Executive Interview

with **Marie Padberg**,
Leader of Global Talent Attraction,
McKinsey & Company

and **Lisa Sprenkle**,
Leader of Global Talent Attraction,
McKinsey & Company

Onboarding and Technology

About McKinsey & Company

McKinsey is a global management consulting firm committed to helping organizations accelerate sustainable and inclusive growth. We work with clients across the private, public and social sectors to solve complex problems and create positive change for all their stakeholders. We combine bold strategies and transformative technologies to help organizations innovate more sustainably, achieve lasting gains in performance and build workforces that will thrive for this generation and the next.

Recognition

McKinsey earned 13 awards in the 2022 Brandon Hall Group HCM Excellence Awards.

EXCELLENCE IN HCM AWARDS

Learning and Development	**6** Gold Awards	**3** Silver Awards	**1** Bronze Award
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion		**1** Gold Award	**1** Bronze Award
Talent Acquisition			**1** Gold Award

About Marie Padberg

Marie Padberg is a Leader of Global Talent Attraction for McKinsey & Company. She and her co-lead, Blair Ciesil, have a unique shared model to set the firm's talent-attraction strategy. Marie joined McKinsey in 2003 as a consultant, serving clients in marketing and customer value creation across a range of industries including banking, insurance and telecommunications. Over the course of her work and studies, she realized her passion for fostering talent and in 2007, transitioned to McKinsey's People team with a focus on recruiting. In 2012, she founded McKinsey's Next Generation Women Leadership program. Prior to McKinsey, Marie worked with Goldman Sachs in their Investment Banking and Private Banking groups, and with Coty, Inc.

Marie has an MBA from INSEAD, an M.S. of Science from ESCP Europe and a B.Sc. in Business Administration from the University of Passau. She lives in Amsterdam with her husband and their twin daughters and son.

About Blair Ciesil

Blair Ciesil is a Leader of Global Talent Attraction for McKinsey & Company. She and her co-lead, Marie Padberg, have a unique shared model to set the firm's talent attraction strategy and lead a team of approximately 1,200 professionals globally to hire into all roles across the firm.

Over a nearly 20-year McKinsey career, Blair has played leadership roles across the full Talent Attraction model — from office hiring to campus sourcing, to experienced hire strategy, to founding and leading global Centers of Excellence to drive innovation and expertise at scale (e.g., TA Digital and Risk & Policies).

Blair started her career at McKinsey as a consultant focused on marketing and branding, and worked for two years with a client to lead a large-scale brand transformation before returning to the firm to begin her tenure in Talent Attraction. Blair has a dual JD/MBA degree from Northwestern University and an A.B. from Duke University. She lives in Virginia with her husband, two (energetic) children and two (poorly behaved) dogs.

About Rachel Cooke
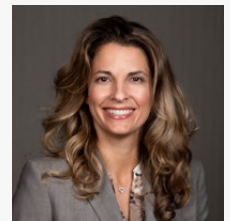
Rachel Cooke is Brandon Hall Group's Chief Operating Officer and Principal HCM Analyst. She is responsible for business operations, including client and member advisory services, marketing design, annual awards programs, conferences and the company's project management functions. She also leads Advancing Women in the Workplace and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, research and events. Rachel worked in the HCM research industry for 20+ years and held several key management and executive positions within the Talent and Learning Research, and Performance Improvement industries.

Q — RACHEL

What is McKinsey doing to find highly skilled workers who have not gone through traditional routes?

A — BLAIR

This is top of mind for everyone; the idea that we know top talent is everywhere. How do we reach talent beyond the traditional channels we focus on? McKinsey is embracing this moment. Historically, we've had a narrower set of top sources we've hired from. As we want to drive positive and enduring change in the world, it's imperative that we attract increasingly different and diverse kinds of talent. We not only need to be able to deliver distinctive client services — because our own research shows that client outcomes are better when diverse teams are driving the work — but it also makes our firm a richer and better place for our people.

