



THE WHITE PAPER

Your Guide to Life Planning

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The Right Staff

Hiring and retaining talented employees can be one of the most crucial building blocks in the growth of your business. Here are some guidelines for establishing a recruiting process that works for you.

- Develop a strategy. Evaluate standard recruiting methods: place advertisements in local newspapers and online; publish internal announcements/requests for referrals; enlist professional recruiting firms, college placement offices, and government job centers; utilize social media strategies. Determine which of these yields the best candidates for the money invested. While you may find that advertising in a newspaper or posting on LinkedIn or another online networking site garners more responses, working closely with a recruiter who can screen applicants may save you time and result in more suitable candidates.
- Build a referral network. Contact professional organizations in your community and ask your lawyer, banker, or accountant for referrals. Implement an employee referral program to encourage recommendations. Make creative use of social media. One example comes from British Petroleum (BP), which created a fun and shareable "weekly playlist" on Facebook featuring a different type of content for each day of the week (e.g., Monday showed images of global BP locations where a candidate could potentially end up living and working; Tuesday incorporated a multiple-choice quiz that tested general knowledge about the company, and so forth).¹
- Accentuate the positive. Small companies often find themselves nudged aside by larger companies in the recruiting game. Emphasize the unique benefits of working for a small company and then stress the qualities that make your company special.
- Refine the hiring process. If you are not finding the candidates you want, look for ways to improve your hiring process. Get feedback on your interviewing techniques and brainstorm new, more probing questions for candidates. When asking for references, request a well-rounded list that includes bosses, mentors, and others who know the candidate professionally.
- Be flexible. Flexibility is the key advantage for small companies, so make the most of it when recruiting new talent. If, for example, you find an exceptional candidate whose background doesn't quite fit the position, consider hiring the individual and modifying the position to take advantage of his or her unique strengths. Or, if a candidate can't commit to a full-time schedule, consider splitting a full-time job into two part-time positions or propose a telecommuting arrangement to accommodate scheduling needs.

¹ERE Media, "Employee Stars, Imaginative Campaigns, and Cool Referral Programs Highlight the Best in Recruitment Advertising," January 14, 2015.

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