

Title:

Beat Your Competition with These New Year's Hiring Resolutions

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Summary:

Another year has passed and it's time to make your New Year's resolutions. While others will be hitting the gym and chomping on nicotine gum, you can get a leg up on your competition with these hiring techniques to build your workforce in 2006.

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Article Body:

Another year has passed and it's time to make your New Year's resolutions. While others will be hitting the gym and chomping on nicotine gum, you can get a leg up on your competition with these hiring techniques to build your workforce in 2006.

Hire Slow, Fire Fast

The first and most important resolution you can make in the New Year is to stop waiting until the last minute to hire a new employee and stop letting the dead weight in your department drag the rest of the group down. Management is not an easy task, and hiring always seems to end up on the bottom of the 'to do' list. Because of this, managers always tend to rush the hiring process since they, "needed someone yesterday."

Resolve to make your life easier this year by being proactive when it's time to hire a new employee. By taking the appropriate amount of time to hire talented candidates, you'll save yourself the future management headaches that come from rushed hiring mistakes.

Similarly, commit to terminating those employees that aren't meeting your expectations on a consistent basis. This resolution is a little harder to execute since these people rarely do anything to overtly attract your attention to their poor performance. By establishing clear performance expectations, you'll have a better understanding of when to deliver a pink slip.

Stop Selling Your Jobs

One of the easiest mistakes in hiring is getting overly excited about great candidates and trying to sell them on all the reasons why they should take your job. This can lead to incorrect assumptions about the position, resulting in unexpected turnover and an overall bad fit.

To solve this problem in the New Year, commit to creating realistic performance expectations in writing for every employee you intend to hire. This should include a dated timeline of expected accomplishments for the first 30 to 180 days of the job depending on the complexity and breadth of responsibilities.

Once you've documented these expectations, openly communicate them to any candidate that is being considered. Also, don't hesitate to talk about the struggles and challenges that a candidate might have. This open communication should weed out unmotivated candidates as well as energize those ready for the task.

#### Stop Hiring on First Impressions

How many times have you hired someone you really liked and they turned out to be a poor performer? We often rely on our emotions in hiring which leads to making quick judgments based on our initial impressions. When this happens, great candidates are overlooked because of superficial indicators of their ability while poor candidates are hired for their superior presentation skills. While personality is an important factor, intellectual ability, technical skills, desire, and core values should also be considered in any hiring decision.

If you tend to lean toward making snap judgments on job candidates, follow these steps to overcome hiring errors based on initial impressions. First, make sure that before you go into an interview, you write down the areas of competency you intend to assess to get a complete picture of their ability. Second, make a firm decision before going into any interview that you won't allow the first few minutes to determine your decision. Next, make sure you follow through with the proper line of questioning that will lead to the answers you need. Finally, wait thirty minutes after an interview ends to review your notes and carefully consider the actual answers that were given rather than the style in which they were communicated. .

#### Create Hiring Partners, not Hiring Vendors

A study released this year by the American Staffing Association revealed that Fortune 500 buyers viewed partnership with their staffing suppliers as an important part of their business. However, the same study revealed that only 2

in 5 customers view their current staffing suppliers as "partners." What this means is that the majority of companies that work with staffing firms consider them a vendor rather than a strategic staffing partner.

If this sounds like your company, you may be missing out on some of the major benefits of a strong partnership with your staffing firm. To push this relationship to the next level, ensure that your staffing supplier has a firm understanding of your business challenges by inviting them to your workforce development meetings. Also, work with your staffing supplier to develop a strategic staffing timeline that will ensure that your staffing challenges are addressed as the business grows and the economy fluctuates.

This year, resolve to make your hiring process a predictable business practice rather than an unreliable event and 2006 will be a landmark year for your workforce.