

## 37 Recruiting Tips From Successful Recruiters

1. Contact and/or obtain the name and fax number of all the following organizations:
  - a. Community colleges
  - b. YMCAs/YWCAs
  - c. Churches
  - d. Athletic clubs or organizations
  - e. Trade schools
  - f. Juvenile centers
  - g. Minority or ethnic organizations (NAACP, LULAC, Mexican/Italian/Irish/Polish/American leagues, etc.)
  - h. Urban League
  - i. Womens' organizations
  - j. Gyms and health centers
  - k. Homeowners associations
  - l. County and municipal community health and social service centers
  - m. Elderly centers (for members, their children, and grandchildren)
  - n. Financial aid offices
  - o. Welfare offices
  - p. Social Security offices

On an 8½ by 11 page with lots of white space and some graphics (a cartoon character or an icon), create an attractive, professional job announcement that describes the position and invites the prospective employee to apply. Make sure to include highlights about the advantages of working for the company, and also include all contact information: name, address, phone and fax numbers, and Web address.

2. Every time you have a job opening, send a fax about the position to all your contacts at the previously mentioned organizations. If you don't have an organization's fax number, call and request it. Let your contact know that you'll be sending them information about various jobs in your "Job/Career openings" bulletins.
3. Send a more formal announcement about job openings on your letterhead or on preprinted cards to every customer (or potential customer). Announce the openings to them — they have retired husbands, sons, daughters, unemployed brothers-in-law, out of work/school nephews, neighbors, church friends, etc. People enjoy being the source of positive opportunities, such as a good job. By doing this, you send a message to your customers that says your company is doing well and is expanding, and you need more good people.
4. Contact the nearest branch of the American Association of Retired People (AARP). Many people who retire in their 50s and 60s are healthy, capable workers. They have useful skills, knowledge, and good work habits. Often, they already have health coverage and an income, and they're just looking to supplement that income.
5. Connect with a company that needs workers in the season when you don't. If you're hiring for the summer, identify those companies in your area that hire employees for the winter and work out an arrangement. This provides employees with year-round employment and you with the assurance of a team for next season.
6. Set up or participate in a job fair. Notify other organizations, such as those listed in tip No. 1, and run an advertisement in newspapers and small local journals. Organize free food and raffle prizes for career fair attendees. Invite the local newspaper and ask reporters to run a story about the fair. At your booth, you can show industry films, give job demonstrations, and display plant material and equipment. Make sure to include certified and professional team members who can describe your company's job opportunities. Ask career fair attendees to complete

their job applications and interviews on site. You could also offer serious applicants a tour of your company's facility or the site of a customer's completed project.

7. Visit the state employment office in your area. Explain the work that your company has available and ask what the employment office can do to help prescreen candidates and send potential employees to you. All workers who accept unemployment benefits are required to seek and accept work if they are reasonably qualified. You are providing that resource. If you have an active, helpful state employment service in your area, it can become a significant source for prospective candidates.
8. Contact the retired police and firefighters clubs. Many of their members seek supplemental income or jobs immediately or soon after retirement. They often like horticultural and outdoor work.
9. Find someone who knows government municipal, state, or federal employees who have retired. They often belong to clubs, so contact them and send them job notices and industry brochures.
10. Contact handicap or disability organizations. Many handicapped people are fully capable of working for your company. Sometimes, a reasonable accommodation on your part can bring you an employee who will be loyal and grateful to have the opportunity.
11. Consider ex-offender programs (almost every state has them). The state usually provides support and/or assistance in employment procedures and requires the ex-offender to work regularly, report in, and maintain a stable lifestyle. For many, a stable job may be their only opportunity to turn their life around. They often become very loyal, stable employees.

12. Consider offender release programs. Incarcerated people with acceptable histories are given an opportunity to cut short their sentences if they become solidly employed. They have full monitoring and counseling to make their lives out of prison successful. If they fail to work regularly or get into trouble, they must return to prison and finish their original sentences. This program, if it fits your company, can become an important and valuable asset. It has for many companies.
  
13. Organize a job sharing system. This doesn't work for every job, but many companies have positions that can be shared by two or three employees. One person may work on Mondays and Tuesdays, while another may work on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Or, one can work in the mornings and the other in the afternoons. Employees on such flexible work programs often do their own scheduling and are responsible for having the job covered at all times. Such programs are often the key to employing retirees and other part-time staff.
  
14. Contact the military bases in your area. In the 1990s, thousands of military people were on welfare and were eager to find local work. The military bases cooperated with employers and rearranged schedules to accommodate these outside jobs. Military people are no longer on welfare, but many bases still cooperate with outside work scheduling. Military people often need special scheduling, but you can find some very talented, disciplined, and valuable employees this way. Many who live on bases have spouses and grown children who are also interested in working. Most of these candidates will not become permanent employees, but some will. All military branches now provide career development, training, and job search services for military spouses.
  
15. Identify military release centers in your area (if any) because many veterans are looking for jobs. Visit them, meet the returning vets, and distribute your company's job-opening flyer and brochure.

16. Identify which manufacturing plants are closing in your area and across your state.

Companies are cutting back, and manufacturing plants are closing regularly. The law (the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification [WARN] Act) requires companies with 100 employees or more to inform employees and local authorities (mayor's office, employment office, etc.) as much as six months in advance of closings or major layoffs. You can contact those companies or the local authorities and obtain their help in screening, interviewing, and even training these recruits. In many cases, you, as the employer, can acquire significant tax breaks and training funds if you hire these people. In February 2008, Tyson's Foods, Pfizer, and Wyeth pharmaceutical plants notified more than 7,000 employees of layoffs, almost all permanent.

