conducted to ask if social media was used in their job search activities. These participants will be referred to as associates. Ministry Health Care refers to their employees as associates. The data that was collected through this pilot study was to help MHC determine if they are putting too much focus on social media in their recruiting strategies. The goal was to understand if new hires are using social media in their job search activities and if so, how often, and why. If the organizational goal is to attract the newest generation into the organization then how does that impact current recruitment strategies. What are the new technologies and mediums that they should be incorporating in their recruiting strategies? How can new technologies be used to recruit highly qualified candidates into the organization? Being best prepared to recruit based on the

technological expectations of current job seekers is important in having successful recruitment strategies.

**RQ1:** How often did Generation Y associates use social media and other related technologies in their job search activities?

**RQ2:** What role did social media and other related technologies play in the associate's job search activities?

**RQ3:** Do the associates think that the Ministry Health Care social media and other related technology recruitment strategies are effective?

## **Methodology**

This pilot study was conducted using a qualitative research method. A qualitative research method was appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to look for themes in patterns from data obtained through in-depth face-to-face interviews. Qualitative research is effective in gathering specific cultural information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of a group. A group of Generation Y associates who have recently gone through the job search process was an appropriate example to support the use of a qualitative research method.

This qualitative pilot study looked at the data provided by 15 of Ministry Health Care's Registered Nurse (RN) participants. The researcher collected the data as a Recruitment Consultant for Ministry Health Care during a four-day period of time. The researcher has worked in Ministry Health Care's Human Resource Department for five years, and in the recruitment department for three of those five years. In addition to being a current recruitment consultant the researcher has been a human resource professional in Central Wisconsin for over

11 years, and has been interviewing candidates for over 15 years. This made the researcher uniquely qualified to interview the 15 participants.

Ministry Health Care has over 12,000 associates. Their promise is to earn trust by working together as one Ministry to keep patients first in everything they do. Ministry Health Care is made up of hospitals, clinics, and home based services throughout the state of Wisconsin. Ministry Health Care is the largest Catholic health care system in Wisconsin, and the second largest health care system in Wisconsin. Ministry Health Care's home office is in Milwaukee, WI, but the hospitals, clinics, and home-based services are in all regions of the state except for the southern part of the state where the home office is located. In 2013 Ministry Health Care hired 1,617 associates, of those hires 229 of them were RN hires, meaning 14 percent of Ministry Health Care's hires are RNs.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point granted human subject approval to conduct the interviews of this pilot study. The manager of the Ministry Health Care Recruitment Department also gave approval to conduct interviews with RN participants. The IRB consent form can be viewed in Appendix C.

### **Participants**

The participants for this study were a targeted sample of 15 Registered Nurses (RN) from Ministry Health Care. The RNs were associates that were hired between June 1, 2012 and December 31, 2013. All associates were at least 18 years of age or older. A deliberate decision was made not to include any RNs under the age of 20. One reason was to exclude minors from the pilot study and the other is that most RNs are not hired under the age of 20. A deliberate decision was also made to look only at associates who were Generation Y. That means the associate participants were born between January 1, 1981 and December 31, 1993. This makes

the age range of the RNs between 20 and 32 years of age. This research was conducted in 2014, so the participant's age during the actual data collection portion of this study were between 24 and 30 years of age. Participants included one male and 14 females. The reason this population of associates was selected was based on two criteria. First, the researcher had no involvement in the recruitment process or hiring of any of these associates. This reduced any recruitment bias that may have occurred during the data collecting of the participants. Second, there was a large population of Generation Y RN associates to ask to participate. This sample is appropriate because it is the largest source of hires for MHC. As a member of the human resources department the researcher was able to pull an Access database report with associate demographic information to be able to target this group and approach associates for interest in participation of this study.

Associates were not be given any monetary or other incentive for participating in this pilot study. Associates were asked to volunteer their time for this study. Participation in this study had no bearing on current or future employment status with Ministry Health Care. The associates' names are not shared in the study. The participants will be coded alphabetically in the results and recommendations section. Identifying the participants as RN-A, RN-B and so on will protect their identity.

### **Procedure**

Twenty-Two RN associates were identified and approached for participation in this study. The researcher began the search by approaching RN associates that worked at the Ministry Saint Michael's Hospital location. When 15 RNs were not available, the search expanded to RNs who worked in the Ministry Medical Group – Central Region clinics, and lastly the researcher looked to participants who worked within Ministry Home Care, until 15 participants

offered to participate. The researcher contacted associates over a two-week period of time. The researcher first attempted contact by telephone. In the telephone conversation the researcher asked if the associate was interested in volunteering to participate in a recruitment project. The researcher explained that their participation would help the recruitment department better understand candidate job search activities, and based on their responses provide insight and feedback that would help develop best practices for future recruitment strategies. When associates did not respond to telephone voice messages, follow-up emails were sent indicating the researcher was trying to contact them regarding a recruitment project, and the recruitment team was hoping they would be interested in helping. 15 of the 22 associates agreed to participate. The other seven did not return the researcher's phone calls or emails requesting participation. The messages left by the researcher were not in-depth, so the associates were not aware of the full scope of the researcher's reason for contacting them. The targeted sample approach allowed for collecting data from associates who had gone through the job search process within the last two years.