We started out hiring from about 700 different sources globally and we're now at about 1,700 and have a big aspiration to hire from 5,000 different sources around the world. That just doesn't mean going to new-to-us schools, it also means focusing on new kinds of talent. We've historically hired from "ready to work" talent pools who are job-ready from day one. We're now expanding into more "ready to learn" or "ready to grow" talent pools such as data boot camps or tech apprenticeships. In the U.S., we also launched a new program for veterans to reach those who have a different path from traditional ones.

We've joined some exciting partnerships, including a "tear the paper ceiling" campaign in the U.S. that aims to change the hiring trajectory for 50 million "stars." These are workers skilled through alternative routes and McKinsey is proud to partner with them to change the narrative to say, "you don't have to have a four-year college degree to be a highly skilled worker."

A — MARIE

It goes very much hand-in-hand to change the way the world perceives McKinsey. Some people may not know who we are. If they don't know what something is, they may not think McKinsey is interested in their profile. McKinsey is working hard to ensure that people believe they have a fair chance to join us and we're interested in them. Great talent is everywhere so we don't want to narrow ourselves to a certain set of preset tools.

Q — RACHEL

What is McKinsey doing to ensure its talent culture is distinctive and inclusive, and attracting and developing talent from a wide range of backgrounds?

A MARIE

A big portion of it is finding the right people, then being able to identify who are the best people from those new sources. We've had to make changes to our assessment model to ensure that we are assessing for potential and don't get biased by the pedigree that people bring. We've seen in the Consulting industry that there's a pretty high level of preparedness in some of our candidates. Making sure everybody has equal access to preparation information so everybody can thrive and be at their best is important to us.

We've made other changes to our process. For example, we are looking for leaders who can create an inclusive environment on our teams, so we're assessing for inclusive leadership in our interview process. We've also added an interview focusing on values and purpose, because that is so important, especially for today's generation. It will make the onboarding and success at the firm afterward so much more relevant if you connect to the values and the purpose of a firm. We're also searching for problem-solving skills, as thye are core to who we are and what we do. We've made changes to that assessment through our "game solve," which is completely set outside of the business world, to make sure nobody's advantaged depending on their background. It's a game that doesn't require any preparation and it's extremely engaging — I dare say it's even fun to play. It's leveled the playing field over other more traditional tests we have used. We continue to evolve. This is not a one-time effort. We will continue to evolve our assessment model because that is so crucial to finding those great candidates.

A BLAIR

The qualities and skills we look for are about the whole person, not just academic achievement or scores you get on a test. We want to hire people who are resilient, curious, humble, kind, hungry to drive change, ambitious and driven — but also fun, interesting and different. We've been leading the management consulting industry in terms of how firms access Consulting talent. We're trying to revolutionize and constantly update our assessment model as the next generation of Consulting talent will require very different skills.

Q RACHEL

What are the best uses of automation in talent acquisition while keeping the candidate experience human and personalized?

A MARIE

There's so much new technology popping up but there's also so much more stringent legislation to control some of the automations. For us, it's not so much automation but it's more about tech enablement. During COVID, we switched to 100-percent virtual and we learned it's actually possible to have good conversations and build meaningful relationships via digital tools.

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It made McKinsey more open and welcoming to everybody. It's much easier because we can't go everywhere physically — that's just not a scalable model. The tech enablement allowed us to reach out and connect to a lot more candidates all over the world.

There's also this idea around, "how can you automate anything administrative?" I would love to automate everything administrative as much as possible to allow our recruiters to build meaningful relationships with our candidates. We're trying to push that with data entry and interview scheduling, etc., but even CRM efforts can be much more tailored in terms of what we share with our candidates. Digitalization has also allowed us to make parts of our assessment model more engaging, fun and interesting than a typical pen-and-paper test in the office.

