5 Signs

You're Ready to Break Up with Spreadsheets

Jobvite **bambooHR™**

Introduction

Here's the sad but simple truth: Not every relationship lasts forever, no matter how wonderful it might have been at the beginning. Feelings change. Situations grow more complex. You start to need... *more.*

No, we're not talking about relationships between people—though they, too, face these issues of course. We're talking about the fading connection that recruiters and HR professionals have with their spreadsheets. As technology in the HR space grows ever more functional, affordable, and versatile, many professionals are realizing it might be time to say *farewell* to their old standby solutions and *hello* to new opportunities.

Is your relationship with spreadsheets starting to take a downhill turn? Here are five telltale signs you're ready to move on—plus ideas for forging new bonds with today's most exciting HR and recruiting technology.

What happens when you and your spreadsheets just can't see eye to eye?

Sign 1: You're just not compatible anymore.

Spreadsheets aren't built for the needs of HR and recruiting organizations—so it's no wonder you're feeling disconnected. You're probably tired of all the data entry and security mistakes that make it tough to focus on more important tasks. And you're no doubt sick of questioning whether your candidate and employee data is up-to-date or accurate.

What you're dealing with is one of the fundamental pitfalls of spreadsheets: *version control*. Spreadsheets only exist as static files until someone saves them, and if people don't follow document storage procedures, they can multiply. For example, if your co-worker Jennifer updates your spreadsheet and sends it to Nigel via email, that updated information doesn't automatically make its way to the master file on your desktop.

Even cloud-based spreadsheets that claim to eliminate this issue fall short. Why? Because they're now easier to access than ever—and anyone with privileges can still open, modify, or break the files.

What you *really* need:

HR and recruiting functions are highly specific and deserve the attention of a technology solution that was built to address your unique requirements.

Look for software that makes it simple to achieve a single version of the truth while eliminating the need for version control. You also want technology that erases the opportunities for human errors—and, better yet, can automatically weed out or correct bad data right from the start.

Sign 2: You love spreadsheets... but you're not *in* love with them.

In theory, spreadsheets have the potential for lots of inventive formulas and data compilation—and once upon a time, that potential was enough to draw you in.

Now, however, you're finding yourself doubting the capabilities of your spreadsheet setup. What if you're missing key data? And what if there's a better solution out there that could help you translate your data into more engaging relationships with your candidates and employees?

Let's be honest. You know there's HR and recruiting technology available that can outperform a basic spreadsheet. And while you're hesitant to take the leap due to questions about training or implementation times, you know it's the right move deep down. You can't continue to cling to your spreadsheets out of misguided loyalty. You're missing opportunities.

What you *really* need:

First, you need to get past the fear of trying something new—because the grass *IS* greener on the other side. Making a HR and recruiting technology purchase is a big step—but the benefits far outweigh any hesitations.

What if you're missing key data? And what if there's a better solution out there that could help you translate your data into more engaging relationships with your candidates and employees?

Consider these advantages that a spreadsheet could never provide:

- **Improved candidate experience.** With an ATS that auto-fills candidate information and automates communications, applications are far easier to complete—and candidates will thank you.

- **Improved employee experience.** Using an HRIS frees up time from doing PTO, benefits and so many other mundane tasks to do strategically more important things—like creating an attractive culture, employee engagement and performance, and making a better candidate experience. Because in today's market, people are what differentiate and grow companies.

- **Customized workflows.** Spreadsheets don't have the flexibility to accommodate your unique systems and processes, but the right software will have built-in integrations that make customization simple and fast.

- **Mobile optimization & employment branding.** Can your spreadsheet appeal to applicants and employees on mobile devices? We don't think so. You need a software that works seamlessly with a branded, mobile career site and application process. Having an app for employees to request PTO right from their phone, or check who is out from their team, or even grab contact info for coworkers makes life simpler. And less energy spent in spreadsheets means more time focused on the right things.

- **Onboarding functionality.** Advanced HR and recruiting technology now seamlessly connect your hiring and onboarding tasks to help you get new hires up to maximum productivity in record time. Spreadsheets? Not so much.

- **Transparency and ease of use.** This is what employees want most. With a single system in place, you'll have one centralized spot where they can find accurate, current data—without the version control woes.

- **Better analytics and reporting.** HR and recruiting technology can create quick reports on the fly with the most current data that stays accurate as your employees and team use it.

Sign 3: You need to focus on your career right now.

Do you know how many hours a week you spend on data entry? If you're using spreadsheets, the number is likely high. And when you're wasting your time punching keys and tabbing between cells, you're not focusing on your real job: making your company attractive to candidates and employees.

Some people worry that HR and recruiting technology won't need you as much as spreadsheets do—and it's true! They will give you more time to set you free to do the stuff you really want to focus on.

You're supposed to be finding new ways to improve performance and reduce time-to-fill. But how can you make forward progress when you're stuck with backward processes?

> How many more candidates could you review if you didn't have to copy their responses into a spreadsheet? How much more time could you spend researching a new vacation policy if you weren't entering everyone's PTO hours manually? And how much time could you spend with management providing valuable insights if you didn't have to worry about the busywork piling up while you're gone?

What you *really* need:

It's time to escape all the manual data entry that wastes your time. If you want to advance your career, you have to find innovative ways to connect with and care for the people in your organization.