The associates were asked to participate in a one-hour in-depth interview. The associates were given the option to meet face-to-face or over the telephone. Associates who chose to meet in person were invited to the researcher's private office. Fourteen of the 15 RNs chose to speak with the researcher via telephone instead of face-to-face. Most RNs preferred the telephone based on the convenience of the RN not having to travel to the researcher's office or obtain childcare coverage. All interviews were recorded on a MacBook computer through the application called *Audio Notes*. Associates were emailed both the IRB and the Ministry Health Care disclosure agreement form to complete and sign prior to the interview. The disclosure form

authorized Ministry Health Care and the researcher to audio record and use their testimony in this study.

The participating associate received an interview confirmation and welcome email thanking them for their upcoming time and commitment to this study prior to their scheduled interview. The email included what they should expect, timelines, and contact information for questions that may arise. Attached in the email were the disclosure forms and a pre-survey. The associates were asked to review and complete the documents and return them to the researcher prior to the scheduled interview.

A previous interview template example to guide these interviews was not available in previous research studies, so one was created. The multi-faceted interview questions guiding this study can be viewed in Appendix A. The interview questions were divided into seven demographic questions, 13 technology use questions, 20 semi-structured interview questions, and a 25 question pre-survey. The pre-survey was sent ahead of time to get the associates thinking about all the specific job searching methods they may have used in the past. The pre-survey was expanded into a qualitative tool during the in-depth interview when the researcher was able to ask for reasons behind the decision in the use of each job search method, and the frequency of use. The pre-survey can be viewed in Appendix B.

### **Analysis**

The analysis was ongoing and inductive to identify emerging themes, patterns and questions. Coding and comparison of data occurred. Bottom up coding was used to look for the primary themes and ideas.

The researcher looked to see what patterns and themes emerged from the interviews, without a specific agenda or pre-conceived idea about what specific job search activities would

emerge. By looking for patterns and themes within the data from the interview notes and audio recordings the researcher was able to determine if the data provided answers to the research questions. Through the use of inductive reasoning the researcher was able to reach specific logical conclusion to determine how often generation Y used social media and other related technologies in their job search activities. What role social media and other related technologies played in their job search activities and if Ministry Health Care's social media and related technology strategies are effective.

The researcher reviewed the data in three stages. The first stage of analysis was exploratory to get familiarized with the data. The second stage was to look for emerging themes, and the third stage was to look for sub-themes. This process is known as the Data Analysis Spiral (Creswell, 2007). It is a way to analyze data in phases. In the first stage the researcher will read the interview notes and listen to the audio recording, and re-read and listen to the recordings again (Maxwell, 2013). At the end of the first stage the researcher was familiar with the associates and their responses. The researcher made notes of tentative ideas of categories and relationships in the data (Maxwell, 2013). During the second stage the researcher started to determine what responses came up often and started coding them into categories. The researcher did not put a limit on the number of categories, as many categories that were appropriate in answering the research questions were used. The researcher created an Excel spreadsheet to organize categories and enter coded information, quotes, and other information that would help in the emergence of patterns and themes. This process consisted of moving from the reading and memoing loop, into the spiral of the describing, classifying, and interpreting loop (Crestwell, 2007). For the coding the researcher created a form of short hand to identify specific responses. For example, social media was identified as "SM". The researcher put these codes into a specific

category to help determine the patterns and themes. The researcher used the same Excel database for this coded data; this is sometimes referred to as a categorical coding matrix (Maxwell, 2013). The researcher created a notes column in the Excel spreadsheet related to any significant data to possibly return to for further exploration. The researcher also made notes in the margins of each copy of Appendix A that was specifically used for each individual RN interview (Creswell, 2007). The notes may have been specific category suggestions to put the highlighted text into, or it may have been a specific quote that the researcher wanted to use. Once the data was entered into Excel the researcher was able to better identify the emerging patterns and themes. This allowed the researcher to then move the emerging patterns and themes into new categories. These new categories also created emerging patterns and themes. The researcher was able to see if there were any relationships between the patterns and themes, which leads into the third stage where the researcher looked for any potential sub-themes within the pattern and themes identified.

