



The Quest for Talent: Recruitment Strategies for Federal Agencies

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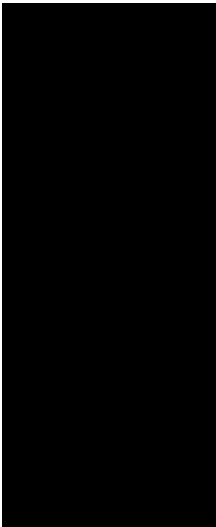
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The Quest for Talent: Recruitment Strategies for Federal Agencies



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recruiting the people required to accomplish the varied missions of federal agencies will become more competitive as the impact of technology changes the nature of the workforce. A higher proportion of the workforce will require educational preparation beyond high school and the competition for workers will increase. The federal government will need to become more sophisticated in how it markets its careers and in how it designs its strategies and tactics for recruiting talent.

There is no magic ingredient that will convert mediocre recruiting results into consistently successful outcomes. Successful recruiting depends upon a wide range of issues that influence the interaction with prospective applicants. One of the most important issues involves the degree to which elected, appointed, and civil service leaders actively promote the rewards that come with serving one's country as a federal employee. It is also critical in providing the resources necessary to create and market a work environment that will be attractive to today's workers and to develop the systems that will effectively recruit them.

Considerable attention is being given to the use of information technology and new concepts such as "branding" in the search for improving recruiting success. Undoubtedly these are important tools. But the culture, the work environment, and the administrative processes of the hiring organization are even more important factors in the effectiveness of recruiting efforts. And consistently effective recruiting also requires strategic workforce planning, understanding the current hiring system's efficiency, maintaining relationships with educational institutions, using effective recruiters, creating streamlined internal processes, and using current flexibilities. Ignoring any one of the above elements can be deleterious to results.

Finally, there are several regulatory and legislative changes that would improve the ability of the federal government to compete with the private sector. Ranking applicants by quality groupings rather than the traditional numerical score order has streamlined the hiring system for agencies using the approach. And pay banding has provided useful flexibility to a dozen agencies in making competitive compensation offers to new recruits. Finally, given the failure of the Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) approach for hiring entry-level administrative professionals, a new approach in this area is required.

Executive Summary

CHAPTER

BACKGROUND, APPROACH, AND LEADERSHIP

1

BACKGROUND

In today's expanding global market, the demand for an increasing array of skills is rapidly exceeding the available supply. While some selective labor shortages have always been a reality, the present growing shortfall in talent is virtually unprecedented. In this environment, employers in all sectors are concluding that recruiting quality employees—and the corollary challenge of retaining them—is an organizational imperative and must be high on the corporate agenda. Since failure here has unacceptable consequences, leaders at all levels are approaching the matter of recruiting (and retention) with a growing sense of urgency. In his *Report to the President: The Crisis in Human Capital*, Senator George Voinovich stated that “there is almost universal agreement on the need to streamline and expedite the government's hiring process.” That view has the agreement of 100 percent of federal agency human resources (HR) directors. A consortium of 60 federal agencies requested that the National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) place that issue at the top of the list for study in 2001. This report responds to that tasking.

Since 1993, the non-postal federal civilian workforce has been reduced by 384,000 positions. The current level of 1.8 million employees is the lowest since 1960. Even at this reduced size over 100,000 hires per year will be required just to replace annual attrition. Over 20,000 of those hires will be in technical and administrative professional occupations where competition for educated and skilled people is most keen. A hiring system that enables the federal government to effectively compete for a share of the best talent is necessary to effectively carry out the nation's business.

APPROACH

It is important to remember that while recruiting involves a set of activities governed by policies and processes, it is part of a larger organizational system. As such, recruitment success is influenced by a host of factors including an organization's mission, values, goals, priorities, strategies, resources and, most especially, its

culture. In that regard, one must take a “systems” approach if any change is to be successful and enduring.

In this examination, the focus will be on three dimensions of recruiting—all of which are part of the system that defines and influences what recruiting is and how it is accomplished. These are:

- **Leadership** : The attitudes, behaviors, and activities of federal officials and leaders at all levels that define and influence the environment or context within which recruiting is performed.

- **Structure and Process** : The organizational alignment, policies, resources, and processes supportive of recruiting activity. These items are largely within an individual agency’s control.

- **Law and Regulation** : Potential changes to federal law and regulation that could contribute to the enhanced ability of the federal government to successfully attract needed talent. These changes are not within the direct control of agencies.

LEADERSHIP

Supportive and active leadership is fundamental to successful recruiting in today’s competitive market. To be effective, leadership must be visible and continuing. And it must involve all levels—from the most senior corporate executive to the first level supervisor. Without this total involvement, the organization will lack the commitment, energy, and resources necessary to successfully compete for and retain a quality workforce. This is a universal truth. And applies to government and industry alike.

Within the federal government, leadership starts with the most senior executives and officials, both elected and appointed. At the highest level, the President of the United States can and does influence public opinion about civil servants and careers in federal service. No individual has greater name recognition or press coverage than the leader of our nation. The President’s official statements, as well as informal comments, can have a significant and enduring impact on how the public views federal employees. Consider the early 60s when many saw government service as a noble calling. The “best and the brightest” is a phrase still used today by public and private organizations alike in describing their recruiting objectives. Unfortunately, many of our Presidents have campaigned against Washington, “the government”, and by implication, against federal employees. Federal executives, managers, and employees will never be the most highly paid in the land. But Americans could be influenced to contribute their talents to their country if more leaders were to deliver the message that the very best people are needed to carry out the programs funded by the taxes of our citizens.

While presidents can influence public opinion at large regarding government service, agency leaders have a critical role in determining how their agency is pre-

sented or marketed to the public. Agency leaders also have a profound effect on the culture of the organization, an important factor in whether an agency is successful in both recruiting and retaining quality talent. Most directly, agency leaders signal the degree of importance they give to recruiting, by the resource decisions they make. This is true of not only recruiting, but also the entire spectrum of “people” focused activities including training and development, advancement, recognition, and incentives.

Top line officials and all managers have a critical role in communicating their agency’s important mission to key constituencies, organizations, and academia. In addition, certain functional managers should have direct involvement in influencing how the recruiting program is structured and in supporting its delivery. Public affairs and communications directors, chief information officers, budget directors, equal opportunity directors, and, of course, human resources directors all should have an operational role in developing, supporting, and delivering an agency’s recruiting program and message.

Public Affairs professionals should be engaged in shaping and marketing the organization’s image in the recruiting arena. “Branding” and “imaging” are current terms used to describe this attribute of successful recruiting.

Increasingly, the organization’s information technology (IT) expertise and leadership must be actively involved as recruiting becomes increasingly Internet. Further, as factors of volume and timeliness demand more automated solutions to application processing and management, IT professionals have a critical role to play in achieving increased efficiency. Finally, IT involvement is required if there is to be a successful linking of new employee data to the organization’s corporate information management system. Such a linkage is necessary for streamlined and automated HR transactions.

