

Make present employees your first line of recruiters



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Looking for entry-level employees? Start by letting your present employees know. They might be able to help you find some more good workers, says Dale Feinauer.

Feinauer is an instructor with the College of Business Administration, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh. He specializes in employment issues. Recently he spent a day with about 60 lawn and landscape pros at the PLCAA Management Conference.

His comments drew several discussions. In fact, few lawn pros skipped out to play golf during his session which is saying a lot inasmuch as it took place on a cloudless, 70 F. day in Tempe, Ariz., in mid January. (Not that I noticed the weather or anything.)

Feinauer says your present employees can become good recruiters.

1) **They know your company culture**, and the type of employees that fit into it best.

2) **They will be honest** when they tell their friends or acquaintances about your company, and the job(s) that they will be expected to do.

3) **They won't recommend** a friend or acquaintance to you unless they think that the prospect has a good chance of working out. After all, their reputation is on the line and they want to stay in your good graces.

But, how do you motivate employees to bring you some more good candidates?

Some of the business owners and managers at the Conference say they give cash bonuses to anybody bringing in an employee that stays with the company, say, 90 days.

"We have the employee stand up and we hand him a \$20 bill every month for five months running for every new employee that stays with us.

[LAWN/LANDSCAPE]

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Mainscape is commercially focused

We hand out the money right in front of everybody else" says one business owner.

Another says he puts a large paper pie on the wall of his company's training room, and everytime an employee brings in a new hire, he pulls off another piece of the pie. When all six are off, he says the employees get a free pizza party.

"I know it sounds hokey, but it works," claims the owner.

While your present employees can help you get recruits for those entry-level jobs, don't forget them when you need someone to fill other, more responsible, openings in your company.

Don't let the fact that you know some negative things about a qualified present employee color your decision too much. This person, warts and all, may work out better than a new employee. After all, your employee has already shown a measure of loyalty.

While we're on the subject, turn this page and read columnist and LCO Bob Andrews' seven valuable interviewing tips. **LM**

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