



## SUCCESS STORY

# SGM Engineering | Consulting | Surveying

## TalenTrust Establishes Proactive Strategic Recruitment Process, Positions Firm in Remote Location to Win the War for Talent

### CHALLENGE

Since 1986, success at SGM has been built upon three key tenets: building deep and strong client relationships, understanding each client's uniqueness, and assembling the best talent for the team.

To fuel their growth, SGM needed to hire a variety of specialized and generalist engineers, which were in demand across all U.S. markets. Further compounding this challenge, SGM hires needed to either already live in these remote or resort areas or be willing to relocate. The tagline "We love where we live, work, and play" is a part of the employment brand for SGM that needed to be further leveraged.

"The civil engineering field was becoming increasingly competitive, with respect to attracting and retaining top talent," said Matt Webster, COO at SGM. "Our prior recruiting efforts consisted of posting open positions and considering resumes as they came in. We recognized the need to get more strategic about attracting high quality candidates to SGM. We didn't have the in-house resources to spend the time reaching out to potential candidates and wanted to evaluate a more aggressive recruiting strategy."

He added that the firm struggled to find talented mid-level team members. The emerging leaders with 10-20 years of supervisory experience weren't actively pursuing new opportunities. And the firm was hesitant to hire only for specific projects. Instead SGM wanted long-term engagement with employees.

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### Industry, Size, Location

SGM is a thriving full-service multidisciplinary engineering, consulting, and surveying firm headquartered in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, with additional offices in Aspen, Salida, Durango, Gunnison, Grand Junction, and Meeker. The firm employs over 100 people in various positions and is proud to be the largest full-service engineering firm in Western Colorado.

### Services

SGM's success is built upon strong long-standing relationships with a solid base of municipal, special district, state and federal government, and private sector clients. SGM delivers responsive service and high-quality solutions in the areas of water and wastewater, water resources, transportation, structural, municipal, MEP and civil/site development engineering. The firm also boasts a full-service land surveying practice and a thriving environmental consulting team. SGM clients appreciate the large-firm resources the firm provides coupled with attentive, small-firm personalized service.



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## SOLUTION

SGM launched a partnership with TalenTrust in 2016 based on the firm's innovative model that treats recruitment as a strategic and ongoing sales process. TalenTrust promised its team would work hard to understand the unique talent needs, growth goals, values, and culture at SGM, and then source the candidates with the best skills and cultural fit.

Webster noted, "Rather than looking for high volume, we tasked TalenTrust with helping us fill key, strategic positions, which would require significantly more effort than simply posting job openings. Several of these mission critical roles have been filled by qualified candidates who are a good cultural fit, who we likely would not have found through standard recruiting efforts. Those hires have put us in a better position to continue serving our clients."

He emphasized, "Fit is critical. The TalenTrust team developed a solid understanding of our firm, and can speak intimately about what makes us SGM, based on our culture and values."

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## RESULTS

*"This partnership makes sense from a business perspective. It's mission critical to SGM. Our business must remain competitive and TalenTrust positions us to win the talent war."*

During the initial three-year period of working in partnership with SGM, TalenTrust established a proactive, strategic, and ongoing recruitment process. This consistent process resulted in:

- the submittal of more than 100 top candidates,
- employment offers extended to 15 people,
- and the successful hiring of 9 professionals

Webster said, "Our experience with TalenTrust has helped us successfully resolve several strategic hiring needs. We have gained valuable insight on the recruiting, interviewing and hiring process. We also have learned a lot about the marketplace for candidates in our industry and our office locations."

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“There’s a specific type of person who wants to live and work in a rural or resort community,” explained Webster. “We joke: who wouldn’t want to live here? but we know that our locations are not appealing to every potential employee. The TalenTrust team worked hard to target professionals in other similar communities in the Rocky Mountain West, and then provided a stringent process to vet and screen candidates and determine their interest levels and motivating factors.”

TalenTrust conducted extensive research to build and maintain extensive candidate pipelines for key roles. These pipelines each now contain hundreds or thousands of potential hires. TalenTrust developed and implemented ongoing short-term and long-term candidate engagement and marketing strategies to address both current and future hiring needs. As an example, candidate engagement email campaigns had open rates of 28-30%, which far exceed the recruiting industry average open rates of 8%.

The team of remote employees at TalenTrust worked on behalf of SGM without being physically located in the western Colorado locations. And TalenTrust built awareness of the SGM employment brand among candidates who may join the SGM team now or in the future.

“Our partnership with TalenTrust gives SGM the ability to reach a broader spectrum of potential candidates, particularly those that might not be actively looking to change jobs but might consider an opportunity when they hear about it,” said Webster.

He added, “Recruiting is a unique skillset. If you are a company that struggles with it, why not partner with TalenTrust? They offer the tools, approach, and trained personnel. If you try to do it in-house, it takes extensive time and resources. Outsourcing to TalenTrust give us flexibility to scale up or down as needed. This partnership makes sense from a business perspective. It’s mission critical to SGM. Our business must remain competitive and TalenTrust positions us to win the talent war.”