

Seven Greenhouse Industry Hiring Tips

By Bob Zahra

Hiring isn't a one-way street. Our survey sponsor offers advice on what you should be doing—and thinking—when bringing a new employee on board.

- 1 The international greenhouse industry is a very small town. Everybody knows everybody else. The experienced person you're trying to hire may make a few discreet inquiries. In a small town, news travels fast. Have you been as good as your word? Do you have a reputation for treating others respectfully?
- 2 The hiring process is like a multi-variable algebraic equation. Simultaneously, the truly qualified candidate is trying to solve for position, geography, cultural/long term professional fit and compensation—not just compensation alone, which is where, as an industry, we tend to focus an inordinate amount of attention.
- 3 There are some excellent candidates on LinkedIn, along with every single con artist alive.
- 4 Employment with your company is a major, life-changing decision. The candidate is super sensitive during every step of the process, trying to imagine himself/herself as a long-term employee. Are you faithful in the small things? Punctual on telephone interviews? Respectful of candidate confidentiality? Prompt in interview expense remittance?
- 5 The candidate who only wants to communicate by email doesn't want to answer your follow-up questions.
- 6 Overpaying is as dangerous as underpaying. Unreasonable expectations are often attached to the overpaid employee, which can lead to exasperation on the part of both employee and company. At the other extreme, the underpaid employee still needs to improve his/her financial situation and may seek more lucrative employment.
- 7 One significant mistake you can make as a hiring authority is to think because you're the one who'll extend the offer that you're somehow superior to the candidate you're hiring. Schools that attract top-level athletes understand that recruiting is multifold: A) Being absolutely certain this is the individual we need and want, while at the same time; B) putting our best foot forward, because ultimately it's the candidate's decision whether to accept our offer; and C) those schools with the best recruits, as well as those greenhouses with the strongest teams, tend to prevail over those content with only average players.

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