

IN THIS ISSUE:

How Do I Hire Good People In A Tight Labor Market?

What Roles Do Managers Play In Hiring Quality Candidates?

Recruiting A Quality Workforce.

Special "Recruitment Tips"

"Hiring Authorities"

PMI Program

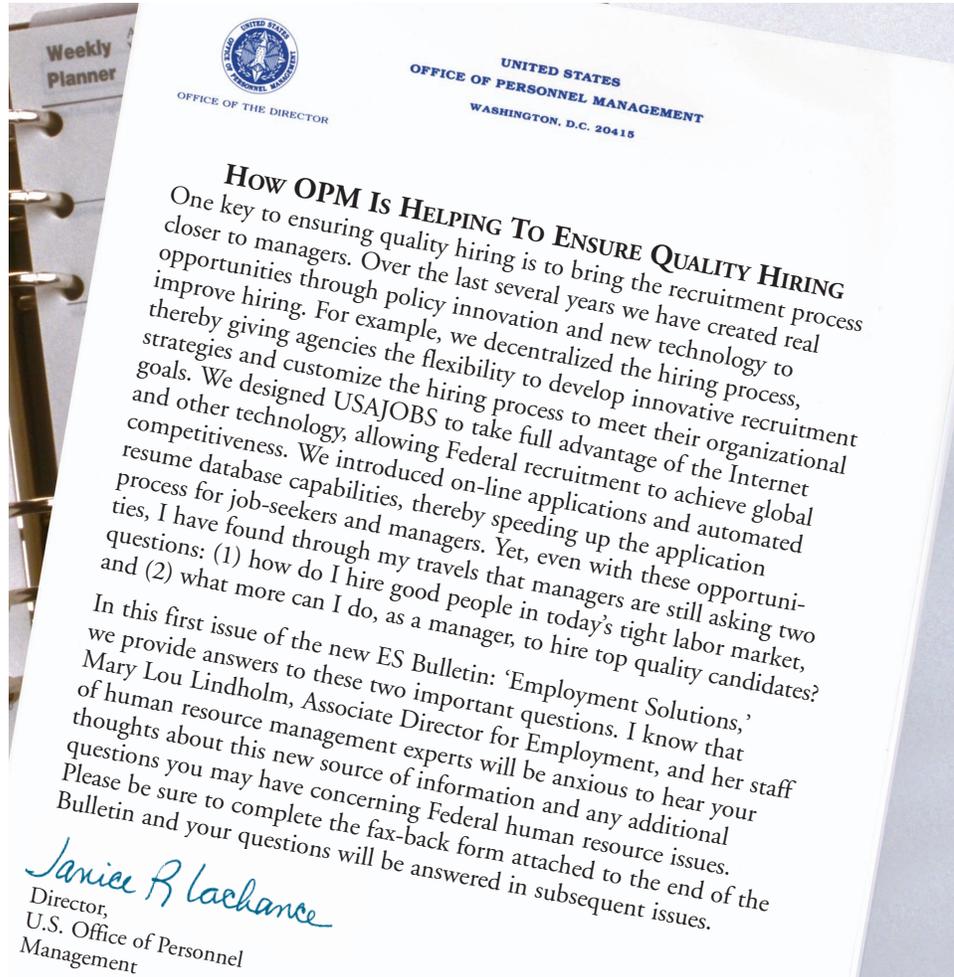
Student Employment Programs

Selective Placement Opportunities

Outstanding Scholar Program



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT WASHINGTON, D.C. 20415

How OPM Is Helping To Ensure Quality Hiring

One key to ensuring quality hiring is to bring the recruitment process closer to managers. Over the last several years we have created real opportunities through policy innovation and new technology to improve hiring. For example, we decentralized the hiring process, thereby giving agencies the flexibility to develop innovative recruitment strategies and customize the hiring process to meet their organizational goals. We designed USAJOBS to take full advantage of the Internet and other technology, allowing Federal recruitment to achieve global competitiveness. We introduced on-line applications and automated resume database capabilities, thereby speeding up the application process for job-seekers and managers. Yet, even with these opportunities, I have found through my travels that managers are still asking two questions: (1) how do I hire good people in today's tight labor market, and (2) what more can I do, as a manager, to hire top quality candidates?