Once the themes and any sub-themes were identified the researcher tied them back to the three research questions for final analysis and recommendations. The researcher looked to see how the patterns and themes helped explain how Generation Y associates used social media and other related technologies in their job search activities, what they said about role social media and other related technologies played in the associate's job search activities, and what they said about the effectiveness of the social media and technology recruitment strategies of Ministry Health Care.

### **Validation**

To ensure that the researcher understood the information the researcher shared some of the preliminary themes she had heard with the last two RN participants to see if they agreed with

what their colleagues had been saying. This is referred to as member checking. It is a way to eliminate researcher bias and ensure the researcher is reporting on what is being said, and not including personal views and ideas into the data collection.

## **Conclusion**

This prospectus looked at the literature that will help support the need for research in social media recruitment. It explored the history of human resources and recruitment, the generational differences of today's job seekers, organizational technology, social media technology, social media recruitment strategies, and examined metrics of measuring technology and social media in organizations. This prospectus then introduced the details of the current Ministry Health Care social media recruitment strategies, and provided specific details about the organization. The combination of the literature review and an examination of the Ministry Health Care recruitment strategies resulted in three research questions. These questions guided this graduate project into the research portion of this pilot study.

Conducting this pilot study was important to Ministry Health Care. It was beneficial in evaluating their social media recruitment strategies. The goal of this study was to take a qualitative approach to understanding Generation Y's use of social media in their job search activities, and determine how often they use social media and other related technologies in their job search activities, what role it played, and if the associates felt Ministry Health Care's social media and other related technology recruitment strategies are effective. When Ministry Health Care knows the answers to these research questions, they will be better equipped to make decisions on how to utilize social media in their recruitment strategies.

## Results

The goal of this pilot study was to determine how often Generation Y used social media and other related technologies in their job search activities, what role social media and other related technologies played, and if the associates felt Ministry Health Care's social media and other related technology recruitment strategies are effective. The one-hour in-depth interviews provided answers to all three-research questions, and the results of the interviews are explored in more detail in the following paragraphs. The researcher first explored the results of the RNs pre-survey at the start off each one-hour in-depth interview. The pre-survey acted more as a discussion opener and a thought-provoking tool more than an actual survey. The in-depth interviews would support uncover their actual job search activities, once the discussions with the RNs occurred.

Contrary to the literature review, Generation Y does not use social media in their job search activities. The first job search activity explored with the RNs was the use of social media. Thirteen of the 15 RNs said they have never used social media or other related technologies in their job search activities. Two said they sometimes use social media in their job search activity, and when they do, they use Facebook. The researcher asked the RNs why they did not use social media in their job search activities, and of the 13 that responded as not having used social media, ten said they just did not use social media very much, two said they did not think about using social media as a job search activity, and one said the job search activities they currently use are effective and they did not have a need to use a different job search activity. No RNs used another technology in their job search activity. This would include technologies like a smart phone application. The two RNs who indicated they sometimes use social media in their job search activity have only used it one or two times, and they used the private message feature of

Facebook to ask specific friends if they knew of positions in their area, or within a specific organization. RN K, for example, said “I will just private message my friends in that area something like ‘hey do you know of any jobs’”. The RN would not use a blanket message to all friends. Instead it would be a deliberate message to a specific friend. No RNs reported in the pre-survey as having used Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, or any other social media platform as part of their job search activity. The researcher is unclear as to why the literature would suggest that Generation Y would rely heavily on technology and yet these RNs did not navigate towards the use of social media or other related technologies like smart phone applications. It could be that, although the RNs are within Generation Y, that within the healthcare nursing industry the use of social media and other related technologies is not prevalent as a job search activity.

The effectiveness of social media recruitment strategies was further reviewed by looking at the specific social media platforms of Facebook and LinkedIn. The RNs have Facebook accounts, but are unfamiliar with LinkedIn. After review of the pre-survey the researcher was able to ask in-depth questions related to the RNs’ job search activities. The researcher asked the RNs what social media accounts they did have, and all 15 had Facebook accounts. Even though the RNs have Facebook accounts, using it for a job search activity rarely occurs. The researcher asked if they had an account for the popular professional networking social media site called LinkedIn. Nine of the 15 had never heard of it, three had heard of it but did not have an account. Only three of the 15 actually had LinkedIn accounts, but none of them ever utilized it, and were unsure if their account was still active. The researcher asked the RNs what other social media accounts the RNs had, and none of the RNs had any other social media account.

