

## **On line recruiting – the way forward?**

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The Internet is providing a drastic change to recruiting. Traditional methods of recruitment, involving actual submission of physical resumes, sorting and short listing and which hitherto had been limited to a small pool of labor has evolved to online recruitment, which has the potential of an unlimited pool from which employers can select from.

Hiring of active job seekers (some of whom were incompetent or depressed in their jobs) and other more competent potential employees to fill high-level jobs was achieved through the use of exclusive and costly search consultants and headhunters. However, the Internet has provided an avenue that makes hiring more efficient and cost effective. Just by logging on to the Internet one can select possible candidates and communicate with them in a matter of minutes.

The benefits of on-line recruiting can be gargantuan. It has been revealed through research of *50 Fortune 500 companies* that 6 days could be cut off the hiring process by advertising online, an additional 4 days by receiving applications online and more than a week screening and short listing by electronic means, reducing recruitment time by as much as 40 percent.

However, recruiting successfully via online alone is NOT that simple. Changes taking place in the process are deep and far reaching, thus to be successful managers, there needs to be a reorientation of the mind set concerning employing and retaining talent. For job seekers who are net users, the Internet is where the action is. The “net” allows for a wide labor market, which is open and uncontrolled by individuals and unconstrained by geography. As such, recruitment should no longer be viewed as a reactive, largely clerical role hidden in the HR function but as proactive strategic tool for leading organization wishing to attract and retain the best talents in the labor war.

In an environment characterized by intense competition for talent, organizations must master the art of on-line recruiting so as to catch the attention of and keep the best.

The recruitment process can be divided into three distinct steps:

***Appealing to the candidates:*** A company's endorsements, advertising and marketing efforts influence probable employees; therefore incorporating recruitment efforts with overall marketing campaigns is crucial to ensure successful on-line hiring. In addition, homepages of websites should be designed to appeal to potential employees as well as clients, as this is usually the first place job seekers look when evaluating companies. An example of this is clearly evident on the website of Phillips Consulting Limited ([www.phillipsconsulting.net](http://www.phillipsconsulting.net)). This website provides compelling materials as to why people should work with them. This method is not only comprehensive and effective but also inexpensive and economical.

***Sorting Applications:*** Not only does online recruiting make it easier for people to put forward applications and resumes, it also enables large volumes be sorted swiftly.

***Making Contact quickly:*** Speed is essential in a competitive market. The first company to make contact with a potential employee often secures a great advantage. Conventionally, HR function resides within bureaucratic cultures, which are typically slow and subjective would be ineffective in today's high speed hiring climate. Recruiters in essence have to act with speed and flexibility.

New Internet based technologies can speed up the process of tracking and contacting applicants. These systems automate the entire hiring process from a standardized application collection process to a proper screening, and monitoring of the applications. All application data remain in a portable electronic form, which enables employers to act very quickly, for example, in checking references and making e-mail contact with applicants.

The process of on line recruitment though having numerous advantages as emphasized above however has some shortcomings.

A major criticism of this approach to recruitment is that it lacks the human touch. This is due largely to the fact that recruiters spend a large amount of their time finding candidates and not enough time developing relationships with them. Thus, many potentially good applicants slip away.

Also it has been observed that on-line recruiting is a “double edged sword”, because as easy as it is to hire good people, it is also much easier for competitors to poach people. It has also been argued that company loyalty may suffer due to the number of job choices available through the Internet. This may lead to a lessening in dedication to current jobs by candidates.

In summary, the online recruitment revolution has only just begun. Companies will have to establish trusting relationships with an increasingly knowledgeable and restless labor pool and workforce. One way of achieving this feat is by making websites more interactive.

On-line recruiting is more than a HR tool; it is the new culture. On a global level, it currently touches a vast number of workers and this is set to continue into the foreseeable future. It is expected to extend into the traditional methods of recruitment, transforming how people are selected and hired.

Companies are advised to stay abreast of these revolutionary changes if they wish to be winners in the race of finding and keeping the best of talents in the recruitment market.

***Where will you be?***