

Finding & Keeping Help in a Tight Labor Market

Gregory P. Smith

If you find it hard to recruit and keep workers, despite increased pay and benefits, consider these innovative approaches.

Quench Your Search: TRC Staffing, a temporary help agency in Conyers, GA, found a new way to tell people about their service. They pass out small bi-fold cards with packets of drink mix glued inside. Printed on the outside of the card: “Quench your search for temporary help by calling TRC Staffing Services Today!!!”

Beat The Rush: Wilton Connor of Wilton Connor Packaging, Charlotte, NC, hires before he really needs the workers to avoid the fall staffing rush for the holidays.

Be Different: Telesec CoreStaff, Kensington, MD temp firm, set up a recruiting table at a Frederick, MD minor-league baseball game. The Protestant Guild (Waltham, MA), a learning center for mentally disabled children, advertised on the back of grocery receipts for teachers and other help. Theme parks and fast-food firms in the Long Beach, CA area use banners pulled behind airplanes to recruit workers

Stealth Missions: Recruit good employees...from other businesses. More than one company has started sending its managers on “stealth” missions. They go around the mall “shopping” for good clerks. When they encounter someone they believe would make a good employee for them, they invite them to apply. In a slightly different setting, a worker in a snack bar at a golf course received approximately ten job offers from golfers.

Internet: Pat Vogeler, human resources director for Alcatel Network Systems (Raleigh, North Carolina) turned to the Internet to fill vacancies and gets about 25 percent of the new hires today from a job-searching Web site.

Recruiters And Professors: Enterprise Rent-a-Car’s north Alabama human resources manager, came up with a new recruiting idea. In addition to on-campus student recruiting sessions, they conduct invitation-only get togethers for the professors and urge them to encourage students to consider Enterprise’s management training program.

Imported Workers: Human resource managers at Gaylord Entertainment Co.’s Opryland Hotel, a Nashville-area facility, imported and housed workers from

Puerto Rico to fill staffing needs. They also hired school bus drivers for summer duty and provided free transportation for workers as far away as 50 miles. The company also sent a personnel team to Jersey City, New Jersey to recruit newly arrived Egyptian immigrants and hired 300 for jobs from housekeeping to staff retail shops. Gaylord also had Opryland provide subsidized housing on company property to help the immigrants get started. Hotel staff members helped them set up checking and savings accounts so they can prepare to rent on their own.

Shopping for Workers: Frank E. Evans, chief executive of EFS Inc. (a Montgomery-based firm that owns and operates pawn shops throughout Alabama and in Charlotte, NC) sends his managers to the malls to shop for clerks. They recruit people from retailers they think are doing a particularly good job of serving the public. The plan offers employees cash bonuses of \$50 to \$250 for every new hire.

Free by e-mail/fax: If you would like more tips and/or information on Greg's new book, ***TNT for Teams: Dynamic Ideas to Reward, Energize and Motivate Your Team***, please fax us your letterhead or E-mail with the words "**TNT**" to 770-760-0581/greg@chartcourse.com.

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