

## Finding the Right Candidate for the Job

Do you ever feel like you just can't find the right person for the job? Don't know where to find them or how to find them? Most of the time, the best candidate for your position is hard at work for someone else. They are doing a great job where they are, and they feel generally satisfied with the job they have.

People who are satisfied at their current place of work aren't actively looking for a new place to work. They don't search the want ads everyday. Although, I have known professionals to look over the ads occasionally, just to see what opportunities are out there. The question is how to find these employees when they aren't looking for you. There are several methods that employers can use.

Employee referral systems are used by several companies, and they can generate a large applicant pool. For instance, I've worked with a company that offered incentives to employees who referred friends that were hired and successfully stayed with the company. Systems like these can be very useful in identifying excellent employees that the company may not have known about otherwise.

However, you should also be aware of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) concerns over building diverse candidate pools and the reliability of the person you receive the referral from. Always document your recruitment process, including employee referral systems. If you don't currently have a diverse workforce, be sure to include other recruitment methods that will increase your diversity. How seriously you should consider an employee referral can depend greatly on the performance and position of the employee making the referral. If they are a hard working, well liked employee, then they likely wouldn't recommend someone unless that person would make a good employee.

As a Human Resource Manager, part of my responsibility was to recruit other managers and specialty sales people. The company understood that great managerial candidates weren't going to voluntarily apply very often, and there was a continuous need for good bench strength to supply the nationwide growth of the company. I, along with other upper management team members, was expected to go out and find these people at their current jobs. The goal was to discreetly talk to them, find out about their interest, and give them a business card. We were very careful not to disrupt their current place of work.

Another approach to this method is not so much seeking people out as just talking to someone that has treated you well or gone out of their way to help you accomplish a goal. For instance, you may be in Kinko's on personal business and the person who assisted you in the copy center was wonderful. Knowing that you need to find a new employee to run your organization's copy center, you should talk to her. Tell her how much you appreciate her helping you and ask her if she (or any other hard working employee like her) would be interested in a change. Then give her your information.

Networking or using professional associations to find job applicants can also be very successful. Talk to other professionals in your field or in community groups that you belong – do they know someone they could recommend? Are they interested themselves? Sometimes, asking someone if they have anyone to recommend can peak their own interest. Networking with college placement offices or professors can also be a great way to find candidates, and not just younger workers interested in entry level positions. Many adults have gone back to college to pursue a higher education in the hopes of advancing their career. They may have the experience and education that you are looking for. Use your connections to get the word out there that you have a position to fill.

Getting the word out can also include good old fashioned mailings and cold calls. If you need to hire a Vice President of Finance, send position information to other executives at companies within your industry. Then follow up the information with a phone call. They may already be looking, but if they aren't, they may still be interested in knowing what your company has to offer.

There are parts of recruiting that are very much like selling. You have to make the candidate interested in your company, but how do you know that you're appealing to this particular candidate? It's hard to tell. The best strategy is to give them as much information as you can in a very concise, informative way and you have to give it at the right time.

Too often, we settle for the best person available rather than the right person for the job, but using these suggestions should help you find that top performer! Don't give up. You can find the right person for the position you have available.

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