A **BLAIR**

Digital is going to be critical for us to be able to open our doors in a virtual way and let people look in. For our firm, it's an important part of our brand ethos. McKinsey is considered to be mysterious and closed-door. Confidentiality is one of our core values around client service work, but that has translated into a sense in the marketplace that we are unknowable or unreachable. Marie and I are excited to invest in digital ways to truly open our doors to new kinds of talent so they can experience what we do and learn who we are — our culture, values, sense of purpose — the "McKinseyness" that

binds all of us together even though we're a super-diverse global firm. That's really hard to describe to people except in a very one-to-one conversational way. We need to scale that so more people get an insight into who we are and experience what we do in a way that's compelling and flexible.

Q **RACHEL**

What should companies do — and what is McKinsey doing — to enable employees to take more control of their professional development?

A **MARIE**

We've implemented a number of ways to help our colleagues "self-author" their journey. We've always talked about "Make Your Own McKinsey." Our Learning colleagues and the People function tailored the learning platform to give the right learning recommendation and advice in the moments of need, linked back to the feedback given. McKinsey has a very strong feedback culture. Some of the courses the platform might suggest are in-person, some are self-paced and some are online. There's a wide variety that our colleagues have exposure to. Some of it is proprietary training for McKinsey but we also partner with external organizations.

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We've also implemented strong credentialing and badging, where people can share with McKinsey and colleagues what type of expertise they bring. That is very important for experienced hires who already have some expertise prior to McKinsey and they want that recognized at the firm. When people look for colleagues to staff on a project, there are ways they can search for that expertise and have faster access and transparency about their colleagues.

Then, of course, a lot of it is just managing and discussing your own development plans. There's a lot of focus and emphasis on helping professional development colleagues who are taking care of the Consultants who don't have a direct line manager. For direct line managers in the parts of the organization where it's a more traditional organization, we want them to have those discussions to make sure people sit down at the beginning of every year and say, "What are my plans, what are my goals, what do I want to grow in, what do I want to get exposure to?" We then follow up throughout the year by giving people moments of apprenticeship, opportunities and access, and ensuring everybody has a sponsor.

For example, every year in January we launch a global apprenticeship and sponsorship survey where everybody at McKinsey globally is asked who is sponsoring you, mentoring you and inspiring you to make sure that we recognize and celebrate those sponsors and mentors who are great at their jobs. We not only sponsor a diverse group of people, but also help those who struggle to find sponsors or don't really know how to find a mentor to help them make the most out of their careers. I believe there's

nobody in this world who has reached a certain leadership level who has not had help, so having mentors and sponsors is very crucial. McKinsey's data-driven approach uses data and insights to help our teams and our people on their development journey.

Here are some ways to listen to the interview on Brandon Hall Group's Excellence at Work Podcast:

iTunes   Spotify   YouTube

Brandon Hall Group
EXCELLENCE AT WORK

About Brandon Hall Group

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 30 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

Professional Certifications
Self-paced certification programs. Virtual group sessions for companies. In-person conferences and summits.

Membership
Individual and Enterprise Membership Options: Includes research assets, advisory support, a client success plan and more.

SOME WAYS WE CAN HELP

Advisory Offerings
Custom Research Projects, including surveys, focus group interviews and Organization Needs Assessment for Transformation, Technology Selection and Strategy.

Excellence Awards
Two annual programs recognize the best organizations that have successfully deployed programs to achieve measurable results.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
recognizes world-class HCM programs that transform their organization and achieve breakthrough results. This designation is the next step beyond the HCM Excellence Awards, which focus on a single program, and looks at the department as a whole.

SMARTCHOICE® PREFERRED PROVIDER PROGRAM
uniquely places HCM service and technology companies at the top of organizations' consideration list of vendors. It adds an unmatched level of credibility based on BHG's twenty-eight-plus years of experience in evaluating and selecting the best solution providers for leading organizations around the world.