A recruiting strategy that is both comprehensive and long-term represents a significant investment for the organization. This is especially true if web-based recruiting and IT systems are involved. Accordingly, the expertise and proactive support of budget officials is essential, especially through the rigors of the budget process. And line program managers must be involved in not only strategic planning activities, but in supporting the activities and investments that will produce the results desired.

At the core of the recruiting function is the human resources staff. Whether or not HR professionals are directly engaged as recruiters, the staff typically plays the central role in administering the advertising, examining, and hiring processes. If performed well and, most importantly, done expeditiously, the HR role contributes to a successful recruiting outcome. HR directors also need to show their agency heads why recruiting the best people will help them implement their goals and make their tenure a success, whether through improved customer service, technical results, or whatever deliverable a particular agency’s mission requires.

CHAPTER 2

STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

How an agency structures its recruiting program and the internal processes it uses to carry out recruiting and hiring operations is largely within its control. This section discusses the organizational policies relating to and impacting recruiting, the priority that recruiting should have within an organization, the resources available to carry it out, the creation of internships and development programs, and the processes used to attract, consider, select, and employ candidates. There are likely to be few, if any, “universal truths” as to the best or correct strategies. Situations and circumstances differ. Nevertheless, the following are some basic prerequisites for a successful recruiting program that are indispensable in today’s environment:

STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING

Of course, successful organizations have a comprehensive knowledge of their business, their products, and their customers’ needs and desires. They also have a strategic plan that covers the improvements needed in their infrastructure, tools, and people in order to accomplish its mission. Workforce planning is the “people” element of strategic planning. Its purpose is to define the kind and size of the workforce needed to deliver the overall strategic business plan. It typically identifies the skills required, the number of employees needed, their location, the training requirements, and the recruitment and/or development needed to fill the gaps. Redeployment, downsizing, and outsourcing are also considerations in this analysis. A strategic workforce plan should serve as the blueprint for planning and carrying out all of the activities of the organization’s human resources function, including recruiting; the structure and direction of its training and development programs; how it deploys the workforce; and how it will gain the commitment of employees.

Under a priority management objective included in the fiscal year 2001 budget submission, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) was to assist agencies in strategically assessing their human resources. To that end, OPM has been developing a workforce planning model for agencies to use. Its official website (www.opm.gov) includes a Federal Workforce Planning Model and references to federal agencies that have conducted workforce planning.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

Using the overall strategic workforce plan as a guide, an organization needs to develop a specific strategy and plan to recruit for the skills and talent it requires—both short and long term. This is not the exclusive activity of the organization’s HR staff. Rather, to be successful, it requires the active engagement of line managers and the interest and support of senior leaders. Issues to be addressed include:

A Strategic Approach to Recruiting

Organizations, both public and private, that are consistently successful recruiting in a highly competitive job market don’t achieve such results by accident. For them recruiting—and retaining—talented employees is an imperative for realizing the organization’s vision and strategic intent. In that regard, recruiting is not viewed as a function that can be routinely “turned on and off” on the basis of the hiring needs of the moment. Neither can it be sacrificed to near-term budget cutting pressures. Rather, recruiting is understood to be a long-term commitment and priority that must be nurtured and sustained. Here is where strong organizational leadership, starting at the top, is fundamental to success.¹

Organizations that take a strategic approach to recruiting typically utilize a strategic workforce plan to guide them in understanding the desired as well as expected changes in the workforce. This in turn helps define recruiting requirements, both near and long-term.

A Coordinated and Integrated Recruitment Program

A fundamental recruiting strategy question—one that is often debated, but rarely answered—is “at what level should recruiting take place?” This is the centralized vs. decentralized issue. Should the individual agency centrally recruit to fill its hiring requirements? Should the subordinate echelons be the primary focus for recruiting? Or should the individual installation or office have this responsibility? Recognizing that while agencies differ in size, mission, location, and specific occupational mixes, an appropriate generalization can be made. That is, all levels need to be involved in some form of recruiting to maintain a talented federal workforce. However, the caveat is that this involvement must be situationally appropriate, and must be coordinated and integrated. Failure to do so typically leads to redundancy, unnecessary costs, confusion for the public, and lost opportunities to attract critical talent. Agencies must conclude for themselves what is appropriate and develop a consistent and coherent strategy based on that conclusion. Once a strategy is developed, to really work well, the recruiting program must have the full involvement and support of the key players.

Programs for Meeting Long-Term Recruiting Needs

After reviewing its skill requirements and turnover estimates, an agency needs to decide whether it will attempt to meet those requirements on a reactive, case-by-case basis, or structure programs that will provide a regular flow of high quality and diverse talent, such as coop programs, internships, and succession planning systems. Such programs lend themselves to a more corporate, multi-organizational approach to acquiring talent and can provide increased recruiting effectiveness.

In summary, agency-wide planning needs to be conducted. Leaders of organizations that are consistently successful at attracting top talent have a strategic view of recruiting and consider it an essential priority. They also understand recruiting in the context of the larger organizational system. As such, they are willing to commit the required resources—including a broad base of skills and expertise—to ensure that the organization's culture and all of its policies and processes contribute to attracting and retaining talent.

EFFECTIVE RECRUITING TACTICS

Once an overall corporate recruiting strategy and plan is developed, there are numerous actions that need to be taken to make that strategy succeed. The following are the most important:

Develop Data and Formulate Metrics on Recruiting and Hiring

The first priority in any improvement effort is information. It is difficult to manage, let alone improve, any process without knowing where you are now. And to monitor progress you need to know how things are changing. Most organizations have numerous anecdotes about their recruiting system—how it is too slow, loses the wrong people as a result, takes too much time in HR, or has too many steps. But when asked to quantify those statements, they are unable to provide any data or show any trends. Only approximations are offered: “It takes about 6 months.” Federal agencies need to review their current recruiting and hiring processes and establish baseline data for use in measuring improvement as they implement change. Data are critical for identifying priorities in the restructuring process and keeping management informed regarding trends and returns on investment. Many excellent books have been written regarding quality improvement, process reengineering, and effective metrics. It is not the purpose of this paper to summarize them. But HR directors need to educate their staffs regarding this issue and implement a business-like approach to recruitment process improvement and ongoing quality management.

Market the Organization: “Create a Vision; Sell the Image”

To be successful in an extraordinarily competitive labor market, organizations must “sell themselves” at least as effectively as the competition. They must give prospective candidates a reason for selecting their organization over others. This requires a marketing strategy that is both comprehensive, and relevant to the target audience. Such marketing can utilize the full-spectrum of media to communicate the organization's message in a manner that is meaningful and attractive to the population being recruited.