17. Contact your local department of labor office and ask for information on job training programs, such as the original Job Corps-type federal programs. These programs not only refer semitrained workers but also allow tax breaks and provide training funds.

18. Find areas in nearby states where unemployment is high. Invest the money into relocating unemployed workers to your area. Often, services are available to aid you and the candidates in this process. Typically, community services are available in your area that can offer aid or assistance during the relocation and subsistence process. The state of West Virginia offers financial assistance for both the employee and the company, even for hires outside the state.

19. Many companies in other industries hire the same types of people that you do. What do those companies offer? What are the job conditions? Can your company provide more? Can some of the workers' problems be resolved by coming to work for you? Advertise your company to people in other industries. For example, place flyers in the local establishments where those companies exist and advertise in a local journal read by their employees. Many jobs in small factories pay little above minimum wage and provide no benefits, particularly in older industries such as paper mills, textile plants, etc.

20. Put up a flyer near the union hiring halls for construction workers. Their jobs are often seasonal, and many want to have better, safer work even if it's a lateral pay move. Many of these laborers are actually highly trained and experienced in almost every kind of construction equipment operation and repair, and they often know a lot about most types of landscaping.
21. Visit the department of labor (DOL) section of your state's Web site. Almost every state has an employment assistance division, which is highlighted on the DOL Web site. This division helps citizens find jobs and offers training and subsistence for candidates; it also offers referrals for employers. If you can't find the site for your state, visit [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov), which is the federal DOL Web site. Select "State Labor Offices" and it will take you to a selection of links to all the states' departments of labor.
22. Post all job openings on all bulletin boards in your company and around your community. Almost all trade schools and colleges have job posting bulletin boards.
23. Offer bonuses to employees who refer applicants who are hired and stay with the company for at least 90 days.
24. Offer a benefit plan that is targeted to the people you are seeking. Your plan could include a health or dental discount card, a paid day off every 3 months or company-provided lunch every Wednesday.
25. When reviewing candidates, learn to screen people *in* instead of out. Think about what it would take to make them a good employee. Is it reasonable to consider that they could fit in your company?

26. Offer sign-on bonuses to candidates. A \$100 to \$500 bonus for new hires can be the difference between a candidate joining your or another company. Be sure to make the bonus contingent on a specific length of employment, such as 90 days.
27. Consider offering hourly employees a guaranteed weekly salary. That can be a big draw for workers and their families. To find out more about paying hourly workers a weekly salary, visit PLANET's Web site at [landcarenetwork.org](http://landcarenetwork.org). Go to "HR University," where you will find the "Personnel Notebook" and "Paying Hourly Workers a Weekly Salary."
28. Call back those who turned you down earlier. Tell the better candidates you turn down what he or she can do to qualify next time. Check back later to see if they have made any progress.
29. Set up a call center recording that gives job openings and short messages about employment around the clock. Advertise that job hotline number.
30. Transportation is often a roadblock for potential employees. Provide transportation (a van) to pick up workers each day. You can also offer bus or Metro passes to help get them to and from work.
31. Design "career ladders" for all available jobs. Show candidates their opportunity for training, development, and advancement from entry-level jobs to higher positions. Promote the career ladder to candidates in your advertising.
32. When you have attracted a candidate, identify his or her "hot button," the key thing that entices or excites a particular person. Every candidate has a hot button: guaranteed weekly salary; the chance to operate equipment; health benefits; a sign-on bonus; training and development; a job for the candidate's spouse, son, or friend; a cell phone for private use; driving a company car home; or an opportunity to work

all winter or to have a guaranteed job again next season, to name a few. Professional headhunters always look for and push people's hot buttons.

33. Network. Although almost all companies run newspaper employment ads for every job opening, most jobs are not filled by responses to them. Ads are one of the most expensive, least effective recruiting tools. *In national surveys asking people how they obtained their jobs, only 15 percent say they got it from a newspaper ad.*

**People report finding their jobs through other people!** They hear about openings from relatives, friends, neighbors, other employees, someone on a bus or at a party, etc. Who knows the people you want to hire? Who can you talk to to get your story out? Talk to everybody! Tell everyone you know — your husband, your wife, friends, acquaintances, people at parties, fellow travelers on the plane, etc. Weak ties work, too. People you know the least talk to people you don't know at all. Let everyone in your company know about the opening(s). Ask people to pass the word. **Networking works and it works best!**

34. Contact [hirevetsfirst.gov](http://hirevetsfirst.gov). It's a new Veterans Administration site. Enter the site and select "Skills Translator." Then enter the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) job code for the position you are trying to fill. You will be given the comparative military job titles. They will then give you the contact point for the local Vets service center to put you in contact with vets. (Note: DOT is available at all public libraries and DOL offices. All U.S. jobs have a DOT job code.)

35. Visit PLANET's job board at [PLANETcareers.org](http://PLANETcareers.org) where job seekers and employers can connect.

36. Attend PLANET's Student Career Days every spring to meet and talk to college students pursuing green industry-related studies and training. Visit [StudentCareerDays.org](http://StudentCareerDays.org) for the latest information.