

LEA Global

Talent Acquisition Collaboration Group Call

February 4, 2026



Rising Star Association



INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTING BULLETIN



Welcome! Meeting Reminders & Housekeeping Items

Please update your Zoom display name to include your firm name

- *(Right-click your video tile → Rename → John Doe | Firm Name)*

Use the Chat feature throughout the call for questions and comments—we'll monitor it in real time.

Continue the conversation in LEA's Talent Acquisition Teams channel.

- This channel is a subgroup within the HR Teams space and provides access to the **HR, Learning & Development, and Talent Acquisition** collaboration channels.

The **2026 Talent Acquisition Activity Plan** is available in the Talent Acquisition Teams channel under **Files**.

Register for future **Talent Acquisition calls** and explore other LEA events by visiting the **Events** tab in Leading Edge Alliance's member portal.

Interested in co-facilitating a future call?

- Please reach out to a Steering Committee member or **Carla Blattenbauer** to volunteer.

Want to help shape future agendas, meeting topics, or the annual conference?

- The Steering Committee is seeking additional members.
- Contact **Carla Blattenbauer** or any Steering Committee member for details on expectations and time commitment.

Welcome! Meeting Reminders & Housekeeping Items

Save the Date: LEA North American Regional Conference

- **May 31 – June 3, 2026 | San Diego, California**
- The Steering Committee is actively shaping the agenda, including planned collaboration with the **Learning & Development** and **Human Resources** groups.
- If you're interested in contributing to the conference or getting involved, please reach out to a Steering Committee member or consider joining the committee.
- Registration is available via the **Events** tab in the LEA member portal.

Round-Robin (Re)Introductions & Icebreakers

To kick off the year and reconnect as a group, we'll start with quick introductions and a light icebreaker.

- Your name, firm, and role
- One Talent Acquisition challenge you're navigating in 2026
- One “swap-shop” insight (*choose one*)
 - A TA strategy, tool, or lesson you've picked up from an LEA peer
 - OR one topic you're hoping to learn from the group this year
- **Bonus**
 - Share one thing that's currently taking up your brain space outside of work (no resumes, no fun facts you've used 100 times).

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Talent Acquisition Strategies and Challenges in Public Accounting: Navigating the Talent Market and Leveraging External Agencies

Presented by:

John “JP” Cambareri – Director, Talent Acquisition, KLR Public Accounting

Current Challenges in Public Accounting Talent Acquisition

Declining Number of Accountants: Over 300,000 U.S. accountants have left the profession in recent years, leading to a significant talent shortage.

Educational Pipeline Issues: The number of students graduating with accounting degrees has been decreasing, contributing to the shortage

Changing Workforce Expectations: Younger professionals, particularly Gen Z, prioritize work-life balance and may be less inclined toward traditional accounting roles.

How are you addressing these challenges?

Sources:

<https://scrubbed.net/blog/new-report-reveals-winning-strategies-for-navigating-the-accounting-talent-crisis/>

<https://www.hrcloud.com/blog/how-recruiters-are-overcoming-accounting-recruitment-and-retention-challenges>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/accounting-errors-remote-work-gen-z-talent-2025-1>

Discussion: Strategies for Effective Talent Acquisition

Enhance Employer Branding

Promote a positive work culture, opportunities for growth, and a commitment to work-life balance to attract top talent

Expand Candidate Pools

Consider hiring non-traditional candidates, such as those from related educational backgrounds or with transferable skills.

Invest in Technology

Utilize advanced recruitment technologies, including AI-driven sourcing tools, to identify and engage potential candidates more effectively

Discussion: Leveraging External Agencies

Access to Larger/Passive Candidate Pool

External agencies may have different or more expansive networks and can reach passive candidates.

Expedite Hiring Process

Experienced third party recruiters will schedule the candidate on your behalf, allowing you to conduct other responsibilities while the hiring process takes place

Expertise in Market Trends and Compensation Insights

Knowledge of salary benchmarks, competitive benefits, and industry trends. They can provide valuable guidance during the offer stage.