The cornerstone for the marketing message is the organization's vision, assuming it has one. Some would say that a vision has the potential for being the most powerful weapon in any employer's recruiting arsenal. It can create excitement and set the organization apart from its competitors; but only if it appeals to the target audience, i.e., prospective recruits.²

A recent concept in employment marketing and job offer structuring is Employment Branding. The Corporate Leadership Council defines employment branding as “the reputation of a firm's employment value proposition in the labor

market. It is based on the benefits (as well as costs) applicants and employees perceive a particular firm can offer in the employer-employee relationship.” The components of the organization’s “brand” include the following:

- Product or service —the appeal of what it does and delivers
- Compensation and benefits —salary, retirement, health benefits, bonuses, insurance, etc.
- Culture and environment —senior team quality, technology level, risk-taking environment, size
- Work environment—manager and coworker quality, diversity, empowerment, recognition, work challenges, nature of the work, mobility, opportunity to learn new skills, and career advancement
- Work-life balance —location, work hours, travel, vacation, childcare, telecommuting

Compelling job offers are built upon an organization’s employment “brand” by incorporating the above components structured in such a way to attract the type of employee desired. Frequent travel and project responsibility may appeal to those in one occupational area, while stability and predictable pay may appeal to another group. Agencies need to research the factors that are most compelling to the principal groups they employ and structure their marketing and job offers accordingly. Describing the agency’s product or service (mission) and its compensation/benefit package is relatively straightforward. The other three factors require longer-term development effort to enable the description of a truthful and compelling “brand” and job offer. See the Academy’s September 2001 report on workforce retention to explore those issues more fully. To explore employment branding in greater detail see the Corporate Leadership Council’s *Introduction to Employment Branding*.³ Agency recruiting staffs should surf the web to review what major companies are doing in this regard. It is always useful to know the competition and to collect ideas for developing a message/brand of your own.

“How does one assess the effectiveness of its marketing message?” A good starting point is to ask for feedback. Recent hires are often the best source of information about what “sold” them. They also may provide feedback on what could be done to enhance the message’s appeal. It is often worth the effort to follow up with those who turned the organization down. They may be candid enough to give some helpful insights about changes that could be made and things the competition did better. It is also another way of staying in touch with someone whom you may have the opportunity to recruit in the future. Finally, it is important to ask for feedback from employees. In the process of learning from them, the organization is also taking the opportunity to share its vision and reinforce why it should be their “employer-of-choice.”

While marketing traditionally relied primarily on print media, information technology, along with new innovations in marketing techniques, provides virtually unlimited options and opportunities to effectively reach perspective candidates.

Use Web Based Recruiting—A “Must” for Today’s Successful Program

Web sites have become a central element of most employer’s marketing and recruiting strategies. It’s where the action is, and where it will be. During the past several years the Internet has fundamentally transformed the way recruiting is carried out. At the same time, it has changed the approach for job seekers. In today’s market, most employers cannot expect to successfully compete for talent without a web-based recruiting strategy. This is especially true when targeting younger college educated candidates. Today, among *Fortune* 500 companies, 89 percent have a careers section with 73 percent linked directly from their homepage; 71 percent have online application capability; 20 percent will only accept Email applications; more than half post employee benefits (55%) and corporate culture information (44%); and 42 percent have a separate college recruiting section.⁴ Forrester Research believes online recruiting will grow from a \$1.2 billion industry to \$7.1 billion by 2005. Whatever the actual growth may be, online recruiting is here to stay. Organizations that ignore the Internet’s recruiting power risk falling behind their competitors. They will be the losers in the war for talent.⁵

Web-based recruiting has five elements:

- marketing
- job posting
- resume mining
- applicant communications
- automated resume processing

Marketing the Organization

While most, if not all agencies undoubtedly have a web site, not all web sites are designed for marketing the organization to possible job seekers. Like other marketing media, the web site, first and foremost, must be inviting. It must provide relevant and current information. The objective is to peak the interest of prospective candidates while meeting their needs for basic information. Ask the fundamental question: “If I were a job seeker, would I stop to explore this site—or would I move on?”

Some organizations design their web site to suite their own needs and preferences. They fail to keep the prospective recruit in mind. In that regard, many overdo it with high-tech “bells and whistles.” In one study of what job seekers most valued, sound, video and other multimedia features ranked last. Informative material was at the top of their list. It is important to remember that most candidates are still surfing the Internet at speeds that make long download times quite frustrating. If the wait is too long, they will click-off. Organizations are better served with good information that is simply and conveniently displayed, and updated regularly.⁶

Employers also should be continually improving their sites and enhancing the message. This starts with seeking feedback: “What do job-seekers want to know? What works? What doesn’t?” Here is a case of what you don’t know can and will hurt you.

“So, what is the message? What do job seekers want to know?” Of course, this can vary from individual to individual. This is where the concept of “employment branding” has its place. Potential applicants want to know the following about prospective employers:

- What does it do and where is it going (mission/vision)—and does it matter?
- What are its values—does it value people or things?
- Would I fit in—and where?
- What’s the work environment like?
- Is the workforce diverse?

They want to know about prospects for the future:

- What opportunities are there for continuing education, training and professional development—who pays for that?
- Is there adequate career advancement beyond the initial job—or would I need to go elsewhere?

Of course, they want information about compensation and benefits:

- Can I expect regular salary increases--for how long?
- How about health benefits, retirement plans, and vacations?
- Are there flexible work hours?
- Can I work at home or telecommute?

Finally, job seekers are interested in life outside of work:

- Where would I live?
- What does the community offer—services, schools, recreation, etc?
- Would I fit in?

In summary, as a marketing tool, web sites offer virtually unlimited opportunities to project an image (brand) to prospective job seekers. It’s up to the employer to determine what that image is. As with any tool, how it is used makes the difference between success and failure--between being a cost-effective tool or an expensive gimmick.

Internet Job Posting

Whether an organization posts job opportunities on its own web site or uses one of the “dotcom” job boards, Internet recruiting has the potential of reaching huge numbers of job seekers.

For those who want to use job boards to post their vacancies, the good news is: there are lots to choose from. The bad news is: there are lots to choose from. In fact, the numbers are staggering—and growing. Gerry Crispin, co-author of *CareerXRoads2000*, says, “at least 30,000 web sites are trying to gain a piece of this market.”⁷ With such an array, organizations are best advised to take it slow at first and be certain the web site fits their needs. The largest and best-known job boards work well. They certainly have the potential of reaching large audiences. At the

same time, college job boards can be an excellent source, as can professional associations and societies even though their numbers are more modest.

