**CHAPTER 6**

**GE MONEY AMERICAS**

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Developing and sustaining an integrated talent acquisition model utilizing recruitment process outsourcing (RPO), advanced sourcing technology, and process efficiency in conjunction with LEAN methodologies.

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**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces the framework, processes, and tools currently used at General Electric, GE Money, for executive talent acquisition. The long-term goals of the strategy and programs GE is currently implementing for talent acquisition include:

• To ensure that an efficient and cost-effective talent acquisition process to provide quality talent and a talent pipeline is identified.

• To provide robust metrics reporting to ensure analysis and measurement of process (efficiencies, waste, quality, time, and satisfaction) are reviewed regularly.

• To maximize performance of recruitment process and HR professionals through utilization of LEAN methodologies.

**COMPANY BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENT**

General Electric is a diversified technology, media, and financial services company dedicated to creating products that make life better. From jet engines to power generation, financial services to plastics, and medical imaging to news and information, GE people worldwide are dedicated to turning imaginative ideas into leading products and services that help solve some of the world’s toughest problems.

GE Money is the consumer finance brand for GE Consumer Finance worldwide. GE Money combines the trustworthiness of banks and the speed of finance companies to deliver a unique service to our customers and clients. Around the world, our businesses have embodied the values of GE Money and prospered. Customers are drawn by what GE Money represents: speed, value, flexibility, accessibility, and trustworthiness. When you work at GE, you work with people who have a passion for learning and a desire to innovate. Their obsession with finding better ways to do things creates an exhilarating work environment.

With more than $163 billion in assets, GE Money is a leading provider of credit services to consumers, retailers, and auto dealers in fifty countries around the world. GE Money Americas offers a range of financial products, including private-label credit cards, personal loans, bank cards, auto loans and leases, mortgages, corporate travel and purchasing cards, debt consolidation and home equity loans, and credit insurance.

**THE CHALLENGE AND APPROACH**

***Solving the Staffing Dilemma: Two Leaders Team to Get It Right***

We often hear the buzz word “sustainability” in reference to environmental resources. At GE Money Americas, we link the term with human resources, too. Our recruiting process delivers sustainable results today, thanks mostly to our partnership with Kelly’s Outsourcing & Consulting Group (Kelly OCG), Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) practice. This recruitment process outsourcing provider helped us get the “people” part right, which can make all the difference in the global scramble for talent.

***A True Partner Steps Up***

In 2000, GE Money Americas (formerly GE Consumer Finance) wasn’t getting it right, and we knew it. Our company, a leading provider of banking and credit services, had staffing challenges common to many large organizations: a decentralized staffing process, inconsistent interview practices, and variable candidate quality from a small number of colleges. Moreover, the cost per hire averaged more than $8,000 and the time to fill a position typically exceeded three months. In short, our process was unsustainable.

A parade of vendors told us they had just what we needed to reform our troubled staffing function. In the end, however, the clear choice was Kelly OCG, which had the competitive advantage in employing experienced, caring people. No surprise that, in selecting a partner to be an extension of GE Money Americas’ HR team, the difference came down to people! (See [Figure 6.1](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#FIG-6.1-section-1-11-3-2).)

[**FIGURE 6.1.**](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#Ref-FIG-6.1-section-1-11-3-2) *The Evolution of Our Partnership*

Kelly OCG launched a revamped outsourcing model in early 2001. Key to the solution were a centralized staffing process and a dedicated team. This shift to centralization included a customized candidate application website and standardized, more thorough screening methods to enhance candidate quality and service level.

The solution also incorporated:

• A hiring logistics strategy to ensure consistency, standardization, and efficiency from interview to offer;

• Management of an Internet-based applicant tracking system;

• Automation of processes once done manually;

• Measurement of staffing and activity costs; and

• Establishment of new benchmarks and goals.

The ability to sustaining a process with year-over-year process improvement given an ever-changing landscape of our business, the economy, and sourcing strategy development are critical.

***Results Chart a Success Story***

Kelly OCG helped GE Money Americas realize significant savings at virtually every level of the staffing process. In addition, they streamlined a time-intensive prescreening process, enabling more interviews of well-qualified candidates during fewer recruiting visits to a diverse range of campuses in a shorter time frame.

Numbers tell the bottom-line story:

• Our total staffing costs decreased 54 percent. The savings were attributable largely to a halving of sourcing expenditures and an 80 percent reduction in travel and relocation costs. The average cost per hire fell to $4,900 from $8,300.

