

Hiring During Tough Times

By: [Dianne Shaddock](#)

Easy
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Five Savvy Tips That You Can Implement Now To Save Money And Hire The Best Employee For Your Job

It's easy to slip into the mindset that this is an "employers' market". With unemployment figures at its highest in years, there are many qualified, hard working people out of work right now who would love to work for you. Despite the fact that there is a lot of available "talent" out there, you still need to think strategically about ways to hire that will not only be cost effective, but that will get you the best worker for the job that you need right now. But this does not mean that you should continue to hire as usual. Being thoughtful and thinking creatively about the best hiring practices during tough economic times, will go a long way towards helping you find the best candidate.

1. Don't Be Short Sighted. The Best Employee For The Job Is Not Always Who You Think

Some of the best employees are those who have something to prove if given a chance to show you that they are hard workers and team players. Don't have tunnel vision and always hire based on experience alone. Do you have the type of job where you can hire someone with transferable skills? Are you able to invest a few hours to train a new employee? The

semi retired senior citizen, or the corporate type who just lost his or her job and wants a stable job may end up being a better worker than someone who fits the “mold” for your position.

Don't overlook these willing workers who at face value may not have the exact experience that you need, but who have transferable skills, especially if you are willing and able to train. Remember, having a worker who works beyond your expectations for only one year or so is often better than having a mediocre employee who you are stuck with for five years.

2. Be Creative When Advertising Your Job Opening

Some businesses make the mistake of thinking that the best employees can only be found by spending lots of money on advertising. In these budget conscious times, throwing money away on advertising can have an adverse impact on the bottom line for many companies. Even if you are in a position to spend lots of money on advertising, why should you when there are other cost effective alternatives.

Some low cost/no cost ways to advertise your job: Try listing your job with outplacement agencies*, or the local unemployment office. Most offer free online job advertising for companies to list job openings. Don't overlook neighborhood or specialty newspapers, which are always several hundreds of dollars cheaper to advertise in than mainstream newspapers. Community organizations and associations, especially those that are specific to your industry are great places to advertise your job openings. Don't forget that Twitter and Facebook are two popular resources to recruit candidates.

3. Be Empathetic, Respectful, But Savvy When Interviewing Candidates

The emphasis on empathy and respect may seem odd in the context of interviewing a perspective employee. After all, you have a business to run, and you need someone to perform the work...period. Don't be the type of employer who thinks that you are the one that holds all of the cards and that applicants should be happy, even grateful that you are considering them for a job. Remember that the interviewing process is a two way street. You are trying to make a decision about who will be the best candidate for your job and the job applicant is weighing whether your job, salary and workplace culture makes your job opportunity an attractive one. Quite frankly, the type of employee that you should want for your job will be an employee who is excited about the prospect of working for you and applying their skills and abilities to advance your business. You want the type of employee who will be assessing whether or not they will want to work with you regardless of whether they have a job, or have been unemployed for months. It often is a sign that the employee cares about where they work which will likely translate into a successful work experience.

How you treat an applicant during the recruitment stage of the process will speak volumes to the perspective employee who is trying to make a decision about whether you are the type of employer that they would even want to work for.

Treat all candidates graciously and with respect by not keeping them waiting to interview with you. Once the interview begins, give them your undivided attention.

Don't rush through the interview, or allow yourself to be distracted by accepting phone calls or allowing others to interrupt you during your

interview with the candidate. Give the applicant the opportunity to ask questions. Thank the applicant for interviewing with you and for considering your company for employment. Then follow up with them as promised to let them know whether or not they will be hired.

4. Be Thoughtful About Who May Be The Best Candidate For Your Job

Don't be short sighted and immediately rule out candidates who may have been unemployed for a while. Don't assume that a candidate must have been a poor performer if they are out of work. In this economy, stellar employees with pristine work records lose their jobs too. Of course during the interview, you should still ask job and work related questions that will help you to assess whether the person is a strong candidate for your job. Weigh all of the information including their overall work experience, the interview and don't forget to thoroughly check references.

5. Do Your Homework: Check References

It's interesting how many people cut corners and don't even bother to check references on perspective employees yet are surprised when they've hired someone who has attendance issues, or who does not have the experience that they thought the applicant would have. Realistically, you could check someone's background and still wind up in a situation where the employee does not work out well for a variety of reasons, but the odds are in your favor when you make it a best business practice to talk to a candidates' current and former employers to learn more about their work history. Make sure that you ask work or job related questions when checking an applicant's references. It's not okay to ask personal questions about applicants such as "Does the applicant have any children", if the

goal is to find out whether the applicant is available to work off hour shifts for example. The better question to ask in this case is “Did you find that the applicant is flexible and open to working a variety of shifts within your company”?

**Outplacement agencies are organizations that are paid by a company to work with laid off workers in order to help them find employment. Outplacement agencies offer a variety of services to laid off workers including career assessment and training, interview skills, and resume writing in order to prepare them for their job search.*

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