Organizations may begin their search for recruiting web sites by asking their employees, especially recent hires, which are the most popular. There is also assistance through online directories. Most of these are free and provide information about and links to the various sites. It is always prudent to visit prospective sites before making any final decisions. One might even pretend to be a job seeker looking for the kind of jobs the organization might be posting.⁸

Many federal agencies are now posting job openings on their web sites. This certainly is a positive step forward in potentially reaching a broader audience. At the same time, it is critical to recruiting success that agencies not just substitute one tedious, bureaucratic and non-user-friendly process with another. In that regard, agencies may want to keep the following in mind when designing the “jobs sections” of their web sites:

- Job seekers are the customers. Treat them as such.
- Make access easy.
- Keep any graphics simple.
- Provide relevant information about the job opportunities. (Remember, job announcements shouldn't read like position descriptions. You are trying to entice candidates—not put them to sleep!)
- Provide a point of contact for questions and feedback. Make it fast and easy. Use e-mail.
- Minimize the hassles of applying.
- “Test drive” the site frequently. Pretend you are looking for a job.⁹

“Resume Mining”—the proactive search for candidates

Posting jobs on web sites is the mainstay of Internet recruiting. However, it is fundamentally a passive form of recruiting. And, it only works to the extent that there is an active participant—the job seeker—who finds your job postings. For many situations, this is adequate. In fact, it may work most of the time.

However, when this is not the case, especially when competition is great, more aggressive efforts are required. In this situation, an organization can take the initiative and search the Internet for potential candidates. Such searches can locate job seekers who have not found them. They can also uncover the “passive”, or “not in play” candidate who, at the time, is not actively in the job hunt.

To locate job seekers who have not found the organization, the approach is essentially to access online resume databases. Sources for such resumes include: third-party commercial repositories (such as Monster.com or HotJobs.com); colleges, universities and other academic institutions; and professional associations and societies.

When it comes to locating the passive candidate, the search is more challenging and may require greater technical sophistication than many employers have. However, the capability called “source strategists”, can be acquired or developed in-house. Simply stated, these searches allow users access to information considered private by its originators, but which is, nevertheless, accessible to the public. Some of the terms used to describe these “power” searches are “X-Ray”, “Peelback”, “Flipping”, and “Domain Search.” Understandably, this more aggressive form of recruiting can be controversial, and organizations need to proceed cautiously. Nevertheless, with an increasingly tight labor market, nearly one in four companies are using such approaches and the numbers are growing rapidly.

In summary, a fundamental truth in today’s competitive market is that employers can no longer be passive in the “cyber war for talent.” If they continue to play the traditional game of waiting for candidates to find them, they will be the losers to more aggressive competitors. Web-based recruiting enables organizations to be proactive in seeking out potential candidates and begin the employment “courting” online.¹⁰

Communicating with Job Seekers

Only a few years ago, virtually all distance communications between job seekers and employers occurred by written correspondence or telephone. Written correspondence is slow at best and trying to reach people by telephone, especially college students living in dorms, is chancy. Slow and uncertain communications in a tight labor market is a problem for everyone. Now, much of that is a thing of the past—or should be—as virtually all parties have the capabilities of communicating online. One agency-recruiting manager who relies primarily on regular e-mail conversations with applicants remarked, “Now, the only time we communicate through written correspondence is when we send a formal job offer, or a turn-down.” Even then, “we typically send an e-mail first.” Recruiters like this fully appreciate, and take advantage of, the ability to regularly and easily communicate with candidates throughout the hiring process. This is not just a matter of courtesy. It’s a matter of winning or losing out to the competition. Especially in today’s market, where the “life expectancy” of a hot resume can be measured in hours not weeks, on-going communications with candidates is a must! As that recruiting manager put it, “If I don’t stay in touch with them—I usually lose them.”

In spite of this capability to communicate quickly and easily, some agencies have made few, if any, apparent changes in their process for dealing with applicants. Improvements in this area can produce significant dividends for agencies in their ability to obtain and hold quality candidates.

Automated Resume Processing

Here is an area of exciting possibilities for federal agencies. There is likely nothing that has so disadvantaged the federal government in its efforts to compete for talent than the often tedious and time-consuming employment process that agencies impose upon applicants and upon themselves. Now, web technology offers a different scenario. New interactive solutions make it possible to not only post job openings online, as we’ve discussed, by also accept and process applications, virtually in real time.

The opportunities here include:

- simplifying and expediting the application process
- creating resume banks
- automating the notification of potential applicants of job interest-job availability match
- rating/ranking candidates on a real-time basis with increased accuracy and consistency
- communicating with applicants on a continuous basis
- eliminating virtually all paper
- reducing the time-to-hire significantly
- capturing data and developing metrics
- cutting costs and reallocating resources

Yes, these are opportunities available now. And, yes, they are available to federal agencies—even without changes to law and regulation. So who's doing this? Well, for one, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), a bureau of the Department of the Interior.

Until last year, the hiring process at USGS was resource and time intensive, and was slow at best. Says Robert Hosenfeld, Personnel Director, "The process would take up to 8 weeks just to get a job posted. Then, we could count on an average of an additional 63 days just to get a list of candidates to selecting officials." Hosenfeld was frustrated. His staff size had been cut, and the department was spending too much time working a complicated, paper intensive hiring process. He wanted to make some changes that would not only simplify and expedite the hiring process, but also free staff time to pursue other strategic issues for his customers. Sound familiar? Yes, but Hosenfeld did something about it. That's when he conceived of what became "OARS," the Online Automated Recruitment System. He knew that automation would be part of the solution. But he didn't want to just automate the existing bad process. Accordingly, OARS, says Hosenfeld, "is a whole different way of doing business." The system is based on interactive technology developed by QuickHire, an Alexandria, Virginia-based technology firm that produces web-based hiring management systems. It can input, track, score, and store thousands of applications for multiple job openings, all via the web.

Here is how OARS works. The process begins with the job seeker going to the "job openings" section of the USGS website, <http://www.usgs.gov/ohr>. People interested in applying, first must register on-line in OARS. As part of registration, the prospective applicant submits a resume electronically while answering 25 basic questions.

When the registration is submitted, the system immediately reviews it and informs the registrant of the types of jobs for which he or she can apply. Once in the system, a registrant can search the job listings and formally apply on-line. (The system will also notify the registrant later if a subsequent vacancy appears for which the person may be interested.) The application consists of questions about one's

proficiency in job-specific skills. As soon as the candidate submits the application, an e-mail response is sent automatically confirming that the application was received and entered into the system for processing. If the candidate does not meet the minimum requirements, the e-mail so informs the candidate.

OARS automatically scores the application based on the responses to the skill-proficiency questions. Individual questions can be weighted on the basis of importance to the particular job. The scores are automatically augmented for those with veterans' preference. As soon as the vacancy announcement closes, a computer-generated hiring certificate is produced with the applicants ranked according to their scores. Almost immediately, the manager can proceed with the selection process.

It sounds great. But does it really work? A year after OARS was implemented, it is clear that the program is huge success. "Now," says Hosenfeld, "instead of taking an average of 63 days for processing, it takes 4." And, "we've eliminated almost 9,000 days of effort a year." When it was implemented, so confident was Hosenfeld in OARS that he predicted his agency would see a return within one year on the \$500,000 investment to develop OARS. It only took six months! Over the past year, USGS has posted over an estimated 2,000 jobs and processed nearly 32,000 applications. One of the positive, yet unexpected, outcomes since implementing the system has been the dramatic increase—nearly 10-fold—in the number of candidates.