• Indirect savings included a cycle time reduction to 47 days from 115 days.

In the course of an eight-year relationship, Kelly OCG has helped GE Money Americas obtain year-over-year cost reductions ($2 million in 2007), while continuing to manage a best-in-class staffing process. With a focus on operating more efficiently and sharing best practices, they have improved both candidate quality and our interview-to-hire ratio. They measure their progress in both quantitative and qualitative terms (see [Figure 6.2](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#FIG-6.2-section-1-11-4-1)).

The process shown in [Figure 6.2](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#FIG-6.2-section-1-11-4-1) combines both GE managers and the RPO provider team throughout the candidate life cycle.

**THE TECHNOLOGY**

***The Challenge***

With the right process defined and in place to attract candidates, we were now experiencing difficulty in managing the high volume of applicants, which negatively impacted the effectiveness of our staffing function. Additionally, existing technologies did not enable them to execute a highly successful, high-volume recruiting program with the ability to produce metrics on demand.

[**FIGURE 6.2.**](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#Ref-FIG-6.2-section-1-11-4-1) *The Process Model*

The company faced these difficulties:

• Lack of an effective applicant tracking tool designed for high volume, nonexempt hiring;

• Limited outlets for candidates to apply;

• A narrow scope of reporting capabilities;

• Complexities of dynamic recruiting needs in more than twenty locations;

• Management of the day-to-day functions of a technology provider; and

• Successful management of phone interview and onsite interview scheduling.

***The Solution***

Together GE Money and Kelly OCG sought a technology vendor to address the challenges. Kelly OCG selected My Staffing Pro (HR Services Inc.), which offered an applicant tracking and recruiting software system with advanced applicant screening capabilities. Next, Kelly OCG stepped in to manage the implementation and the ongoing day-to-day activities of the applicant tracking system (ATS). This included system, end-user, and reporting functionality. As a result, a variety of improvements were made to the process.

The solution incorporated:

• An interactive voice response system (IVR), which serves as an automated applicant screening and scheduling tool;

• An integrated online and telephone application accessible twenty-four hours a day;

• Automation of candidate prescreening and scheduling previously done manually;

• A custom candidate portal specific to the client;

• Standardized EEO data collection and reporting;

• Advanced statistical reporting capabilities;

• Strategic initiatives that maximized the use of available resources; and

• Automated communication (including confirmation and regrets letters).

***The Results***

By strategically integrating the right technology partner, Kelly OCG was able to optimize the recruiting process and achieve significant results for GE Money. In the first year 15,332 new applicants were tracked and managed through the hiring process. In the following years the number of new applicants continued to grow and exceeds 80,000 annually. As the client hiring demands and processes have continually changed, the flexibility provided by My Staffing Pro (HR Services) and its technology have helped to seamlessly accommodate their requirements and enable better hiring decisions. Recent successful implementations include the addition of four new call centers, increasing the total number of Kelly OCG recruited call centers to eighteen.

**STRATEGY FOR SOURCING**

We also refined our sourcing strategy. The Internet, for example, remains an important weapon in our recruiting arsenal, but qualified candidates who are working successfully for our competitors may not be checking web postings. This truth calls for fresh thinking about a model that blends both contemporary approaches and traditional recruiting tactics such as cold calling, all but abandoned during the rise of the web.

Our candidate funnel ([Figure 6.3](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#FIG-6.3-section-1-11-5-1)) is streamlined due to an efficient process. Through this process only qualified candidates are invited to an on-site interview, which means Hiring Managers are spending quality interview time and have higher interview to offer ratios.

***The Challenge***

Dissatisfied with their current methods of generating and implementing an effective method for research and advertising, a world-renowned consumer financial services company requested assistance in finding a more successful channel of advertising media to increase the flow of candidates. Additionally, the company wanted to improve the way in which they tracked their advertising spending in order to accurately calculate cost-per-hire and manage their annual budget.

[**FIGURE 6.3.**](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#Ref-FIG-6.3-section-1-11-5-1) *The Candidate Funnel*

The relationship is managed by the Kelly OCG-RPO talent acquisition team, and it is uniform across all locations. Prior to the endeavor to merge the process of ad placement into a single, proficient entity, nearly two dozen client locations were actively placing their own advertisements separately—using limited time and resources.

The company faced the following challenges:

• Lack of advertising budget management and tracking of spending;

• Inconsistent process across all client locations;

• Lack of resources to research best ways to advertise and reach target candidates, including cutting-edge technology and emerging trends; and

• No cost-per-hire nor ROI tracking.

