

The Resource

Special Edition: Attracting and Retaining Capable People

CREATIVE RECRUITING BRINGS RESULTS

With record low unemployment rates in many markets of the country, filling job vacancies has become a major challenge. The need for creativity in recruitment techniques is more pressing than ever, as traditional sources of qualified applicants continue to dry up. While some companies are turning to headhunting/recruitment firms or employment agencies, forward-thinking companies have found more innovative ways to attract talented people.

Over the past three years, dozens of PSP customers have shared their creative ideas regarding recruitment techniques. The following list of strategies has yielded favorable results throughout the United States in "full employment" markets. These road-tested techniques are low-risk and low-cost approaches to attracting high quality people.

Shopping Mall Kiosks allow shoppers to complete preliminary job applications on-the-spot — an excellent way to attract people while they are "off duty."

Vo-tech and Trade Schools are excellent places to find young workers eager to prove themselves and to land secure jobs upon graduation. High school assemblies can be used to tell your company's story in the community.

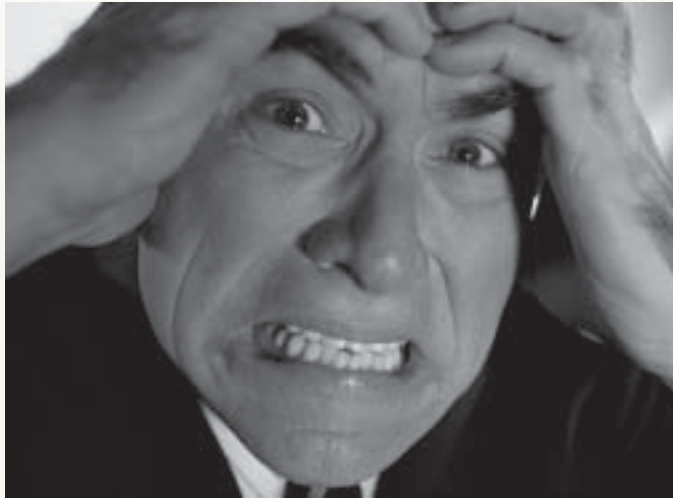
Internships and Summer Jobs introduce companies to prospective employees while the prospects may be earning school credit for their attendance. Internships are particularly popular among family members of existing employees.

Radio and Cable TV Ads are affordable; community bulletin boards and public service announcements give broadcasters a chance to feature local business and hiring opportunities.

Referral Bonuses or "finders' fees" to employees who recommend applicants for hire are usually paid after the new hires have completed the full training or probation period.

Plant Field Trips/Job Fairs can generate great interest, especially if they are held on evenings and weekends to be convenient for currently employed workers.

Billboards announcing job openings along with a contact telephone number should follow the **KISS** principle: **Keep It Short and Simple**.



Plant Closings create opportunities for companies that need seasoned workers, mitigating the distress caused by the shutdown.

Website Posting of job openings on the Internet make it easy for potential applicants to express interest in your company with a few clicks of the mouse and some identifying information.

Military Bases should not be overlooked since recently discharged personnel frequently want to remain in the community, using the skills and work habits they have obtained in their military training.

Civic Groups such as senior citizen centers, clubs and churches often look for speakers for their programs, and many members of the audience may be interested in job possibilities.

This list is designed to supplement rather than replace the more traditional forms of recruitment such as college campus visits, temp-to-perm agencies, and want ads. If we have learned anything about recruitment from our customers over the past few years, it is that multiple pipelines bring the best results. With recruitment challenges expected to last for several years, successful companies will be the ones who focus on attracting and retaining capable people.

For more information on these or other creative ideas on recruitment and retention in hard-to-recruit markets, call PSP at 412-261-1333.

REDUCE RECRUITING COSTS THROUGH BETTER EMPLOYEE RETENTION

If you are hemorrhaging, it's a good idea to stop the bleeding before you get a transfusion. It's true in medicine, and it's true in business. Finding and hiring good employees is difficult, and it is expensive. So, while you are beefing up your recruiting efforts, look for ways to keep the good employees.

Money is Not the Solution

Today's workers are less loyal than those of the past — unlikely to work for a long time for any single employer. Money is a given: they expect to be paid competitively. Fred Herzberg, former PSP motivational researcher, found over and over that money in and of itself is more a symbol of being treated fairly rather than a motivator to do good work. What motivates today's workers is interesting work and the opportunity to learn new skills for a better position. To this end, management must provide career development opportunities for employees it wishes to keep. Neither companies nor managers are usually prepared to provide the motivation required to retain good workers.

Communication with workers is often overlooked as a means of gaining increased employee commitment. PSP offers employee surveys to measure employee feedback and determine possible problem areas that could be addressed to head off employee dissension. Such surveys often uncover problem areas and alert management to issues of which it may not be aware or which it believes is not significant enough to take action. Resolving employee problems and conflicts quickly is important to keep frustration levels low and commitment high.

Good Bosses Promote Loyalty

A recent Gallup Survey of 400 companies found that an employee's relationship with his or her direct boss is more responsible for retention than is either pay or job perks. When the relationship between employees and their direct supervisors is poor, the employees are likely to seek opportunities elsewhere. Companies in today's market must pay attention to the interpersonal skills and overall mentoring skills of their supervisors and managers. Employees want their leaders to be competent, with a sense of the future of the company and to have a concern for employees. Leaders must emphasize helping their employees develop new skills and making their jobs interesting. Leaders must also be committed to developing and improving their own skills.

Companies must take stock of all direct managers and supervisors to determine if they have the skills necessary to develop employees and create a positive work environment. Are they sufficiently flexible and concerned for employees to feel a part of the company and to have a stake in the company's future? Stock options may be part of the answer, but they are widely available today, often from companies with great growth potential. Employers need to be aware of quality of work life issues — flexible with schedules, dual careers, child and parent



care, time off for additional schooling, etc. Company leaders must also be credible, showing concern, sharing information, keeping confidences, and developing trust with employees so that each employee feels part of a work team as well as part of the company.

PSP offers tools that assess a direct supervisor's strengths and weaknesses related to employee retention. PSP can tailor a development program for each manager to enhance the leadership and interpersonal skills that enable him or her to work effectively with direct reports. PSP's career development process also helps individual employees set realistic goals and develop the skills that will enable them to reach those goals. PSP's career development programs have assisted companies in the United States and Europe to cut costs through greater employee retention.

If the Employee Fits...

Retention actually begins with selecting employees who fit your organization. Selecting employees with the right skills, work interests and behaviors, and leadership skills increases the odds that the employee will be a good fit in his/her position as well as have appropriate growth potential. Identifying employees' strengths and weaknesses allows you to develop their skills for greater job impact as well as for filling future job openings internally. Identifying those individuals who have the potential for development is a crucial step in any strategic retention strategy. Average as well as star performers need to be recognized, challenged and given the opportunity for job growth. Effective managers have the skills required to be appropriate mentors, and effective companies have a culture of accountability that holds managers responsible for retaining and promoting the talented people they supervise.

For your company, stopping the hemorrhaging of employees may be the most effective way to reduce the need for transfusions of new recruits.



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