

Transport Topics Classified Marketplace Employment Plus!

The Great Talent Race: Will Your Company Be First?

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The pace car has made its lap, the green flags are waving and the race is on — for top talent.

Despite numerous economic indicators pointing to continued slowdowns in several industry sectors, one of the major concerns throughout transportation today is the ability to attract talented people. Look around and you'll find carriers racing not only for business but also for bright, energetic and innovative talent experienced enough to take their companies to the next level.

But here's a new twist. Unlike the past decade, carriers are no longer taking the risks that come with in-house promotions. Instead, they're calling on recruiters to find hit-the-ground-running, walk-on-water talent who are currently working for industry winners with the best operating ratios. That's how top companies make giant steps up the industry ladder.

In some cases, carriers are working with recruiters for the first time. They are realizing the value of professional recruiting in overcoming the obstacles of an erratic marketplace and looking for a competitive edge in attracting top industry talents.



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In spite of the sharp competition for the industry's best and brightest, carriers are not backing off of their own demands. A typical recruiting wish list looks something like this:

- Innovation with speed.
- Experience in designing and implementing new technology.
- High productivity and morale despite shrinking margins.
- Excellence in multi-tasking.
- Ability to accomplish much more with fewer people and resources.

Here's a critical area to think about: Some companies, especially successful and growing carriers, often have the mistaken idea that top talents are just waiting for the opportunity to work for them when, in fact, there are hundreds of companies in the

race for their services.

To attract top talents ahead of the competition, executive leadership must first be prepared to answer these questions:

- What has made this company successful?
- Why would top talent pass up another job to work for us?
- What are we prepared to do to attract and retain this talent?

Once these questions are answered, the next step is to make certain corporate recruiting strategies are flexible and in tune with market realities. Today's top talents look for a streamlined recruiting process, one that is fair, short and provides feedback in days, not weeks. Foot-dragging by hiring managers will send a desirable candidate running to take a competitor's offer.

Keep in mind that loyal employees are a thing of the past. Just because a top talent wants to work for your company is no guarantee they'll be there permanently. In fact, staying more than two to three years before looking for greener pastures is relatively uncommon. Once a top talent has signed on the dotted line, the real work — of retention — begins.

Tweaking these strategies now will push you closer to the front of the line of desirable employers as the race for talent grows

more competitive.

It's also important to know the pool of top talent is relatively shallow — and when there's a shortage of anything, whoever captures the supply wins. A savvy recruiter should be able to widen your talent net so it reaches those individuals you would never have come into contact with otherwise.

employed job-hoppers. Top talents are generally not looking for a new position because they are too busy working. They have not registered with an employment service, nor are they reading help wanted ads. They are the top 10 percent who are unreachable — except through a surgical recruiting process.

Finally, a good recruiter's efforts allow you to focus on the core operations of your business.

One caveat: All too often, success lulls corporate leadership into complacency about continuing to fill the company pipeline with top-notch personnel. Recruitment and retention of the talent necessary to move the corporation to the next level continues to be a top priority and, for many of transportation's up-and-coming companies, the elusive key to corporate success.

The great race for top talent has begun — what are your company's chances of winning the checkered flag?

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Did You Know?

The trucking industry employs over 11 MILLION PEOPLE

A good recruiter's process is conducted through referrals and by contacting people in the disciplines and companies where qualified candidates are most likely to be. They do not rely on unsolicited resume flow, blind ads, or job boards, which generally result in chronically unem-