***The Solution***

The client needed to hire talent for call centers across the country but did not have a comprehensive or long-term solution in place. Together, TMP Worldwide and Kelly OCG-RPO developed a nationwide annual media plan. With the plan in hand, the client could reference the overall strategy and implement the best tactics for the specific market within a two-week lead time. Included in the plan were specific strategies for search engine marketing, job boards, direct email advertising, mobile marketing, and outdoor advertising.

Since the media plan included strategies throughout the year, in addition to covering all of the client-specific geographic areas, it was easy to implement. As a result, the client took advantage of both traditional and non-traditional media to achieve success in staffing the call center locations. The client is now competitive for hiring for positions across the country—no matter the regional location. The well-received advertising campaign promoted the collaborative and unique company culture and captured the essence of joining a successful team. In fact, the client requested two additional executions promoting the benefits of employment.

The solutions for the client included (but were not limited to) the following:

• Budget management for advertising spending;

• A consultative relationship between TMP and the client managed by the Kelly OCG-RPO talent acquisition team;

• Demographic research provided by TMP Worldwide;

• TMP Worldwide working specifically within company branding guidelines;

• Introduction of new and cutting-edge products/technologies;

• All requests handled by one to two direct points of contact; and

• Cost-per-hire tracking from the Kelly OCG-RPO talent acquisition team to better manage resources.

***The Results***

Through a partnership with Kelly OCG-RPO, the company’s respective locations no longer need to place or research their advertising. All research, recommendations, placement, spend tracking, and budget management are taken care of through this business relationship, thus helping to reduce overlapping advertisements, unnecessary or ineffective advertisements, and unnecessary spending. TMP Worldwide and Kelly OCG-RPO worked together to maintain the distinguished image and reputation of the client company.

*“Partnering with TMP as an ad vendor, and having that relationship and budget managed by Kelly OCG, has allowed us to have one centralized point of contact for advertising needs, research, and staying up-to-date on developments in the market(s). Additionally, this centralized approach has helped us reduce overall advertising/ recruiting costs while reducing cycle time and increasing position fill rates.”*

Effective sourcing strategies have reduced agency spending by over 70 percent (see [Figure 6.4](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#FIG-6.4-section-1-11-5-3)).

[**FIGURE 6.4.**](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9780470555231/epub/OEBPS/gold_9780470555231_oeb_c06_r1.html#Ref-FIG-6.4-section-1-11-5-3) *Sourcing Model*

**LEAN METHODOLOGIES**

***Flexibility Defines the Future***

Like all successful programs, this one is evolving to meet the needs of our ever-changing organization. Over the past year, we embarked on a Lean quality review. Through value stream mapping, we reviewed opportunities to improve our processes and defined our ideal process state. Working closely with Kelly OCG, we formed *kaizen* teams to effect positive change. Our challenge was to enhance the applicant experience through reduction in process delays and redundancies. In the end, we were able to meet more stringent federal compliance standards while maintaining cycle times and quality of service.

We are most familiar with “Lean Manufacturing” as introduced by Toyota® to improve production manufacturing. In such an environment, it is used to reduce waste, increase quality, and improve production. Could this “Lean” approach be used to improve a transaction-based service operation—like staffing? GE Healthcare thought so. With help from Kelly Outsourcing and Consulting Group (Kelly OCG), “Transactional Lean” has been successfully integrated into their solid business partnership with great results.

***Introducing Transactional Lean***

In 2006, the relationship was being challenged with increasing hiring volume and heightened requirements from U.S. Department of Labor Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). GE Money needed more and more staff to combat these issues, which added more and more cost to the staffing budget. Something had to change. We decided to apply the Lean approach to the staffing process to create efficiencies, improve performance, and generate cost savings.

A team of Kelly OCG managers and recruiters and GE Money human resources managers created a value stream map (VSM) of the current staffing process. The VSM revealed areas of low-quality output to target as kaizen improvement opportunities. But before anything could be set in place, a fundamental culture change had to occur.

***5S***

To initiate the required culture shift, a Lean principle, 5S, was introduced as the foundation for all improvements. The 5S consists of:

• **Sort**—separation of necessary items from unnecessary items;

• **Set in Order**—arrange items according to how they will be used;

• **Shine**—maintain work area for sorted and set in order items;

• **Standardize**—ensure sort, set in order, and shine are consistently followed; and

• **Sustain**—maintain and improve sort, set in order, shine, and standardize.

