

Building your People Pipeline:

Recruiting tips for small to mid-sized companies

American businesses average 48 days to fill a job vacancy. The price of posting the job, productivity lost, and other costs average over \$3,200. (PricewaterhouseCoopers Saratoga 2005/2006 Human Capital Index Report) Can your company afford this?

When faced with an unexpected vacancy, many companies scramble to get a warm body in a seat. Other employees take on additional responsibilities to pick up the slack, and depending on the employee/client relationship, your company could be losing valuable rapport with your customers. If you don't already have formalized recruiting plan in place, you probably know the scenario all too well. You may be able to quickly fill a position, but is a 'fill' good enough? An open position is an opportunity to get exactly what you want. By developing a proactive recruiting plan, you can quickly and efficiently find top candidates.



Forecast your hiring needs

The best way to reduce the scramble is to reduce the surprise. Develop an annual forecast of your hiring needs by position, broken down by quarter. This will give you a three-to-six month lead-time to find the best resources and top talent. Take into consideration turnover, business growth and the economy. On average, businesses report at least 10% annual attrition.

Do you know what you want?

Finding the 'fit factor' combines the skill and qualities you are looking for, along with a positive addition to company culture. Many times employers hire solely on paper or leave it up to "I know when I see them." This is far too subjective. Know what you are looking for ahead of time and stick to it throughout the interviewing process. Identify a hiring team within the company and ask them to provide questions that reflect the company culture and skills necessary for the job.

Are you looking in the right place?

The most qualified and attractive candidates are often already employed. Find out how to attract these passively looking job seekers by posting your position with networking and industry organizations. Do you have an employee referral program? If you have top performers in a position, they probably know other top performers at other organizations.

Can top talent find you?

If someone wanted to get a resume on file with you, how many avenues do they have? Take into consideration what other companies are doing. Your Web site should have, at the least, a link to submit a resume. If you have a constant incoming resume flow, you have resources as soon as you need them.

Do you need help?

Most organizations don't have the time to go out and find the best candidates or the patience sifting through hundreds of resumes responding to a job posting. Utilizing an employment referral service can be an excellent option. As stated earlier, an open position can cost well over \$3000; find out if there is a better value out there, let someone with industry knowledge and connections help you build a pipeline.

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