In this first issue of the new ES Bulletin: 'Employment Solutions,' we provide answers to these two important questions. I know that Mary Lou Lindholm, Associate Director for Employment, and her staff of human resource management experts will be anxious to hear your thoughts about this new source of information and any additional questions you may have concerning Federal human resource issues. Please be sure to complete the fax-back form attached to the end of the Bulletin and your questions will be answered in subsequent issues.

Janice R. LaChance Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management

How Do I Hire Good People In A Tight Labor Market?

Think about recruitment in terms of attracting the strongest candidates most prepared to meet your

agency's strategic goals and priorities. Recruit for meeting those goals and priorities. The purpose of effective recruiting is attracting strong candidates prepared to perform the work that needs to be done in the environment

you have to offer. Take full advantage of customizing the competitive process by using the many staffing flexibilities and hiring authorities available. Take full advantage of technology by using USAJOBS

(article continued on page 2)

(continued from front cover)

and accepting on-line applications. Make the most of entry level hiring strategies such as the Presidential Management Intern Program, Student Employment Programs, Outstanding Scholar Program and Selective Placement Opportunities. Hire for part-time, intermittent and seasonal work, or use temporary and term appointments where appropriate. Tap into new and diverse populations. These include: military/veterans, mid-career workers who may be underemployed or in a career transition in the private sector, former Federal employees, adults with disabilities, students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and at the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. Take full advantage of the flexibilities to use recruit-



ment and relocation bonuses, and to use incentive awards programs to reward employees for making hiring referrals. Help employees balance work and family life by offering a variety of work schedules and work locations (i.e., satellite offices and telecommuting).

*Note: See Attached for "Hiring Authorities." ■■■*

#### **PMI Program**

*This program is designed to attract to the Federal service outstanding individuals from a wide variety of academic disciplines who have an interest in and commitment to a career in the analysis and management of public policies and programs.*

#### **WHAT ROLE DO MANAGERS PLAY IN HIRING QUALITY CANDIDATES?**

In today's environment, a manager's biggest challenge and greatest priority is attracting a higher quality and diverse workforce. Managerial involvement in recruitment is the key to effective succession planning and an effective recruitment effort. There is a large improvement in the satisfaction of managers who get directly involved in recruitment versus those who send an SF-52 just to recruit for a vacancy to their Human Resources Office. The more involved managers are in the recruitment process, the better chance they will have to attract quality candidates.

Understanding why high performers come to work for an organization is key to recruiting. Communicating what you believe is important to these candidates—growth, opportunity for impact, training and development, flexible work schedules—can result in a quality hire. Being involved also gives the candidates an opportunity to get a good look at who they will be working for or with, and to see if they fit into the culture of the organization. This is a very important factor in having productive, successful and happy employees—which leads to increased retention. Make sure you are trained on how to recruit! Just being a manager doesn't make you an effective recruiter. Getting training in contact etiquette, the hiring process, and personnel flexibilities allowed by your agency gives you an advantage. Check with your Human Resources Office for training availability. ■■■

#### **RECRUITING A QUALITY WORKFORCE**

Thinking about what makes an exceptional employee is a critical step to getting the right person for the job. Most likely, you would identify a person who had a mix of both technical and general qualities. Fortunately, OPM is developing a "whole person" approach to assessment—a way to not only look at what technical



knowledge, skills and abilities or competencies candidates have, but to also identify their general qualities such as communication, flexibility, teamwork, and other key competencies. Building the approach and the tools aids in the competitiveness of the Federal Government's recruitment efforts. Extensive empirical studies are identifying the critical competencies required to perform changing roles. The results so far show that quantitative measures, such as years of experience performing technically related work, are less important than qualitative measures of all the qualities a candidate needs to bring to the job. This competency-based approach is where the Federal Government is heading,

and managers are getting into the act. For example, OPM is piloting a competency-based approach for the GS-510, Accountant occupation, and the financial community is looking forward to using this platform to set their recruitment plans in action.