5S was first applied to the physical environment, eliminating unneeded storage and files. It soon became evident the discipline to sustain 5S was necessary to sustain a change in the staffing culture to one of continuous improvement.

***The Lean Journey***

Following the VSM and 5S, the staffing team focused on the kaizen opportunities. Initially, the team led and participated in more than thirty-two efforts to standardize processes and improve quality. Early efforts included:

• Creating application instructions;

• Standardizing the initial candidate phone screening;

• Creating a compliant process for documenting search strings;

• Standardizing the hiring manager call for newly posted positions; and

• Documenting the employee referral process.

***The Impact***

Staffing continued to improve, with plans to institute visual management practices to capture performance and adopt better process controls with internal audits. With the Lean improvements in place, staffing processes became more consistent. Defects decreased, and the quality of service continues to improve. For the first time, vacations, absences, and peaks in hiring volume do not disrupt customer service. The standards of excellence and defined processes also allow new team members to more easily learn their roles and integrate into the team.

**EXPANSION**

In 2008 our process and abilities were challenged again to provide our process in Latin America (Guatemala, Central America). This would mark the first site in Guatemala, as well as the first opportunity for Kelly OCG to staff there.

***Process Efficiency and Successes***

1. Implemented technology and process used for North American staffing and began processing candidates on March 10, 2008.

2. The first hiring date for the new Guatemala site was April 28, 2008 (six weeks to process candidates).

3. In managing vendor relationships, Kelly OCG worked with an advertising vendor to conduct market research on trends and avenues for advertising in a new market and in a different culture. By managing ad vendor relationships and monitoring effectiveness of ad avenues, cost per hire is at $603.12 as of September 30, 2008. The client averages forty-two hires per month since project inception.

4. We streamlined the hiring process to better customize for the client site: removal of redundancies in the process (preliminary English test), reducing total number of interviews down from three to two by combining competencies covered in two on-site interviews to reduce redundancy. HRF also created and adjusted the phone interview used. Through this process improvement, time to process a candidate was shorter and the number of trips a candidate had to make to the recruitment site was reduced. We adjusted the final English assessment (CEDS) schedule to accommodate most candidates.

5. Kelly OCG hired and trained a local team to represent the RPO onsite RPO team.

The Kelly OCG team was entirely responsible for establishing the process, providing /maintaining resources, and processing of candidates. Once the Guatemala team was hired and trained, the U.S. team maintained daily communication, weekly calls, and occasional trips to Guatemala to ensure questions were answered and issues were resolved. The U.S. team co-managed the advertising and participated in weekly update calls with the entire client project management team to discuss updates and resolve issues.

**CONCLUSION**

We will continue to demand more from our outsourcing provider as new challenges surface. With the RPO practice of Kelly OCG as our strong right arm, we look forward to the future because, through flexibility, scalability, and strategic thinking, we have proved we can successfully manage our talent acquisition within GE Money.   Tammy Grisham is the Staffing Center of Excellence Leader for GE Money Americas. Grisham has over fifteen years of recruitment, operations, and management expertise. She leads the talent acquisition for the Americas and ensures proper implementation and management of the tools aligned to recruitment (employee referral program, leadership development program), as well as temporary and contingent workforce management. Based in Stamford, Connecticut, GE Money is the consumer and small business financial services unit for General Electric. Grisham is based in the Kettering, Ohio, office.   D. Zachary Misko is the global RPO director and member of the leadership team at Kelly Services, Inc., Outsourcing & Consulting Group (Kelly OCG), Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) practice area. Kelly OCG-RPO provides outsourced hiring process management and human resource skills to a variety of different companies. As the global RPO director, Misko works with Fortune 500 clients throughout the world to develop and implement processes that improve and drive the hiring process, recruitment, on-boarding, retention, and selection functions within a company. Misko is based out of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, office. Prior to joining Kelly OCG, he managed human resource functions at a world-wide leader in biotechnology and life sciences, Promega Corporation, Madison, Wisconsin, and was employed as the senior training manager for Lands’ End, Dodgeville, Wisconsin. Misko has over fifteen years of broad human resource and management expertise in the direct merchant arena, retail, finance, biotechnology, and professional services. Additionally, he has held various positions in the areas of recruitment, employment law, employee relations, consulting, strategic HR planning, performance management programs, training/development, and compensation. He has completed advanced certification from DILHR and is certified in affirmative action and diversity hiring. Additionally, Misko has been a member of SHRM for the past fourteen years and is the past president of the Metro Milwaukee chapter.