Initial results indicated that the Ministry Health Care social media recruitment strategies were not effective, because no social media job search activities were identified as being the primary source of hire for any of the 15 RNs. The researcher asked the RNs their opinion on the use of social media as an organizational recruitment strategy. The reason an opinion was asked for was because 13 of the 15 RNs had reported never using social media in their job search activities. One of the 15 was unsure if social media would be a good job search activity, and the other six said that social media would not be a good strategy because social media platforms like Facebook should be kept for personal use and not professional use. The RNs believe social media is for their personal lives and not their professional lives. The researcher wanted to further explore the RNs' thoughts on the social media recruitment strategies so the RNs were asked about the organization's use of Facebook.

The RNs were asked if they knew Ministry Health Care had two Facebook pages. None of the RNs knew that the organization had two Facebook pages. Four of the 15 said they did follow one of the two Facebook pages, 3 of the 15 RNs said they followed the marketing Facebook page, and one of the 15 said they followed one of the Facebook pages, but were unsure which one. Twelve of the 15 said it made sense to have one universal Facebook page. They said this would make it less confusing to those who follow the organization. RN G Said, "If I was a new candidate I would not know to look for two different Facebook pages for one organization." Three of the 15 said it is probably okay to have two, but that Ministry Health Care would have to do a better job of letting the public know that there are two. RN E said "I think it makes sense to have two, just as long as the one page says 'hey we have another page too' so that people know about it." In contrast RN J said, "People might not be aware they need to follow two pages to get

information and to find information about jobs.” Overall the RNs believed it was better to consider one Facebook page for the organization.

The idea of having one Facebook page and promoting it was further explored. The RNs were asked what type of status updates they would like to see. The most popular suggestions were job postings, upcoming events, and philanthropy. The RNs said they like to see the good work that the organization does in its communities. RN G said “I would like to see patient satisfaction if I was an applicant, and job openings, or at least put on there new job openings and then a link so it goes right to the employers page. Then you wouldn’t have to search for it.” The RNs said if they were actively looking for employment they would definitely want to see information about jobs available.

The RNs believe that the Ministry Health Care social media recruitment strategies may be best suited for the generation behind them. Eight of the 15 RNs indicated that they thought social media recruitment strategies might be a way of job searching in the future. RN C said many young people are on social media, and so it made sense to attract candidates that way. RN C said social media could be the way to recruit in the future “For younger kids I think social media is, you know, is posting on Facebook.” RN C who is from Generation Y believes it is the generation behind that may have interest in searching for jobs through social media, but not his/her generation. RN C goes on to say “I feel like when I talk to my younger cousins they do more through social media like with posting for job fairs” and RN A said “ I think it is the way of the future.” The Generation Y RNs believed that it is the younger generation, the generation behind them that may be more interested in social media in their job search activities than they are.

The literature review identified Generation Y as being technology savvy, but almost a third of the RNs purchased their first smart phone within the last year. It is an interesting technology item to mention that 14 of the 15 RNs said they owned a smart phone, but five of the 14 said they had obtained the smart phone within the last twelve months. The five who recently obtained a smart phone shared that some of that decision was based on lack of options in the marketplace for mobile phones that were not smartphones. This led them to have to purchase a smart phone. RN F said “I just upgraded to a smart phone a few weeks ago. I upgraded because everyone else was getting one.” And RN H said, “I now have a smart phone, reluctantly.” The researcher asked the RNs if they used applications (Apps) on their smart phones, and if they knew that Ministry Health Care had a “Careers” App to search for jobs. Thirteen of the 15 RNs said they were not aware that Ministry Health Care had a “Careers Application”, but all 15 agreed they would be interested in getting it. The RNs indicated they don’t use a lot of smart phone applications. The other two of the 15 RNs said they think they read about the “Careers Application” on the intranet or in a newsletter, or heard about it from people talking, but only one of the two would be interested in getting it. All RNs said they have never used a smart phone application to apply for a position. All agreed they would always prefer to apply for a job opportunity from a personal computer versus a smart phone application. The primary reasons for this included their resume not being available on a smart phone and the screen being bigger on a personal computer. To better understand what the RNs were using if they were not using social media or other related technologies in their job search activities the researcher asked other job search activity questions. This included the exploration of the responses from the pre-survey, and then further discussions during the in-depth interviews.

The most popular job search activity is going directly to the employer's website. Twelve of the 15 RNs indicated the Ministry Health Care Careers website was the primary source in their job search activity that led them to apply for a job at Ministry Health Care. In further discussion about job search activities all 15 RNs listed their primary or secondary source in their job search activities as either going directly to the employers website or doing an internet search. Although for their position at Ministry Health Care they went directly to the website, their self disclosed habits indicate that many times the internet search is also a primary source for them in their job search activities. If the employer's website was not the primary source of their job search, then the primary source was an internet search.