In this report, considerable attention has been devoted to web-based recruiting. This is clearly "where the action is," and where it will be in the future. If employers are not actively engaged in making it a core part of their recruiting strategy, they run the risk of losing out all together in the "cyber" war for talent. Having said that, successful recruiting strategies are not one-dimensional.

Develop and Use Candidate Management and Tracking Systems

As described above, one of the outcomes of successful web-based recruiting can be an explosion in the number of resumes that an employer receives. That's both good news and bad. The good news is obvious. The bad news is that if the employer is ill equipped to handle the potential volume of resumes, good candidates can "fall between the cracks," and the organization can be embarrassed over lost resumes. Employers cannot afford to conduct business that way. One solution is a resume management or inventory system. These systems can enable line managers, recruiters, and HR officials concurrent access to candidate resumes from any networked computer. Such a system facilitates the timely review and consideration of resumes by the HR staff as well as by selecting officials. It maximizes the exposure of a candidate's credentials to many parties in the minimum amount of time, something that is essential to any recruiting strategy. By capturing certain critical data, the resume management system also enables the organization to perform post-recruitment analysis. This may be useful for assessing such things as recruiter effectiveness, the degree to which certain colleges and universities have been sources of successful recruits, acceptance rates by grade-point average and discipline, recruiting cost-per-hire, and the effectiveness of diversity recruiting.¹¹



Establish a College Relations Program

A traditional strategy for recruiting recent college graduates and those whose graduation is pending, has been the on-campus interview. For industry and government alike, this has been the core element in many recruiting programs. It provided the important, and generally, the initial opportunity for both the employer and the student to sell themselves and learn about the other. However, in the past few years, there have been important changes. Today, almost 100 percent of college students have access to computers and much of the curricula require such access. As a result, use of the Internet permits both students and employers to be more proactive in seeking out prospective matches. As a consequence, now the campus interview often occurs only after both parties already have considerable information about the other. Thus, the Internet now provides some of the marketing and “pre-screening” that the campus interview once accomplished.¹²

This does not mean that college recruiting and campus interviews are things of the past. To the contrary, recruiters continue to flock to college campuses. Rather, it means their approaches are changing. No longer is the once or twice yearly interview excursion sufficient. The truly successful employers develop year-round relationships with colleges. This means investing time with the career services officials, the admissions staff, key faculty, members of student organizations, and other “gatekeepers” who may have access or influence. Employee-alumni are often effective representatives in this area. Beyond investing time, it may also mean investing other resources such as equipment, research grants, technical expertise, or summer faculty employment. The payoff for employers is in marketing themselves, establishing name recognition on campus, and being seen by students as a desirable choice to pursue one’s career.

Create and Promote “Pipe-line” Development Programs

Most experienced HR professionals have observed that when seeking recruits from external sources hiring efficiency increases with the number of positions being filled. Attempting to hire just one or two quality individuals at a time produces frustration and frequently less than optimum results. Making one selection from a federal internal merit promotion list is usually more efficient than from external sources with the complex and often frustrating rules and requirements. And the effort involved in developing marketing materials, recruiting strategies, job announcements, crediting plans, and interview guides for numerous vacancies greatly increases both staff productivity and hiring success. Thoughtful planning, organizational discipline, cooperation, and timing can provide the benefits desired. More strategic methods that consolidate predicted vacancies and produce organized and well planned recruiting and hiring programs will provide payoffs with a constant flow of talented individuals into the organization. Following are three approaches that have been successful:

Cooperative Education Programs

A positive element of agency college relations programs in the past and an excellent source of hard working and capable college graduates was the cooperative education program. In spite of high marks from both managers and HR professionals regarding the quality of coop graduates and the positive results regarding diversity (over 30% of hires) cooperative education program hires declined

steadily each year—from 1,299 conversions in 1994 to 533 in 1998. Government downsizing and a requirement to include such programs in FTE counts were largely responsible for the decline.¹³ However, since OMB informed agencies that it would provide additional FTE for such programs, if requested, coop program use has begun to rise again to 1,016 in 1999 and 1201 in 2000. It is gratifying that the trend appears to have reversed. However coop conversions represent only 5 percent of the intake into professional and administrative occupations over the past decade. Retired HR executives with the Academy recall when Coop conversions totaled over 9,000 annually—about 30 percent of professional and administrative entry-level hires. It is worth noting that coop programs may also serve the organization's retention strategy. Many report that, in general, coops who convert to permanent status upon graduation are more likely to remain with the organization longer than their counterparts who have had no prior working relationship.

Internship

Another useful tool for attracting college graduates to an organization is the existence of a structured intern program. Internships communicates to prospective hires that an organization is considering them for a career that offers development and growth rather than merely a job. A Watson-Wyatt survey of top performing employees found that opportunity for advancement and learning new skills were the top two factors in attracting and retaining high-performing employees. However, in the May 21, 2001 edition of *Government Executive Magazine*, Jean MacFarland said that “among MPA students, 84 percent and 74 percent respectively credit the government with ‘attractive benefits’ and job security.’ But this is not enough when only 33 percent believe the federal government offers good opportunity for personal growth and development.” Structured internships covering grade levels up to full performance levels for all the occupations for which college graduates are recruited would go far in reversing this view and in marketing federal careers. The Presidential Management Intern program is an example of a successful government-wide program geared to Masters degree graduates. Agencies can create their own programs to attract the larger Bachelors level cadre.

Succession Planning

A critical element of every organization's recruitment and retention strategy is an organized and official corporate program to recognize, select, and develop the future technical and managerial leadership of the organization. The transition from professional staff member to a position of leadership, or to higher levels of leadership, is often difficult. Making that transition a success is critical to the morale and commitment of employees and the success of the organization. A team of line and HR managers selected for the Executive Leadership Program at the USDA Graduate School developed a step-by-step *Succession Planning Guide* in collaboration with the Academy as its official class project. Due to its length, it is not included in this report, but is available on the Academy's website. (<http://www.hrm.napawash.org>).

Taking a corporate approach by broadening the organizational and/or occupational coverage of the agency's recruitment/development programs could provide the scale required to make such programs viable. In the past, coop and management

intern programs that included several administrative fields and that assigned and rotated participants through various agency functions were successful in attracting high-caliber individuals. Many Senior Executive Service members report in conversation how they began their government careers in such programs. They wonder why they are no longer supported and used to the extent they once were.

Use the Best Recruiters

For organizations with significant and continuous hiring needs, especially in highly competitive career fields such as science and engineering, having knowledgeable and effective recruiters is essential. On this, there is likely no debate.

