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Interns as good as gold to Silver Census

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David Mezzapelle, founder of GoliathJobs.com and the marketing and development director for Silver Census, said he likes to hire interns to supplement a full-time staff. Hiring interns is a sure-fire method for companies to trim costs in today's economy while still getting the job done, according to David Mezzapelle, founder of Stamford-based GoliathJobs.com.

"From a cost standpoint, it's a very cost-effective way to build a work force," he said. "You get bright-eyed, motivated students who are willing to learn and possibly seek employment with your company."

Mezzapelle said he has hired more than 20 interns for SilverCensus.com, a Jupiter, Fla.-based senior living, health services and national placement directory that merged with GoliathJobs, the parent company of JobsOver50.com, in September.

"We hire interns across all facets," said Mezzapelle, Silver Census' marketing and development director, who has hired interns for positions in marketing, information technology, communications and social work. "They learn so much from working from our team that if they prove themselves, we hire them. It saves us time and money because we don't have to retrain them, and they'll have learned our culture."

Silver Census, which was founded by Jessica Adams, has hired 14 interns to supplement its staff of about 20 workers, Mezzapelle said.

"We'll double that number by June 2010," he said. GoliathJobs' staff of 12 full-time employees receives help from several interns, and people of all ages have expressed an interest in working as an intern for both firms, Mezzapelle said.

"Some people have to sharpen their skills and learn new methods," he said.

Mezzapelle in 1990 hired marketing interns for Goliath Technology, which he sold in 2007.

For any company looking to hire interns, Mezzapelle suggests researching local colleges, having managers draft internship programs and establishing a compensation plan, perhaps in the range of \$200 to \$300 per month.

Sean Liptrot, 27, in mid-October joined Silver Census as an information technology intern after getting laid off in January from his job as a golf course designer.

"I am just glad for the opportunity," said Liptrot, who will become a full-time employee in mid-January. "When I become full-time, I'll be able to hit the ground running."

Offering internships to college graduates is a very effective way for a company to develop its work force, said David Lewis, president and founder of Stamford-based human resources firm OperationsInc. "Every business should seriously consider it because that is your minor league system where you can create the future employees of your organization at a low-cost, low-risk situation," he said. "This the toe-in-the-water approach."

Highly experienced professionals also make for good interns, but companies should tell them upfront what full-time employment would pay if it were offered, Lewis said. "You just have to be honest," he said. "The more you tell them, the better off you are."

GoliathJobs founder finds, promotes job interns.