A popular trend among the job seekers is internet searches. All 15 RNs said they have used an online search engine like Google or Bing to search for jobs. RN F said, "My first step is an internet search" RN F and others enter a key word string into the online search engine search field. For example typing in "RN jobs in Marshfield, WI". Once the RN types in the key words the search engine brings up results that include links to employer websites, job boards, and other job posting sites. At this point the RN would either go directly to the employer's website, or use a job board as secondary source, and click into that job board, Monster.com or Careerbuilder.com for example, and then review more information about the job posting. Most times, the RN would go to the employer's website instead of a secondary posting site. The reason the RN would go directly to the employer's website more often than a secondary source was because it ensured the posting was still available and to obtain direct information from the employer website versus going through a secondary source that may not have all the information needed for the RN to determine if he or she should apply for the job. RN E said, "I would definitely use the employer's site, it is black and white. It tells you straight out the skills and

qualifications and tells you everything you need to know.” This reinforces that the employers website was a primary source for these RNs. These RNs also reinforced that if organizational or employer names were unknown to the RN that the RNs would make the internet search their primary source for searching for jobs.

Other traditional job search activities were acknowledged by the RNs but used in rare occasions. These traditional job search activities include going to a job fair, searching in printed materials like publications and newspapers, and networking. Three of 15 said they sometimes looked in a newspaper for jobs, but only if the newspaper was lying around. They did not seek out a hard copy or online newspaper or publication on their own. Nine of the 15 said they sometimes ask friends and family about jobs, and two of the 15 said they often do this. Four of the 15 said they use a professional network to help search for jobs, and one of 15 said they often do this.

The in-depth interviews did answer the research questions. The data answers the first research question of how often did the Generation Y associates use social media or other related technologies in their job search activities. The data shows that the Generation Y RN associates did not use social media in their recent job search activities that resulted in employment with Ministry Health Care. The data also shows that the RNs have rarely used social media or other related technologies as a job search activity prior to their search for Ministry Health Care. The second research question was also answered in the in-depth interviews. The Generation Y RN associates shared how they have used social media when in those rare occasions they have used it. The RNs only use Facebook, but most do not use it very often and they have rarely leveraged Facebook as a job searching resource. To determine the last research question the researcher asked the Generation Y associates to provide a personal opinion on the use of social media and

other related technologies as part of Ministry Health Care's social media recruitment strategies. The answer to the third research question would be that no Generation Y RN associates utilized social media or other related technologies in their job search activities. This would translate into the strategies not being effective in attracting job seekers to the Ministry Health Care jobs. This is substantiated by RN associates not being hired by Ministry Health Care through the use of a social media recruitment strategy. Based on these results the researcher will present recommendations on the use of social media and other related technologies in the Ministry Health Care recruitment strategies.

### **Recommendations**

Conducting this pilot study provided important data to Ministry Health Care. It was beneficial in evaluating the social media recruitment strategies. The goal of this study was to take a qualitative approach to understanding Generation Y's use of social media in their job search activities, and determine how often they use social media and other related technologies in their job search activities, what role it played, and if the associates felt Ministry Health Care's social media and other related technology recruitment strategies are effective. Now that Ministry Health Care knows the answers to these research questions, recommendations can be made to enhance or further evaluate the continued use of the current social media recruitment strategies. The researcher's recommendations will evaluate what Ministry Health Care is doing well, and what Ministry Health Care can improve upon. Recommendations are written as short-term goals, and are not intended to be long-term goals that may require further evaluation and research. It is important to remember that this pilot study focused on RNs, and that the recommendations are based on the results provided in this study. It is unknown if research conducted with non-clinical

associates would result in different findings. Therefore these recommendations are based on the specific research conducted in this pilot study.

The recommendations are intended to inform Ministry Health Care if they are meeting the needs of the job seeker, if there are any implications to Ministry Health Care if they do not meet the needs of the Generation Y job seeker, and if they have the tools they need to have successful recruitment strategies for the Generation Y job seeker.

The recommendations have been organized into two sections. The first section is the recommendations of social media and other related technology platforms. The data indicates that the RNs do not utilize social media or other related technologies in their job search activities. This led to the creation of the second section of recommendations, to then see what they were using. The researcher wanted to determine what other job search activities the RNs were using if they were not using social media. The second section of recommendations is based on the RNs actual job search activities, the data. This second section was added based on the overwhelming data on the actual job search activities of the RNs, which could be valuable to Ministry Health Care. The data suggests a growing trend in internet job searches as a job search activity. This job search activity has not been explored prior by the researcher or Ministry Health Care, and was uncovered during the interviews. The first section is divided into three categories. They are the use of Facebook, LinkedIn, and then other social media or related technologies. The second section is divided into four categories. They are The Ministry Health Care website, internet searches, word of mouth, and online job boards.

