

**Why social media can help recruitment**

**Paul Ince** 00:07

Hello and welcome to a series of videos just for you, the dedicated care sector professional who's looking at ways to use social media as part of the recruitment process. My name is Paul Ince, I'm a content strategist, consultant and speaker and CEO of LikeMind media, a content marketing consultancy based in Loughborough. I've been working with the team at Skills for Care to create these videos, especially for you. So I hope you enjoy them, and that you find the content within them helpful. We all know that recruiting into this sector has become a bit of a challenge over recent years. There are shortages in many types of industry, but the care sector in particular has struggled to retain some of the brilliant staff that were with us, and recruit to fill some of the gaps that exist. Now, of course, that's not a surprise given the last few years. But there are people who are ideal to work in our organisations, supporting people with their lives, some of whom may not yet know that they are perfect for your role. So in these short videos, we'll be discovering what social media is really about right now, and how your organisation can make best use of it to get your vacancies filled and show the world what an excellent team you have. Now, we know there's no one single way to solve your recruitment and retention challenges. But we also know through research that using values based recruitment and retention works as part of a holistic approach. There's a wealth of resources on the Skills for Care website to help you understand the principles of values based recruitment. So make sure you get in touch with your locality manager to help and advice on how you can learn more. The world of social media is fast moving with changes to ideas, platform functionality, and user behaviour changing all the time. We're making these videos in the first few months of 2024. So just bear this in mind. If you're watching some time. After that, there are plenty of places to get updates. Stay tuned to the Skills for Care website for latest updates and ways in which you can get additional support. For now though, let's dive straight into the wonderful and actually not that frightening a world of social media. According to reports from the social media platforms themselves, there were over 45 million active social media users in the UK, that's an astonishing two thirds of our population. On average, UK, users of social media spend nearly two hours each day using it just over 33% of their entire time on the internet. Now, that might seem a lot. But perhaps if you have teenagers, you'll think that's quite low. If we look at who uses social media, you'll see actually people of all ages and from all walks of life. It's become an inherent part of our culture, a way of finding out information and communicating just as picking up the telephone sending an email or dare I say a meeting in real life. You can see from this chart here, how wide the age range actually is. These are standard age grouping. So what does that tell us? Well, it tells us that there is the potential to reach people of every age in every location to show them what our organisation is like to work for, and also the work that we do. We can show potential candidates why working in care is fulfilling and also fun. And in terms of recruitment, this widespread usage of social media translate into unparalleled access to those candidates. Each platform is unique. LinkedIn might be the source to go to for senior leadership, while Instagram and Tiktok are gaining traction amongst the younger candidates. Facebook with its broad user base serves as an excellent venue for sharing organisational news and achievements. While platforms like X allow real time interaction with potential candidates. We'll be looking at specific platforms later in the series and go into a deep dive on what they're about and the demographics that tend to use them. Before devising any social media strategy, or jumping straight into posting, which is something I see organisations do a lot of, it's worth taking a step back and asking yourself, what are we trying to achieve? And I don't mean, we need to fill these vacancies - go right back to what your organisation is setting out to do. So for example, are you trying to create the best provision for the people you support? Is your organisation focused on underrepresented or minority groups? Perhaps you specialise in supporting young adults with learning disabilities living more independent lives? Can you articulate what it is that you do? Now if you can, that's perfect, and a good foundation for some of the messaging you'll need to give. If you're struggling to think what your team's purpose is, go back to your team or leadership and get a sense of what that core message needs to be. It's quite likely that your social media channels will serve multiple purposes for your organisation. They might help you to promote role vacancies to potential candidates as we're discussing in these videos, generate more attendance at events that you're running, whether that's a recruitment day or friends and family open day for the people you support. Well, they may also be used to share what's happening in a setting with friends and family of people you support in the wider population. This idea of sharing social media is important because it means that unless you're using social media exclusively for recruitment and retention, what you say and how you say it needs to be consistent with other parts of your organisation. Now fortunately, the technology behind the platforms will help deliver the right message to the right person. As we'll discuss on the video about algorithms, and videos where we'll look at specific platforms, we'll cover the key information about setting up and optimising each channel. Beyond the platform's functionality, it's key to consider how individuals consume content, the many hours that they spend on it, as I mentioned, now, some favour static images are the preferred videos. And still some people appreciate the brevity of just text. There's a huge amount of choice in the content we create. And so it's a good idea to vary the content so we can engage a wider audience and start to appeal to the different types of people who could apply for a role. thinking specifically about a vacancy, I want you to consider who is likely to apply, and what would be attractive to them. So for instance, do you want to show that a senior leadership role brings the chance to make a strategic difference to people's lives? Or how about showing to a person looking to change careers completely, that they can still use the caring skills they developed in another sector for hours, all of these things are possible. But again, it starts with thinking about purpose and objectives. If you can pause this video, and spend a few moments noting what you're trying to achieve by using social media. The beauty of social media is its versatility. It enables a variety of strategies from conversational engagement and real time job postings to showcasing your organization's culture and impact that traditional recruitment channels might not allow. So take location targeting, you want to advertise a care manager position specifically to people in Birmingham, or perhaps industry targeting where you're looking to find people with specific skills. Again, we'll cover it in the video and algorithms. But being this specific, will help you. Perhaps one of the greatest advantages of social media is that in the main, it's free to use. Now, sure, there are some premium features now where the platforms are charging to use the services. So I'm thinking about Meta's verification, and X also has a premium subscription. And of course, if you choose to advertise that will require ad spend. But at least to get started, all it requires is your time, and creativity. Now, that's sometimes easier said than done, it's very likely you're watching this having the responsibility of using social media to recruit but it's not the only thing that you do in your role. So we need to balance the demands of social media with a real world scenario of your other responsibilities. What we'll show in videos about selecting the right platforms and content that you create is that you can probably create less content, if you make it good. You'll definitely need to engage with users, your potential candidates on the relevant platforms. This is fundamental to a successful strategy. So I'm not advocating checking every five minutes to see if someone's liked a post or added the comment. But you will need to dedicate some of your time to interacting on the platform if you're really going to increase the number of people who see your posts. And obviously, when there are roles to fill, we want as many potential candidates to see that there is a vacancy. I don't want you to be scared by the scale of social media. Yes, it's a large landscape. But if you're one of the 45 million people in this country that uses social media, the good news is, you already know how to use it on behalf of your organisation. Because there's very little difference in how a person and an organisation acts. Social media is centred around human activity, words and conversations and painting of pictures about what working in the social care sector will be like. Social media is not going anywhere. It's exciting where it's going. And there's a great opportunity to really express why someone should come and be part of your amazing team. So join me on other videos where we can start to go into more detail about your strategy and some of the practical elements that will help you fill those roles.