Ken Bresnahan, Acting CFO, Department of Labor, states:

*"We are on the right track. It has been a refreshing and rewarding experience to partner with OPM and the HR community at the front end of this revolutionary approach."*

Once you've identified the qualities of exceptional employees, you have to go find them!

Working with the Human Resources Office to develop a realistic, effective recruitment strategy is one of the most efficient uses of a manager's time. It should be done continuously.

It is practicing good planning and exemplifies good leadership. If you are always a part of your agency's recruitment efforts, even while not in a hiring mode, the stage will be set for you to go get those exceptional

employees when you need them. How do you do this? Become a part of the recruitment strategy by establishing good relationships

with college professors or deans, attending campus functions, speaking at professional organizations, and attending conferences and seminars.

Utilize your Human Resources Office personnel as consultants to the process and to manage the implementation strategy to successful completion.

Work with your Human Resources Office to make sure the vacancy announcement is a realistic preview of the job and that it highlights points of interest. Think about what would make an exceptional person want to work for your agency, perform the work you have, and want to work for

*(article continued on back page)*



## RECRUITMENT TIPS

- Be aware of labor market trends.
- Identify your competition and their attraction.
- Prepare a fact sheet highlighting key features about the organization, jobs and benefits.
- Identify the type of recruiting that will be accomplished: immediate or future.
- Develop the image you want to project. Accentuate the Positive.
  - Be aware of any potential negative perceptions and plan for them.
  - Create a page on your agencies website designed to attract candidates.
- Identify the type of candidates you are seeking:
  - Entry Level: Well rounded academically and socially.
  - Senior Level: Specialized experience and other key competencies (i.e., communication, leadership, vision)
- Prepare a recruitment schedule.
  - Consider school schedules and events, professional associations, conferences and seminars.
- Develop alliances with educational institutions; including deans, professors, and instructors.
- Train your recruiters. Provide training on:
  - Contact etiquette;
  - The hiring process;
  - Personnel flexibilities.
- Always have a plan to consider referrals from your outstanding employees.
- Be prepared for inquiries using responsive specialists to answer questions in-person, by telephone and/or email.
- Know your hiring time frames, the process and flexibilities, and be prepared to share them with prospective applicants.

**WE WANT  
YOUR INPUT!**  
Please fill out Fax Back Form  
on other side.



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF  
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

## FAX BACK FORM

Please fill out the following information and fax to Cheryl Thomas at (202) 606-1540.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

What Human Resources topics/questions would you like OPM-ES to address in upcoming issues of this newsletter?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Do you have any comments or suggestions for improving this newsletter?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Thank you for your input!

If you would like additional copies of this newsletter, or if you have further questions or comments, please email Cheryl Thomas at [ckthomas@opm.gov](mailto:ckthomas@opm.gov). And be sure to check out our website at [www.opm.gov/employ](http://www.opm.gov/employ).

## HIRING AUTHORITIES

You may use a wide range of hiring flexibilities when developing a hiring strategy:

- Make temporary appointments of up to 1 year [5 CFR part 316].
- Use part-time, intermittent or seasonal work schedules [5 CFR part 340].
- Make excepted service expert or consultant appointments (NTE 1 year) [5 U.S.C. 3341].
- Use special veteran's authority without competition up to GS-11 [5 CFR part 307].
- Use details in 120 day increments [5 U.S.C. 3341].
- Use commercial temporary help services for short-term requirements [5 CFR Part 300 subpart E].
- Use term appointments for work from 1 to 4 years in duration [5 CFR part 316].
- Make schedule A and B excepted service appointments when it is not practical to hold open competitive examinations [5 CFR part 213].
- Make Schedule C excepted service appointments for positions of confidential or policy determining nature (these require OPM authorization) [5 CFR part 213].
- Use transfers to move an employee of one agency, without a break in service, to another agency without having to compete [5 CFR part 315].
- Use reinstatement to reenter former career and career conditional employees without open competition [5 CFR part 315].
- Make noncompetitive appointments of current or former Peace Corps Personnel/Volunteers [5 CFR part 315].
- Make noncompetitive appointments of VISTA Volunteers under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 or the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 [5 CFR part 315].
- Make noncompetitive appointments of overseas employees returning to the United States [5 CFR part 301].
- Use the Presidential Management Intern Program for careers in analysis and management of public policies and programs.
- Use your agency developed Career Intern Program to fill entry level through managerial level positions.
- Use the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) for appointments not to exceed 1 year.
- Use the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) to convert noncompetitively to a career status.
- Use the Outstanding Scholar Program as a supplement to competitive examining for the GS-5 and GS-7 positions included in the Luevano consent decree.
- Use Selective Placement Opportunities for appointments of people with disabilities.

**NOTE: When making appointments using any of these flexibilities, keep in mind the Presidential Memorandum entitled "Career Transition Assistance for Federal Employees," under 5 CFR part 330.**

### **Outstanding Scholar Program**

*This special hiring authority was established to be used as a supplement to competitive examining for some entry level positions. This program is authorized under the terms of a consent decree (Luevano vs. Lachance) and can only be used for specific series and job titles. This special hiring authority is restricted to grade levels GS-5 and GS-7. Positions in the following occupational fields are not covered by this program:*

*Accounting & Auditing; Engineering; Physical Sciences; Biological Sciences; and Mathematics.*

*(continued from page 3)*

you! Internet recruiting, mass media recruiting, and paid advertising are just a few samples of the techniques an employer may consider when developing a recruitment strategy. Agencies now have the ability to develop their own vacancy announcements and instantly post them on our USAJOBS network of information systems (Website, telephone, and kiosks), where they can be seen worldwide, 24 hours a day! Operating on multiple platforms provides maximum access to users of differing technological, economic and physical backgrounds. Applicants can apply on line, which enormously reduces the time needed to disseminate job information and collect applications that was so much a feature of the former paper-based system. We continue to work with agencies to ensure that this technological capability is used to its fullest advantage. We have also determined that examining offices may establish open periods for their announcements based on the number and type of jobs to be filled, the number of applications expected from well-qualified candidates, labor market conditions, and recent experience when announcing to fill similar positions.

Collaborate with your Human Resources Office to factor money into your marketing strategy. Identify your competition and their attraction. Is it their work, their image, or their marketing style? Incorporate the use of traditional and non-traditional media to recruit. These can include:

- brochures
- videos marketing your agency
- newspaper/magazine ads
- advertising on the web, and
- personal contact (most important of all)

Think about exciting, innovative business practices in which your organization is involved and highlight these in your marketing materials to attract candidates. The idea is to promote your agency and public service as a

whole—a place where an employee can have a great impact on the overall success of this country.

Persuasive information is an investment—the exceptional employee gained is your return on that investment!

Make sure you have a system to receive inquiries. Ensure that telephones and automated systems are staffed with professional, knowledgeable representatives of your agency who are informed about your efforts. Prepare a fact sheet containing critical information about the organization, jobs, benefits, and the hiring process. Know your hiring time frame; take advantage of special hiring authorities. Be prepared to follow up with schools, individuals, and professional organizations. They will want to know what is going on before, during, and yes, even after the hiring. Inquiring minds need to know!

Plan, prepare, and get out there—the Federal Government can have a competitive edge—but we have to be present at the right places and at the right times!

*Note: We continue to work on providing useful tools to aid in your recruitment endeavors. Attached you'll find our "Recruitment Tips" and "Hiring Authorities," designed to be easily removed for your convenience. ■■■*