### **Social Media Recommendations**

The first recommendation in this social media section is the discontinued use of two organizational Facebook pages. The RNs find it confusing that Ministry Health Care has two

Facebook pages. Based on the results of the interviews it is recommended that Ministry Health Care utilize one Facebook page. The data supports that the RNs recommend having one unified presence to the public. Based on the data it is recommended that Ministry Health Care Careers Facebook page be removed and that the recruitment department partner with the marketing department to coordinate the Facebook goals of both departments. The one Facebook page should still be able to meet the goals that two Facebook pages aimed to do, but by having one presence on Facebook the job seeker does not have to follow two pages, and can be assured that they are not missing posts from another Facebook page. The researcher also believes that this will strengthen the social media initiatives of Ministry Health Care overall. The recruitment department will be able to easily invite all of the Facebook followers on the careers page to the marketing Facebook page. This could be done within one week. The recruitment department can start working with marketing to build the following of the sole Facebook page.

Recommendations include developing an email blast to invite recent applicants within the applicant tracking system, Taleo to follow the page, and leverage current systems and third party vendors to set up automatic status updates. For example, job postings and career fair events. The recruitment department and the marketing department will also need to develop how status updates from the recruitment department will be administered on the Facebook page of Ministry Health Care. This could be accomplished within 90 days. The recruitment department can update automatic update feeds that were uploaded to the careers Facebook page to the sole Facebook page by working with The Arland Group, outside vendors, and the administrator of the applicant tracking system, Taleo to change the path of the postings to the combined Facebook page. This could also be accomplished within 90 days. Once the sole Facebook page has been streamlined and is functioning within the goals of recruitment and marketing departments then

initiatives can be created to invite job applicants and similar audiences to follow the sole Facebook page. This should be the first considered.

The results indicated that RNs do not utilize LinkedIn in their job search activities, but when the researcher explained what LinkedIn was, the RNs were very interested in learning more. The researcher sent follow-up communications to those RNs who requested more information about this social media platform. The recommendation for LinkedIn is to create awareness for the Generation Y RN job seeker population. The results also indicated that the RNs do not use Facebook very often, and rarely for job search activities, so Ministry Health Care has an opportunity to educate future RN candidates and current RN candidate populations about the features and benefits of LinkedIn. It is recommended to partner with nursing program coordinators from colleges and universities on how to connect with Ministry Health Care and colleagues early on through LinkedIn. This will provide Ministry Health Care with an alternative to Facebook, or secondary way to use social media to connect with job seekers. If this recommendation is considered it could take six months to establish relationships and initiatives for this social media strategy.

The results indicate that the Generation Y RNs are not using these platforms currently, but the participants believe the generation behind them may. It is recommended that Ministry Health Care be aware and further evaluate at a later time the job seeker habits of using Twitter, YouTube, and smart phone applications. For now it is recommended to place these recruitment initiatives on hold until indications from job seekers are seen, at which time further research should occur to determine if they should be re-evaluated. This recommendation is a decision that could take 30 days to determine. There is one caveat to the use of YouTube. Although job seekers do not use YouTube in their job search activity, further exploration of the use of

YouTube in other related recruitment and marketing strategies is recommended. Instead of using it as a social medial recruitment strategy, perhaps utilize it as a tool to help promote job postings, websites, and other marketing media.

### **Recommendations Based on the Data**

These next four recommendations are based on the data that was provided during the pilot study. These recommendations are based on how the Generation Y RNs responded to how they actually search for jobs. The top four primary job search activities according to the data are going directly to the employer's website, internet searches, word of mouth, and using an online job board.

The primary job search activity is going directly to the employers website. The recommendation is for Ministry Health Care to continue to invest in improving and updating their website. The results indicate that the job seekers will go directly to an employer's website and that they expect it to be user friendly and have a streamlined process to apply for jobs. To the RNs that means having as few clicks as possible to get to the job application. It is recommended to improve the careers page to reduce the number of clicks it takes a job seeker to get to the applicant tracking system, Taleo. This could be accomplished by working with the web developer to find ways to reduce the number of web pages before getting to the application. Another option could be to provide a simplified application platform where only minimal information is collected from the applicant, but allows them to apply relatively quickly. Just as important to the job seeker as the actual application is the ease of find out information about the organization. The data indicates that RN job seekers are familiar with the Ministry Health Care organization and will go directly to the website to search for jobs, side stepping a secondary job search activity often. This makes it very important that Ministry Health Care meets the needs of

the job seeker. Ministry Health Care is currently working towards website updates, so it is recommended to share the results of this pilot study with that project team to ensure the pieces related to recruitment are within the scope of the updates.