However, what are debated are the characteristics of a successful recruiter. Perhaps the first question is whether the recruiter even needs to be an employee. Some find that outsourcing this function adequately meets their needs. Typically, this may be the case when recruiting is periodic, or when targeting a very specialized candidate pool. Executive search firms, for example, are often used to locate candidates for executive and senior level positions. However, most employers, public and private, contend that mainstream recruiting is best performed as an in-house function. There is no consensus regarding whether the in-house recruiter should be a full-time professional recruiter, or one who performs the function as a co-lateral or on periodic duty. Lockheed Martin and MicroStrategy, for example, both find that employing a team of dedicated recruiters year-round provides the focus and energy necessary to market their companies, gather large candidate pools and screen applicants. On the other hand, Procter and Gamble, and Honeywell, International report success in rotating their staff scientists and engineers through the recruiting function. There are also differences of opinion as to whether the co-lateral duty recruiter should be a human resources professional, or a subject matter expert from the career field being recruited. Many federal employers rely on co-lateral duty recruiting teams composed of both HR professionals and subject matter experts. Again, there are no definitive answers as to whether the best recruiter is full time, co-lateral duty, or an HR professional or subject matter expert.¹⁴

However, all will agree that the person must be an effective representative and marketer of the organization. This includes a person with strong communication and other “people” skills, along with a solid understanding of:

- the mission and vision of the organization, its customers and stakeholders, the kinds of work being performed, and products and services provided
- key workforce policies and programs, especially those relating to compensation, career development and advancement, quality of work life, and other employee benefits
- the positions being recruited, including duties, responsibilities, and competencies sought and qualifications required
- the employment process, including application procedures and timeframes
- relevant information about surrounding communities including housing, schools, recreational and cultural facilities, and available services

In summary, the recruiter is arguably the central player in an employer's total recruiting strategy. It is this person who represents, or even personifies, the organization to a vital audience. Accordingly, having anything less than the most dedicated, well trained, and effective representatives as its recruiters, impairs an organization's ability to compete for the talent it needs.

Emphasize “Plant” Visits and On-Site Interviews

Many government agencies contend that they are severely handicapped by their inability to make “on-the-spot” offers, especially when they recruit on campus. Certainly, conventional federal employment processes do not provide the same flexibilities as those found in the private sector. However, not all successful recruiters see the on-campus offer as either essential or necessarily desirable. Some contend that making an offer only after a brief interview can appear to be the action of a desperate employer. Many students report that they are not persuaded by such “off the cuff” job offers. What they want is to visit the prospective employer, talk with managers, understand the kind of work they might do, and see the actual work environment. Accordingly, many in industry and government use the campus, or off-site interview, as the opportunity to screen candidates. Those who appear to be a good match are invited for a “plant” visit where more extensive interviewing and “selling” by both parties can take place. In that regard, the campus interview is the time to make an “on-the-spot” offer to “come visit the plant.”

At the conclusion of a successful visit, or shortly thereafter, is often the time that a job offer has the biggest impact. If an organization cannot commit that quickly, there needs to be a timely follow-up to let the candidate know where he or she stands in the process. This is critical! Even so, hot candidates won't stay “on-hold” for very long. They may understand that certain processes in government may take time. However, in the final analysis, they really don't care, especially if they have another equal or better offer elsewhere. The message ought to be clear. If agencies want to be winners in the war for talent, many must change the way they do business, beginning with streamlining their employment process.¹⁵

Streamline the Employment Process

This is fundamental to success. There is no question that certain changes in law and regulation could enhance the ability of federal agencies to compete in the job market. (Recommendations for such changes are included later in this report.) That aside, it seems to be human nature to bemoan that which we do not control. Perhaps it is a convenient excuse for shortcomings in areas we do.

The fact is, when it comes to streamlining the employment process, much of what is needed is within the control of individual agencies. Remember what the USGS accomplished. No laws or regulations were waived. Theirs was a dramatic change in the way of doing business, and required a significant up-front investment. However, other more modest changes to “standard operating procedures” could and do reap benefits for those who have the will and make the effort. Perhaps not all of the needed authority lies within the individual operating human resources office. In fact, much of the employment process is spread throughout agencies. But certainly significant discretion and the ability to make needed changes exist at higher echelons of the organization and at the agency level.

A good starting point for those who want to make changes is to conduct a critical and thorough assessment of the “as is” employment process. This needs to be done from the macro or global perspective, not just focusing on what happens within the HR office. The review may start with identifying the “who,” “when,” and “how” associated with hiring requirements being identified and approved, and end with the same questions relating to new hires being appointed.¹⁶ In between, the assessment should examine processes dealing with recruiting, job posting, examining, and selecting. In reviewing the results, organizations must continually challenge themselves with the tough questions: “Why do we do it this way?”, “Are there alternatives?”, “What are the costs, the savings, the impacts?” If done well, such an assessment is a significant undertaking. However, the potential for improvement is also significant. And if that improvement can enhance the organization’s ability to compete for talent, it may be a prudent and necessary investment of time and resources.

Use Currently Available Flexibilities

In the federal government’s quest for talent, often much attention is given to salaries as a reason for recruiting difficulties. There is no question that for many career fields, salaries are not competitive with the private sector, even when advanced in-hire and special salary rates are used. However, there are a number of flexibilities available to agencies that can go a long way towards bridging the salary gap. Perhaps the most applicable flexibility is the recruitment or “signing” bonus. Even though recent surveys of prospective and new college graduates reveal that such bonuses were not among the most desired benefits,¹⁷ it may be necessary to offer bonuses in some situations in order to be within “striking distance” of the competition.

The use of recruitment bonuses by federal agencies was one of the provisions of the 1990 Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act, permitting a one-time cash incentive of up to 25 percent of basic pay. While agencies have had this flexibility for a decade, its use prior to 1998 was minimal. An OPM study on the use of such flexibilities, suggested that greater use would come with increasing management officials’ awareness of such flexibilities, and by lowering approval levels and easing the justification burdens imposed by some agencies.¹⁸ In the years since that study, anecdotal evidence suggests that progress has been made in that regard.

Another flexibility, that could be a powerful incentive, and offset an otherwise uncompetitive salary, is the repayment of student loans. This is a new authority and, as yet, there is no information about its use in federal agencies.

Some agencies are following a practice in industry of giving “finder’s fees” to current employees who assist in recruiting for occupations in high demand. This can be a cost effective way of incentivizing those who would not otherwise be directly involved in the recruiting and hiring process. Agencies who decide to use this approach should establish clear criteria for when and how much employees will be paid. While there is no explicit authority to pay such fees, existing incentive awards criteria would accommodate this use.¹⁹

Flexible and alternative work schedules, time-off awards, telecommuting, and work-at-home, along with generous leave benefits are but some of things that agencies can offer that better enable people to balance their work and personal lives. For many people, this is a priority.

The federal government offers an attractive benefits package. To fully appreciate this point agencies may want to calculate the value of the benefits as a percentage of salary. In doing so, the total compensation package (salary plus benefits) becomes very competitive in most cases. This fact needs to be fully marketed throughout the recruiting process.

With respect to opportunities for professional growth, many agencies make significant investments in training, education, and development. And some offer rapid advancement opportunities, especially for entry-level professional employees during the first three to five years of their careers. While many employees enter the federal government with salaries below their industry counterparts, they often quickly catch up and even surpass them in pay and responsibility during those early years. These factors should be incorporated into the marketing message.

