

Recruiter services are in growing demand in business world



Written by

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Recruitment of new employees has gone the way of payroll and tax duties for a number of companies — out of the building.

For years, employers have used recruitment firms to fill specialized technical and senior level executive positions. Now more types of job-seekers are likely to deal with a third party than a person at the company that is offering the job.

Burns Personnel, for example, is filling a wider variety of positions, according to area manager Jim Ellis. "It is a little different mix than we've seen in the past." He said that companies may be making ends meet in a tough economy by downsizing their human resources and recruitment departments. "Staffing is very important, obviously, but it may not be part of their core business."

Demand for recruitment process services led Employee Relations Associates to launch a new company, ER Select, to find staff for mid-market companies. According to its announcement earlier this month, ER Select will handle "everything from candidate screening to on-boarding."

Such outsourcing of human resources functions, along with contract hiring trends and the Internet, have changed the game for job seekers.

Rochester Works Executive Director Peter Pecor does not advise trying to "go around" a third party that has been hired to help fill a specific position. "They are contracting with those individuals or consultants for a reason," he said. "The worst thing a job seeker can do is not follow instructions."

Tony Coccitto, managing partner of Premier Recruitment Group, says that job seekers can attract the attention of recruiters by customizing their applications. Too many people apply for multiple jobs by e-mailing or uploading the same generic resume. "It's

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pretty obvious when you get them," said Coccitto. "If (recruiters) see someone who has done some research and some homework, they'll stand out ... You definitely want to tinker with your resume."

He also recommends a cover letter that is precise and to the point. "Recruiters aren't going to read the whole cover letter if it's two pages," he said. "A lot of times people use the cover letter to explain their resume. That's what the resume is for."

Several local recruitment professionals and employment experts say that developing an online presence is important. Coccitto said that Premier Recruitment Group recruiters search for resumes in many Internet venues.

Melissa Lamb, marketing and social media coordinator for Employee Relations Associates, says that her company searches LinkedIn profiles when trying to fill positions. "A lot of people don't realize that is a really great way that our recruiters source candidates."

These days it is harder to get face-to-face interviews with decision makers at hiring companies, said Coccitto. "The biggest complaint I get from job seekers is that they can't get through the automated process. If they want to work for a Fortune 500 company and they want a real human being, they can't be shy about picking up the phone."

Job seekers can also approach staffing firms directly. Staffing firms are being

asked to provide more contract workers, said Rochester Institute of Technology Saunders College of Business Assistant Professor of Management Shalini Khazanchi, a trend she expects to continue. Accepting temporary work through such an agency can lead to long-term employment. "It's not a bad strategy," she said.

Even if you don't immediately find work, applying through a recruiter may end up being helpful. "You have, in essence, introduced yourself to that recruitment firm," said Michael Palanski, assistant professor of management at Saunders College of Business at RIT. If the firm has an opportunity that might fit your skills, it will be likely to contact you. "At the end of the day, (recruiters) want to get paid, and the way they get paid is putting the right people in the right jobs."

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Recruiters' advice

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Customize your resume for the specific job you are seeking. It is easy for recruiters to spot a generic resume.

Keep your cover letter short. It is not a place to summarize your resume.

Build your online profile on Web sites such as LinkedIn.

Don't shy away from temporary work, it may lead to full-time employment.

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