The internet search is a fast growing primary job search activity. Based on the data it is recommended that Ministry Health Care invest resources into understanding and establishing their presence when a candidate conducts an internet search. The researcher walked through an example of an internet search with RN F during the interview. The researcher typed in the key word search “RN jobs in Marshfield” into the Google search engine. Neither Ministry Health Care nor Ministry Health Care job postings came up until the fourth results webpage. Research and resources should be given to learn how Ministry Health Care and Ministry Health Care jobs show up on the first or second results page. RN F said they do not navigate beyond the second results webpage. When Ministry Health Care jobs show up on the first or second results page the chances of attracting candidates to formally apply for a job posting greatly increase. This benefits the organization in both recruitment and advertising. There are resources available for organizations to improve what is called a “website score” this may be a resource to explore. If this recommendation is considered it is recommended to work with the marketing department on this initiative; this could take 90 days.

Ministry Health Care is a prominent employer in the small communities that it serves so the experiences of its patients and job applicants spread quickly. All of the RNs were told about, or knew about Ministry Health Care prior to applying. The word of mouth job search activity is just as important today as it has always been. One of the reasons the Ministry Health Care website is such a popular primary job search source is because Ministry Health Care has a strong

word of mouth presence. There is no recommendation, as the data supports, this continues to be proven successful.

Job seekers still find themselves on online job board sites, but not as directly as they were 10 years ago. The fourth highest job search activity supported in the data is the use of an online job board. The data indicates that an online job board is accessed only after an internet job search occurs and a job listing that interests the job seeker shows up in the results webpage. The job seeker will then click on the link to the online job board, Careerbuilder.com or Monster.com, for example. The data supports that the job seeker's habit was not to go directly to an online job board, but that they would utilize the job board if an internet search lead them to a job posting they had interest in. The research does support Ministry Health Care's decision to not renew the 2014 contracts with Careerbuilder.com and Monster.com, but suggestions ensuring, in the absence of these contracts, that focus on the internet search presence does improve or the implications of not having an internet search presence or an online job search presence could reduce the total applicant reach with their job postings. Although the word of mouth and website recruitment strategies are successful for Ministry Health Care, the internet job search and the online job boards hold potential value that should not be ignored.

These recommendations are based on the data provided in this pilot study. The social media recruitment strategy recommendations should be considered first. This will allow Ministry Health Care to align their strategies now that research has occurred and data has been recorded. The social media strategies that were implemented were done without research or data to support that they would be effective in recruitment strategies. Five years after implementation it was an appropriate amount of time to evaluate the strategies and determine what is working well and what is not working for Ministry Health Care.

### **Future Research Opportunities**

This pilot study was conducted with a targeted sample of Generation Y RNs. This study could be expanded to include other generations and other professions within Ministry Health Care. In the future it might be interesting to explore the job search activities of the generation behind Generation Y, as the RNs suggested. This newest generation is slotted to be called Generation Z. Generation Z will be those persons born between 2002 and 2022. That means that within the next 4 years they could be looking for their first summer job, and within the next 10 years graduating from college and entering the workforce.

This study was limited to the healthcare industry, and excluded job seekers outside of the organization. A future study could include different industries and external job seekers. It could even expand upon the differences, based on the job seeker types; active or passive. Suggestions for future studies include interviewing associates and external job seekers that could be looking for their first job, secondary job, new job, seasonal, or passively looking for a different job. By collecting diverse data, greater patterns and themes could emerge that could assist in future recruitment strategies. For example, if Ministry Health Care was looking to recruit the passive job seeker for a hard to fill position, a research study could be done to determine what the most effective way to recruit them is.

The researcher encourages other industries to conduct their own pilot studies within their organizations and industries to determine the effectiveness of their own recruitment strategies. These results could be specific to the healthcare industry.

### **Conclusion**

The goal is that this pilot study will help Ministry Health Care understand best practices in using social media other related new technologies in recruitment in the future. This will

allow Ministry Health Care to be best prepared if candidate job search behavior changes again in the future. When Ministry Health Care can first evaluate or research job seeker behavior this will assist in ensuring the right organizational resources are used to attract ideal candidates.