Considerations:

Costs // Remote vs. In-Person // Culture Alignment

Framework of a Fee Agreement

Key Components



Fee Structure

Contingency Fees:

- Payment is made only upon successful placement, typically ranging from 25% to 33% of the candidate's first-year salary.

Retainer Fees:

- Involves upfront payment, often used for executive searches, with fees usually higher due to the dedicated resources involved.

Flat Fees:

- A predetermined fixed amount, regardless of the candidate's salary, suitable for roles with predictable hiring processes



Refund & Guarantee Period

Replacement Guarantee:

- If a candidate leaves within a specified timeframe (e.g., 90 days), the agency commits to finding a replacement at no additional cost

Refund Policy:

- Some agreements offer partial or full refunds if the candidate departs within the guarantee period.



Other Considerations

Payment Terms:

- Clearly define payment schedules, methods, and any penalties for late payments

Non-Solicitation Clause:

- Agencies agree not to recruit employees from your firm for a specified period, protecting your talent pool

Upcoming Deadlines and Timelines for Hiring

Tax

April 15, 2025

This is the big one. April 15 is the deadline to file your federal income tax return for 2024 unless you [request an extension](#).

June 17, 2025

June 17 is the filing deadline for U.S. citizens living abroad, including military personnel stationed outside the country.

September 15, 2025

September 15 is the third-quarter estimated tax payment deadline for the 2025 tax year.

October 15, 2025

If you file for an extension in April, the October 15 deadline is your last chance to submit your 2024 tax return.

Audit

March 31

Deadline for preparing financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2024

June 30

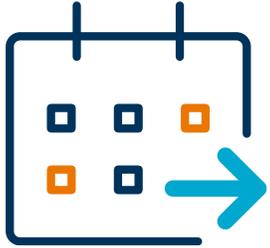
Deadline for approving annual financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2024

July 15

Deadline for submitting approved financial statements to the relevant court register

Discussion:

How does your firm address hiring during busier times of the year?



Targeting Talent from Firms Facing Structural Shifts

Focusing on... Public accounting firms undergoing significant transitions—such as private equity (PE) investment or mergers/acquisitions (M&A) by larger firms—often experience cultural and operational disruptions. These moments present opportunities to attract talent who may be seeking stability, alignment with their career goals, or a different work environment.

Recruitment Opportunities:

- Professionals who feel pressure from increased profitability expectations over client service.
- Staff frustrated by cost-cutting measures, reduced flexibility, or aggressive growth mandates.
- Leaders seeking firms with a long-term, people-focused approach over short-term financial targets.
- Senior professionals seeking firms where they can have a greater voice
- Mid-level staff looking for stability if the new firm eliminates redundant positions.
- Professionals seeking to maintain a regional/local firm feel rather than adapting to a national/global culture.

⚠️ Challenges & Considerations:

- Some employees may benefit from enhanced resources and brand recognition of a larger firm
- Need to be strategic in your messaging

Thank You for Attending!

Thank you for your engagement and contributions to today's Talent Acquisition Collaboration Group discussion. We appreciate the insights, perspectives, and shared experiences from across the group.

Reminders: Save the Date: National Conference

- **Leading Edge Alliance North American Regional Conference**
- **May 31 – June 3, 2026 San Diego, California**
- Registration is available via the **Events** tab in the LEA member portal
 - **Compensation, Transparency, & Negotiations**
 - **Beyond the CPA: Career Progression and Growth for Non-CPA Professionals**
 - **The Future of Work in Public Accounting**

Next TA Collaboration Group Meeting April 2026 (exact date TBD)

- Discussion led by **Steering Committee Co-Chair Taylor Phillips** of **Draffin Tucker**

Get Involved

- Interested in shaping future agendas, content, or leading a collaboration meeting?
- Looking to expand your network or contribute thought leadership?
- Have ideas for **future topics, guest speakers, software demos, or discussions?**
- Please reach out to **Carla Blattenbauer** or any member of the Steering Committee to get involved.
- If these opportunities interest you, consider joining the **Steering Committee** as a full-time member—member input is always welcome.

