

# Ready for Recovery: Hiring in 2010

by Debbie Trevino



**I**t's a new year. Budgets are being established. People are looking back on 2009, hoping for significant change in 2010. Employers are looking forward, assessing their human capital needs. Many are deciding that it is best to *get ahead of the curve*.

Delta Dallas has been in the business of staffing for over 26 years, and has seen a myriad of fluctuations in the economy. We have learned a few lessons along the way in the area of "recovery hiring." We are beginning to see our clients re-hire for some of the positions they eliminated during 2008 and 2009.

Hiring strategies during recovery can be challenging. The approach you take now could define how quickly production teams can build momentum as your company acquires more business.

## Team Temperature

This is a critical time for your remaining staff. It is important that you take the time to meet with and assess the temperature/attitude of your present employees. Let's face it, the employees you have kept through this recession are the ones you value the most. They have put in extra hours to absorb the duties of their laid-off co-workers, and frankly, they are tired.

There is a kind of unintentional resentment that can build between corporations and their employees during a downturn. While it is understood that most organizations are doing the best they can to survive, many remaining employees are planning to move when recovery begins. Employees that have been retained during this recession have taken on the production burden of lost workers. Their life-work balance has diminished, and after the recession is over . . . many will start to move.

You can avoid this dynamic by talking to them now. Be sure that remaining employees know that they are valued. Let them know that you empathize with and appreciate the amount of work they have been doing. Ask them what it would take to make them stay. The hard truth is that when the economy opens up, you will not be the only employer who is hiring. It would be unfortunate if resolvable dissatisfaction made your best, brightest, and most experienced people look for greener pastures.

## Get Ahead of the Curve

Even if you do not plan to hire until 2nd or 3rd quarter, now is the time to plan. You can start now by pulling your HR team and/or managers together to discuss where your most effective placements can begin.

Tackle your critical positions first. Take a good look at your business strategy and align your hiring plan with the positions that are most integral to company goals. Which positions will be the most important spots to fill as your company (and the economy) begins to ramp up?



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Build a plan that allows for recruiting, onboarding and training time as you move through each position. Create a solid hiring strategy now, and you will be able to move into action when it is time to hire.

## Make Them Want It

When order of priority and strategy has been established; take the time to create well-defined performance-based job descriptions that will attract top talent. Building a complete, dynamic job description will give your team a comprehensive picture of the position's requirements. An inclusive job description will allow them to present your opportunity to A-players with a deeper picture of your company, your

position, and the benefits associated with each.

## Hire Forward

Get **in front** of your hiring needs so that when it is critical to have talent in place, you are not waiting for new hires to complete training, or develop depth of knowledge in their positions that will allow for production speed.

We are all ready for recovery. Top to bottom, most organizations are stacked with people that have been putting in long hours, and looking over their shoulders for the lay-off axe. The economic forecast for the New Year is encouraging. In order to run with the front of the pack, organizations will have to start re-hiring and implementing sound hiring strategies to bring their production up to recovery speed.