



**RECRUITING STAFF ONLINE YET? –
IF NOT, YOU'RE MISSING OUT
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While the economy has slowed, there is still the need to continually upgrade the labor force and all indications point to an upturn soon. Now is an excellent time to upgrade your workforce and position the organization.

Regardless of the economic trends, should a company that needs an entry-level employee or one with supervising skills use the Internet as a recruiting tool? Initially many people thought that only highly technical, Internet-savvy people posted their resumes in search for employment opportunities on the Internet. However, recently this has changed dramatically. Non-technical jobs are frequently posted and companies, if they know where and how to look, are finding high-quality applicants of all types. Not long ago, the US Army sponsored the front page of monster.com and the objective was obviously to get job seekers to consider a career in the military.

One of our clients in Texas found, based on quality of candidate, candidate flow, and, most importantly, the cost of acquiring a candidate, that the Internet was an excellent source of new employees. While employee referral was still the number one source, the Internet was the second most valuable source.

Even with the number of open jobs down, it is still hard to find a high quality candidate to hire. With increased traditional print ad costs many are finding online recruiting easy, quick, and a cost-effective alternative. With today's labor market, it is important for companies not to rely on a single source, but to identify and use multiple candidate sources.

Some quick and simple research will let you decide if Internet recruiting is for your organization. The first step is to identify the likely locations where potential candidates would look or browse. Most cities have at least one employment site focused on that geographical area. For example, there are several sites in Dallas dedicated to positions in the local area. Since these sites focus on the geographical area, they tend to be a good place to post ads for general types of positions. You might consider posting an ad on a site such as this because the cost is usually very reasonable and in some cases, may be free. Remember, the candidate or person you are looking for does not have to find the ad, because friends or family members may see it and pass it on to the applicant you are looking for.

Many people feel individuals who are applying for entry-level positions, not management or professional level, don't have resumes and this would make using the Internet difficult.

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Experience shows more people than ever before have resumes or can easily create one with inexpensive or free software and respond to your ad. Also, your online ad copy can direct the individual to visit your web site to fill out an online application, or they can simply respond by phone just as they would with a printed ad.

There are a number of free job-listing services. America's Job Bank (www.ajb.dni.us) is a free service sponsored by the federal government. It contains all the jobs listed by the local job service offices. You can log on to have your job listed free. This is only one organization that offers this.

Searching an on-line service database is an excellent way to quickly find candidates. Inquire to see if the free sites will allow you to search their database. Even many paid sites will let you do this one time or for a limited time to demonstrate the service you are considering.

Database searching is especially good if a specific credential or particular job title is unique to your needs. For example, if you wanted a person with a specific credential, you could easily search one of the national databases and identify everyone in their database with that credential. There is a high probability there are applicants in monster.com or hotjobs.com databases that match the position.

The major sites may well have an individual with the credentials and experience you need. If the applicants or candidates are not in your area, they may be willing to relocate. The Internet provides the opportunity to match a job seeker with your job. It can broaden the job search to areas that you would not reach with traditional advertising or print media.

You don't have to just rely on ads. An excellent way to recruit is to use the Internet as the "ultimate networking" tool. You could create an e-mail that outlines the job, the reasons why some would take it, and request help from everyone in your personal network, just as you would request help in person or by phone. You can send this request to those contacts in your address book that might know of someone who would fit the job. Ask them to reply to you with contact information on anyone who might be interested. Suggest they forward the e-mail to several people to get the word out about your needs. In the body of the e-mail, you can even suggest any reader forward it to anyone who might be interested. This e-networking technique we teach in our staffing workshop is a very effective way to recruit.

Given the scarcity of great candidates, even though unemployment is up – and the explosion of the Internet use, which will continue to rise – the Net is a very good tool to match candidates to jobs. At last count there were 2.5 million resumes on the Internet and 20,000 job related websites that contain listings. With this amount of communication concerning jobs and today's difficult labor market, can you afford not to explore this source of candidates?