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**Appendix A**

**Ministry Health Care  
Social Media Recruitment Strategy Interview**

***Themes & Patterns:***

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Job Title:</b>	
<b>Work Location:</b>	
<b>DOB:</b>	
<b>Sex:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b>	
<b>Highest Level of Education:</b>	

<b>Technology Use:</b>	
<b>Do you have a smartphone?</b>	
<b>Do you have a cell phone?</b>	
<b>Do you have a landline?</b>	
<b>Do you have an email account?</b>	
<b>Do you have a laptop?</b>	
<b>Do you have a home desktop?</b>	
<b>Do you have a LinkedIn account?</b>	
<b>Do you have a Facebook account?</b>	
<b>Do you have other social media accounts? Which ones?</b>	
<b>Do you subscribe to a printed newspaper?</b>	
<b>Do you subscribe to an online newspaper?</b>	
<b>Have you ever searched for jobs from a mobile device?</b>	
<b>Have you ever applied for a job from a mobile device?</b>	

<b><i>Semi-Structures Interview Questions:</i></b>	
<b>On your application you noted this as your referral source. is this accurate, and was there a</b>	

<b>secondary source or another source that lead you to this primary source?</b>	
<b>What job searching methods did you use in your job search?</b>	
<b>Did you know that MHC has an organizational Facebook page and a careers Facebook page?</b>  <b>Do you “like” or “follow” either page?</b>  <b>What do you think about two Facebook pages?</b>	
<b>Do you “like” or “follow” a recruiters specific Facebook page?</b>	
<b>Were you comfortable becoming “friends” with a recruiter for an organization you were interviewing with?</b>	
<b>Have you changed your Facebook privacy settings based on what you may have read or heard about organizations looking at your Facebook page?</b>	
<b>Do you have a MHC Careers App?</b>  <b>Did you know we had an App?</b>	
<b>Did you review the website and the organization as part of your job search activities?</b>	
<b>Do you think of social media as a way to search for employment?</b>	
<b>What social media site are you most likely to use to connect with an employer?</b>	
<b>What are your thoughts on using Facebook over LinkedIn</b>	

<b>as part of your job searching activities, do you have an opinion?</b>	
<b>What kind of status updated would you expect or want to see on an employer's social media page?</b>	
<b>What social media platform do you think employers should use to attract candidates?</b>	
<b>Would you prefer to apply from your phone instead of a computer?</b>	
<b>What would be your ideal interview process with an employer?</b>	
<b>What is your preferred method of being contacted by an organization after you have applied?</b>	
<b>Did the email notifications you received keep you updated?</b>	
<b>Did you prefer another notification process like phone call or text message?</b>	

**APPENDIX B**

**Place respond to the frequency you have used the following job searching activities. We will discuss your responses in more detail during our scheduled discussion.**

**Your options are:**

**1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often 5. Always**

	<b>1 - Never</b>	<b>2 - Rarely</b>	<b>3 -Sometimes</b>	<b>4 – Often</b>	<b>5 – Always</b>
<b>Local job service</b>					
<b>Printed materials, newspaper, publications</b>					
<b>Job Board (Monster.com or Careerbuilder.com)</b>					
<b>Twitter</b>					
<b>Employer Website</b>					
<b>Career Services at my School</b>					
<b>Facebook</b>					
<b>Asked a friend or family member</b>					

<b>Asked a friend or family member through social media</b>					
<b>YouTube</b>					
<b>Online Search (Google, Bing)</b>					
<b>Radio</b>					
<b>TV</b>					
<b>LinkedIn</b>					
<b>Job Fair</b>					
<b>Temporary Agency</b>					
<b>Unemployment Agency</b>					
<b>Smart Phone App</b>					
<b>Through an Internship</b>					
<b>Went directly to an employers location and inquired within</b>					
<b>Pinterest</b>					
<b>Traditional</b>					

<b>networking</b>					
<b>Other:</b> <hr/>					

## Appendix C

Dear Participant,

Nora Boomer, under the direction of Dr. Chris Sadler, Professor and Graduate Program Coordinator at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, is conducting a study on the use of social media in job search activities of Ministry Health Care employees. We are inviting you to participate in this graduate project. Nora Boomer is a representative of the Human Resources Department of Ministry Health Care.

Although you may choose to share private information, your identity will be confidential and will not have your personal information connected to any of the data. The information that you give will be done in anonymous form. Your participation will have no bearing on your employment status with Ministry Health Care. Your participation will be helpful for the Human Resources Department of Ministry Health Care in evaluating their recruitment strategies.

We anticipate no risk to you as a result of your participation in this study other than the inconvenience of your time in answering a few pre interview survey and a one hour scheduled interview.

Your participation is completely voluntary. This mean that you can decide whether or not you want to be involved in this project. You may decline to participate at any point. Also, you don't have to answer any questions you don't wish to answer. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time, and for any reason. Any information collected on you up to that point will be destroyed.

Once the study is competed, we would be glad to give you the results. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact:

Nora Boomer  
Human Resources  
Ministry Health Care  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-346-5634

Dr. Chris Sadler  
Division of Communication  
University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-346-3898

If you have any complaints about your treatment as participant in this study, please call or write:

Dr. Jason R. Davis, Chair  
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
School of Business and Economics  
University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-346-4598

Although Dr. Davis will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

Your participation in this research represents your consent to serve as a subject in this research.