



people management

The New Paradigm

By Ron Evans

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Top-flight companies at the threshold of the new millennium have witnessed a radical change in the dynamics of recruiting - namely that the demand for talent exceeds the supply across an alarming range of functions and positions. Add to this a baby boom generation less willing to relocate and more focused on their personal lives than their predecessors were, and you've got the recipe for the toughest recruiting environment in decades. Many companies have been slow to grasp the profound implications of the new paradigm: employers are now sellers and prospective candidates are buyers. Growing numbers of potential employees find themselves in a "free agency" environment previously reserved for top executives and whiz kids. Your challenge is to give them a compelling reason to join your company, and a compelling reason to stay. In this highly competitive climate, consider the following "reality checks" before launching your next recruiting assignment:

1. Does your company have a compelling story that will appeal to the best and the brightest candidates?
2. Is your hiring process streamlined so that you can move quickly when qualified and interested candidates are found?
3. Is your company competitive with the market regarding flexible work hours, telecommuting options, childcare benefits, continuing education policies, etc.?
4. Is your company culture appealing? Does it offer balance between work and personal life, or, for example, are vacations routinely tyrannized by email and voice mail?
5. Do you have a process for assimilating and orienting newcomers?
6. Will established compensation ranges prevent you from competing for the talent you seek?
7. Are you willing to make tradeoffs in the requirements of the position if the recruiting process reveals that you can't find or attract what you had hoped for?

Ask yourself, "If I were in his/her place, would I accept this offer? Is this a reasonable risk versus reward scenario given the candidate's current position? Is our offer compelling enough that this candidate can persuade his/her family that it is worth relocating?" We believe that the winning companies at the end of this millennium will be the ones that use their recruiting savvy as a competitive weapon to attract, motivate and retain quality employees.