

2010 Hiring Update

Preparing Your Recruitment Efforts for Tomorrow

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Most economists believe 2010 is not the year of recovery, but it is without question a better year than the prior. As the economy begins to grow, hiring will increase. What will you do then if you do not prepare now? Use this lull in hiring to plan for the future. What better time to update, replace, or create hiring related policies and procedures?

First, consider conducting a self-audit of your current hiring process. The primary outcome of this self-audit is to ensure your policies and processes are in compliance with federal regulations. Ask yourself:

- Is my company posting its open positions with the state employment agency?
- Does our process accurately capture applicant flow data?
- Does our process comply with the OFCCP's Internet applicant definition?
- Is our online system Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) friendly?

Once you are satisfied the process is compliant with the various regulations and laws, ask yourself, does this work for us? The same hiring process will not work for each company. Keep doing what you do well, but add or change steps in the process that will help to:

- streamline the process;
- make the process more efficient both internally and externally;
- increase Return On Investment (ROI);
- shorten the time to fill for position openings.

Keep in mind any changes to your process should be viewed from the applicants' perspectives as well. Are you currently asking your applicants the same questions over and over because you need the answers in multiple places? Is there any way to get the information you need into multiple systems by only asking the applicants once?

Be a "secret shopper" or ask a friend to pretend to be an applicant to your company. Does the online application ask a lot of questions that could be answered by looking at the applicant's résumé? In that case, a résumé parsing tool might be a nice feature to add to your online system. The application process is critical in establishing a good relationship and a pleasant experience for both the employer and applicant. You want your process to appear seamless and ensure communication throughout is clear and accurate.

Evaluate your technology. Technology is constantly improving and HR related technology is no different. Review your electronic applicant tracking system to ensure its ability to track and maintain the data required by regulations, and to ensure it can handle your organization's volume of candidates. After updating or creating your processes,

“Streamline the process.”

determine if your applicant tracking system needs any updates, or consider new technology. It's possible the expensive system your organization considered a couple of years ago is available at a more reasonable price today.

Now is also a good time to analyze your organization's jobs by gathering, examining, and interpreting data regarding the specific tasks. Areas to consider are job design, job evaluation, compensation, employment, and performance management. In addition, consider equal employment opportunity, equal pay, overtime eligibility, workplace safety, and ergonomic requirements. Afterward, existing job descriptions should be reviewed, or new ones created, to include job identification, job summary, duties and responsibilities, and job specifications.

Once job descriptions are revised and updated, HR professionals can engage in targeted recruitment. Start partnering with industry related organizations where the "best of the best" can be found once the organization is ready to hire. Companies, especially federal contractors, should consider partnering with groups, organizations, universities, and schools working with minorities, women, Veterans, and individuals with disabilities. Partnerships with such parties can assist employers in meeting placement goals or in showing efforts for targeted recruiting.

Once the new policies, procedures, systems, and job descriptions are in place, find time to communicate the changes to all employees, especially hiring managers. The communication and training methods used are specific to each organization. Factors to consider are the size of the organization, company location, usual method of company communication, and timing. Some of the procedures can be communicated several months before hiring starts, and soft copies of communication can be placed on the company's Intranet site for future reference. Others are more time sensitive, for instance training on new software. If training is provided too early and at a time when the product is not available for immediate use, information might be forgotten by the time it is implemented. If training occurs too late, the database that is supposed to help will slow the work down.

Recruiting is a never-ending process, whether the economy is flourishing or lacking. Right now look at the down economy for its silver lining, and use this time to your advantage. Prepare your hiring related methods and procedures for the next economic boom, and reap the benefits of a streamlined process, and an increase in your ROI.

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