This section started with the observation that federal salaries often were not competitive. Perhaps, at times, there is a pre-occupation with this. The fact is that many of the people whom agencies hope to recruit often place a higher value on other job qualities. Again, recent surveys of college students indicate that what they especially appreciate are opportunities for professional growth and advancement, flexible working hours and time-off, and a good benefits package. In these areas, the federal government has much that can be highly attractive to prospective recruits.²⁰

In summary, in spite of some constraints that confront federal agencies, there are a vast array of flexibilities to use, and benefits to market. They are all part of the recruiting arsenal in the war for talent.

CHAPTER

3

Law and Regulation

Recruiting high-quality employees is an imperative for the federal government, just as it is for employers everywhere. To that end, officials at all levels must be relentless in helping to create and support effective recruiting strategies and processes. And they must use the flexibilities they currently possess. Addressing the issues discussed above will go a long way toward improving efficiency and effectiveness. But, there are other changes, outside their control, that can make further significant improvements in federal recruiting success. These include targeted legislative changes in areas that have been tested in a number of agencies and proven to be effective.

Title 5 permits the establishment of “Demonstration Projects” that modify selected areas of Federal law and regulation to provide a proving ground for new approaches to HR policy that could be extended to others. The following two concepts have been successfully applied for years in a number of agencies and are recommended for wider application:

QUALITY GROUP RANKING

First to implement this innovation (also called Category Ranking) was the Department of Agriculture in 1990 through a formally approved personnel demonstration project implemented in the Forest Service and the Agricultural Research Service. The project was an attempt to find an alternative to the “rule of three” which has been identified by every personnel oversight agency as well as all federal agencies as the principal detriment to timeliness and quality staffing. That is due to the requirement to place applicants, whose qualifications usually do not allow precise measurement, in absolute rank order and then to select from the top three—a bureaucratic, time consuming, and often litigious process. The concept was initially proposed by President Grant in his effort to establish a federal civil service. It was designed as a “rule of one.” When implemented after President Garfield’s assassination it was modified by the Congress as a “rule of three” to avoid political manipulation which could have occurred if the selection of a preferred candidate was required. It is a nineteenth-century concept that has survived into the twenty-first.

It forces the federal civil service to drive a horse and buggy in a modern Formula-One auto race. It is not surprising it loses the speed competition.

Quality Group Ranking involves assigning candidates, who met the minimum qualification requirements, to one or more groups, e.g. "Quality" and "Eligible," based upon a review of their education and experience. All candidates within a certified group are available for selection. Veterans' preference continues to apply with veterans being selected first within each group. After a five-year evaluation, the results showed an increase in candidates per announcement, more candidates referred to selecting officials, improved timeliness in hiring, and greater satisfaction with the hiring process by all concerned, including veterans. On the basis of those significant outcomes, this approach to ranking job candidates was approved by Congress in 1998 for permanent use by those Agriculture Department organizations.

Encouraged by what was being demonstrated during that project, the Department of the Navy, Naval Sea Systems Command Warfare Centers incorporated a similar streamlined delegated examining provision into their personnel demonstration project. That project was approved in 1997 with implementation beginning the following year. Today, it covers more than 12,000 employees in over a dozen locations nation-wide. These flexibilities have proven to be invaluable. In spite of an extraordinarily competitive job market, the warfare centers have been successful in recruiting hundreds of quality scientists and engineers annually over the last several years in an efficient and timely manner.

The Federal Aviation Administration adopted this approach when it received exemption from Title 5 in 1996. It has experienced similar improvement in its hiring process.

PAY BANDING

Over the past several years, the highest salaries available under the General Schedule have become increasingly less competitive in selected occupations. For example, undergraduate degree holders in certain engineering disciplines (e.g., electrical/electronic engineering), are receiving, on average, entry-level salary offers nearly \$9,000 higher than the maximum that can be paid under the GS 7, step 10 special salary schedule.²¹ Reasons for the growing pay gap between the private and public sectors include the following:

- Industry has demonstrated the ability and willingness to rapidly adjust/increase its compensation levels in response to dynamic job market conditions. The present system does not provide agencies with this ability.
- The salary gap increases progressively for high-quality graduates with special credentials, e.g., they are from top rated colleges and universities, graduated high in their class, completed a specialized curriculum, or have some relevant work experience.
- In addition to a higher salary, the private sector can, and does, offer a total compensation package that is often well beyond the reach of the present fed-



eral system, even with the ability to pay “signing” bonuses. Pay banding is a concept that involves grouping two or more grades in the General Schedule into one broad pay band. Employers using the approach have increased pay setting flexibility within the wider pay band. For example, if Grades 5 through 9 are banded, the agency has the option to offer the top of Grade 9 rather than Grade 7 to a high-quality college graduate. This allows greater ability to compete with the private sector for top talent.

Beyond the pay setting flexibilities that pay banding offers, it can also simplify and streamline the position classification process, and increase flexibilities in managing employee assignments. Finally, it can provide the structural context for a performance and/or competency-based pay system. While these additional benefits of pay banding may not directly facilitate recruiting, they do underscore the substantial merits of this system. The Academy’s 1991 and 1995 reports dealing with modernizing federal classification provide useful information regarding paybanding.²²

The Department of the Navy was the first to use the pay banding approach at its China Lake and San Diego laboratories in a demonstration project approved in 1980. After years of monitoring, Congress approved it for permanent use in 1995. Since that time the approach has been extended to 10 other agencies and is being used in a broader demonstration project within the Department of Defense by Army, Air Force, and Navy laboratories.

Both pay banding and quality group ranking have been extensively tested, reviewed by OPM and others, and supported by Congress as worthy of exploration and use. Demonstration projects were authorized to test personnel policies for possible broader application. The above approaches have proven to be valuable and useful for improving federal recruiting and hiring. They should be made available to all agencies as optional systems to assist them in attracting and retaining the talent they require to conduct the nation’s business.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAREERS WITH AMERICA EXAMINING

The Academy’s 1999 report *Entry-Level Hiring and Development for the 21st Century: Professional and Administrative Positions*, concluded that ACWA examining produced less than 1 percent of entries into federal service and, along with its associated Outstanding Scholar authority, fewer minority hires than all other methods for filling these entry-level positions. The ACWA program was established in response to the 1981 Luevano Consent decree that was implemented in response to the charge that the existing method for filling these positions (the PACE exam) had an adverse impact on Hispanics and African Americans. It is ironic that ACWA has done less to address that issue than any other recruiting/hiring technique in use today. Recognizing the fact that ACWA has been an unmitigated failure and minority hires into professional administrative occupations have exceeded their Combined Labor Force (CLF) representation as a result of other hiring authorities, the director of OPM should request that the Justice Department propose ending this 20-year consent decree. The ACWA examination system should then be terminated and agencies permitted to hire for these occupations using techniques

that have proven to be more operationally efficient and more effective in terms of meeting any diversity shortfalls that still exist.