By ditching spreadsheets and implementing a HR and recruiting technology, you can scale up your capacity while making time for more business-critical tasks. Think about it: How many more candidates could you review if you didn't have to copy their responses into a spreadsheet? How much more time could you spend researching a new vacation policy if you weren't entering everyone's PTO hours manually? And how much time could you spend with management providing valuable insights if you didn't have to worry about the busywork piling up while you're gone?

Look for a technology solution that is built to save time, with features like automation, scalability to accommodate growth, and the ability to build and nurture talent pools. Then think about how technology can help you expand your career, through forecasting and analytics, or customized reporting that helps you demonstrate improved metrics to management. Remember: Growing into new, more rewarding responsibilities is a big part of a happy career. Don't let spreadsheets hold you back.

Sign 4: Your friends think you can do better.

People all over the office come to you for reports—but they never come without complaints about your legacy recruiting and HR portal. Whether it's IT, hiring managers, or legal, everyone's become a critic of your cumbersome spreadsheet-based mechanism and its many limitations. They're after you all the time to step it up and make improvements.

You know they're right. You can do better. It's just hard to let go, especially when you're not sure of your next move.

What you *really* need:

Before you beat yourself up about not making a change yet, remember that no single software program is going to do 100% of what everyone wants it to do. (If such a perfect solution existed, then it would quickly develop sentience and become our electronic overlord.)

That being said: If your co-workers are complaining about your current software configuration, you should probably investigate *why*—because any new technology solution you invest in must accommodate their requirements as well.

Ask others how they feel about performance reviews, the Employee Referral Program, and whether they really use the PTO tracker spreadsheet. Ask about security for the IT department, online collaboration for your hiring managers, analytics for your directors and executives, and any other questions that you've uncovered in your research. The responses you get may prove your assumptions, or they might go in a completely different direction. Either way, they can help guide you in your search for a better solution.

Sign 5: You're craving something new!

Face it—you're completely bored with using spreadsheets and spending so much time with them. All the other functionality and collaboration woes aside, you really just want something new. Something that's a better fit for everyone.

Perhaps you've already got your eye on a more innovative, current HR and recruiting software. All you need now is the right way to break it to your management team that it's in everyone's best interests to make the switch. So how can you make the case to others that this is a good move for you, your team, your budget, and the company as a whole?

What you *really* need:

Change is difficult—so you're smart to want a plan in place before you seek approval. Your next step is to make space in your budget, so that no one can deny that you and your new software were meant to be.

Here's a question: Can you list the ROI of your current software tools? Most people can't. If you walked into a board meeting asking for double the budget next year, could you justify it and back it up? Again, most people can't. But you need to be ready for this. You'll only be equipped to make a case for yourself if you have real data that shows real problems and real solutions. Period.

When you get at the "why" behind what goes on in your organization, you can make a strong case that your proposed new solutions address existing problems and that they're worth the resources that they'll require.

Try this approach:

1. First, identify key stakeholders in your software decision, including your managers and employees outside of your department.

2. Ask your stakeholders for their input on what's missing, what works, and what they need most from a HR and recruiting software in order to do their jobs effectively.

3. Then help these stakeholders see how your time better spent could help them. For example, hiring managers would have better hires as recruiters could spend more time with candidates, creating scorecards, etc.

4. Want a seat at the table? Determine real numbers of how software would make the company more profitable. A very easy way to do this is multiply hours spent in spreadsheets by your hourly salary, and there you go! That's instant savings and time for you to focus on the right things that add strategic value to the company.

5. Consult with IT and others that would be affected by the new software about implementation, security, downtime, data backup, and other technicalities.

6. Present your findings to your executives with all the details.

Conclusion

Breakups aren't easy, but sometimes they're very necessary. If you're showing any of these five signs, odds are your relationship with spreadsheets is headed for trouble—and it's in your best interest, as well as your company's best interest, to cut ties before you risk damage to your employer brand. Today's smart candidates eagerly seek out businesses that pay attention to innovation, and that can demonstrate strong commitment to and engagement with their employees. You need technology that helps you convey this kind of culture, while enabling you to better understand your HR and recruiting needs and ultimately implement new programs that improve the workplace at large.

If you want to learn more about how you can become more strategic in your role and add more value to your company as a whole, check out BambooHR and Jobvite. We're both here to help you through the breakup and provide a healthier relationship with your employees and candidates.

Jobvite is the industry leader in recruiting software that helps emerging, mid-market, and enterprise companies hire top talent easily, efficiently, and effectively. Our comprehensive and analytics-drivenrecruiting platform accelerates recruiting with an easy-to-use Applicant Tracking System (ATS), social recruiting capabilities, mobile-optimized branded career sites, a recruiting branding solution, on-demand video screening, advanced analytics, onboarding, and seamless integration with other HR systems. Focused exclusively on recruiting software since 2006, with offices in San Mateo and London, Jobvite has thousands of customers including LinkedIn, Schneider Electric, Amway, Zappos, and GoDaddy. To learn more & request a free demo, visit www.jobvite.com or follow us @Jobvite.

BambooHR is the leading provider of tools that empower the strategic evolution of HR in small and medium businesses. Using BambooHR software, HR professionals can automate mundane HR tasks to free them up to perform big-picture activities that improve their workplace (and make themselves vital leaders in their organizations). BambooHR ensures that HR professionals can create great places to work for themselves and their people. Schedule a demo of BambooHR today.

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