

E EMPLOYMENT

Make Hiring Easy — Rely on an Agency



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You're the personnel manager and in addition to your regular job, you're now filling in for the vacationing hiring coordinator. You have three mid-level openings, and you just received word that the legal department is gearing up for a document production project requiring six temps. Also, your firm is looking to move to another office and you're in charge of setting up appointments with new vendors for billing, accounting and word processing systems. What's more, you have performance reviews coming up, new insurance coverage to review, and vacation scheduling looming. This may be the worst-case scenario, but it illustrates the stress employment managers face without the help of an employment agency.

Saving Time. It's no secret that screening and interviewing applicants are two of the more time-consuming aspects of hiring. Receiving 300 resumes for an advertised position is overwhelming and requires sifting through hundreds of pieces of paper to find top candidates.

Scheduling interviews is a special project in itself, because the sought-after candidate you're trying to recruit is not always accessible. You can have the agency handle it all, from screening resumes to scheduling interviews to checking references. This saves you time and valuable energy.

A thorough process is necessary to ensure the right decision by any hiring manager, and an agency works closely with you to identify your needs. The right agency will only present candidates qualified to perform the duties and tasks required. This will greatly reduce the time you need to spend down the line.

Zeroing in on a Winner. Once the agency has identified for you a highly skilled pool of candidates, the process of interviewing them will be more pleasant and fruitful. Consultants will have already discussed the

specifics of the job, benefits and salary, and will have screened out unqualified applicants. The personnel manager won't have the tedious responsibility of reviewing all job duties with each candidate, saving time and making for a more relaxed interview.

Checking Backgrounds. The failure of companies like Enron and WorldCom illustrate the importance of hiring individuals with integrity. When you use a good employment agency, your consultant will begin checking references almost immediately, and by the time the candidate arrives in the client's office, that individual has been given a stamp of approval.

Temping as Trial. Most employers don't want to invest thousands in salary until they're sure the candidate can perform the job and fit into their corporate culture. One option many hiring managers often overlook is the temp-to-perm situation. Now common at all levels in most organizations, this strategy can effectively eliminate any risk. Another benefit of hiring someone on a temporary basis initially: The agency absorbs the financial downside if a candidate doesn't work out. For instance, the average cost of unemployment insurance incurred as a result of a terminated employee is \$15,000.

Figuring the Costs. Most employment agencies do all work on a contingency basis, and clients don't have to pay unless a hire is made. Fees are generally based on a percentage of the candidate's annual salary. A good agency should offer guarantees on all placements. This means that if someone doesn't work out within 30 days, 100 percent of his or her fee is refunded. But if you've done your homework and hired the right agency, you'll never have to worry.

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