CONCLUSION

What was true in the early 1960s is true today: Federal service is a noble calling and a worthy career choice. It underscores the importance and urgency of strengthening and improving our recruiting capability.

Where does an organization begin to make improvements? Making bold changes quickly can have certain appeal. However, it is likely not the best or right thing to do. Recruiting is part of a larger system and is grounded in the very culture of the organization. Precipitous changes in one part of a system can have unexpected and unwelcome consequences elsewhere. An agency must first conduct a rigorous assessment of its present recruiting efforts. It must understand what is working throughout the organization, as well as what is not.

Some legislative and regulatory changes would help level the playing field for federal employers. But if these changes were in place today, many federal agencies would still be unable to keep pace with the competition due to self-imposed bureaucratic processes, disorganized and unfocused recruiting, and the lack of contemporary IT applications. Locating quality applicants, interesting them in your work, continually communicating with them, evaluating them effectively, and making prompt offers are largely within agencies control.

At some point, the notion that government “can never compete with industry” became part of the conventional wisdom of many within government. Low expectations for success (or high expectations) can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Those who are consistently successful at recruiting and retaining talent are those who have an abiding belief in, if not passion for, what they do and what they can offer. Most importantly, they are able to effectively communicate this to their employees and to prospective job seekers.

Most agencies report that their recruiting efforts are falling short of producing the volume and/or level of talent required. For them, change is imperative. Even those whose recruiting needs are presently being met must continually evolve their approaches. This too means change. And dealing with change is a difficult and endless process. In that regard, it is hoped that this document can serve as a useful guide for changing and improving agencies’ recruiting programs so that the federal government will be successful in its “quest for talent.”

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Marilyn Mackes, Executive Director, National Association of Colleges and Employers, stated that to be successful in recruiting in today's labor market, employers had to develop an overall recruiting strategy that is tied to the organization's strategic plan, and to create supporting marketing plans for the targeted recruitment population. Address to the National Academy of Public Administration Conference on Workforce Quality, April 2, 2001.
- ² Currier, Richard. "Vision Must Be a Cornerstone of Recruiting." *Workforce*, November 3, 1999.
- ³ *An Introduction to Employment Branding*. Corporate Executive Board. 2000
- ⁴ "Best Practices for Fortune 500 Career Web Site Recruiting". Recruitsoft.com research.
- ⁵ Gilster, Paul A. "Channeling the Resume Flood with Applicant Tracking Systems". *Workforce*. December 15, 2000.
Leonard, Bill. "Online and Overwhelmed." *HR Magazine*. August 2000. Volume 45, Number 8.
- ⁶ Power, Densie. "Keep on-line Recruitment Simple for Success." *Executive Technology*. September 1999.
- ⁷ Crispin, Gerry; Mehler, Mark. *CareerXroads*. (Jist Works, 2000).
- ⁸ Leonard, Bill. "Online and Overwhelmed." *HR Magazine*. August 2000. Volume 45, Number 8.
- ⁹ Tony Lee, Editor-in-Chief and General Manager of Careers.wsj.com, speaking at an October 28, 1999 seminar on Internet recruiting in Los Angeles.
- ¹⁰ Leonard, Bill. "Online and Overwhelmed." *HR Magazine*. August 2000. Zimmerman, Eilene. "Internet Recruiting 101". *Workforce*. April 18, 2001. Unpublished study and report presented by KPMG Consulting to the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division. January 10, 2001. Address by Dan Currell, Director of Member Education, Corporate Executive Board, to the National Academy of Public Administration Conference on Workforce Quality, April 2, 2001.

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- ¹¹ Unpublished study and report presented by KPMG Consulting to the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division. January 10, 2001. Gilster, Paul A. "Channeling the Resume Flood with Applicant Tracking Systems." *Workforce*. December 15, 2000.
- ¹² Marilyn Mackes, Executive Director, National Association of Colleges and Employers. Address to the National Academy of Public Administration Conference on workforce Quality, April 2, 2001. Grabczynski, Sandra. "Nab New Grads By Building Relationships With Colleges." *Workforce*. May 2000. Vol. 79, No. 5.
- ¹³ National Academy of Public Administration, *Entry Level Hiring and Development for the 21st Century: Professional and Administrative Positions*, 1999, 26.
- ¹⁴ Unpublished study and report presented by KPMG Consulting to the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division. January 10, 2001.
- ¹⁵ One Federal installation that is using the plant visit with impressive results is the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC), Dahlgren Division. NSWC-Dahlgren is the largest of Navy's laboratories, and aggressively recruits scientists and engineers year-round. With the advantage of operating under a formally approved personnel demonstration project, Dahlgren has considerable flexibilities that include the ability to effectively make on-the-spot offers in many situations. In spite of this advantage, Dahlgren now avoids making hasty job offers on campus. Experience has demonstrated that they get their best results if a timely job offer is made at the conclusion of a successful on-site visit or, at the latest, within a few days. By the end of such a visit, all parties have a better sense as to whether there is a good match. By way of example for industry, McDonald Douglas arrived at the same conclusion, and, as a matter of policy, avoids making on-the-spot offers on campus. As Dahlgren, its strategy is to get the candidate to visit on-site.
- ¹⁶ Some would argue that the need to assess the employment process doesn't end with the appointment of a new hire. Rather, it is also essential to understand and assess what happens when the new hire is brought into the work place.
- ¹⁷ A recent survey of prospective and recent college graduates found that while a good starting salary was important, what most interested them were jobs with room for advancement, a good benefits package (medical insurance, annual salary increases and a retirement plan, along with dental and life insurance), and the opportunity for continuing education or training. In a similar survey, when asked: "Which benefit do you desire most?", "flexible working hours" led all other responses with 42%. In both surveys, a "signing bonus" came in dead last. National Association of Colleges and Employers. *Journal of Career Planning & Employment*. Spring 2001. JOBTRAK.COM. Los Angeles, CA. Student Poll Results. March 26, 2001.
- ¹⁸ U.S. Office of Personnel Management; Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness. *Report of a Special Study: "The 3Rs: Lessons Learned from Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives."* December 1999.
- ¹⁹ U.S. Office of Personnel Management; Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness. *Report of a Special Study: "The 3Rs: Lessons Learned from Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives."* December 1999.
- ²⁰ National Association of Colleges and Employers. *Journal of Career Planning & Employment*. Spring 2001. JOBTRAK.COM. Los Angeles, CA. Student Poll Results. March 26, 2001.
- ²¹ National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). NACE web-site. Press Room:

“Salaries to Recent College Grads Continue to Climb.” April 10, 2001.

²²National Academy of Public Administration. *Modernizing Federal Classification: An Opportunity for Excellence*. 1991 and *Modernizing Federal Classification: Operational Broad Banding System Alternatives*. 1995.

Endnotes