

# Knoxville NEWS SENTINEL

## WorkWise: “Transparency” Minimizes Recruiting Problems

By Mildred L. Culp  
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Job seekers often don't understand what keeps companies from finding good candidates. When unemployment is down to the five per cent range, like today, companies complain as much as they did when millions were unemployed. Companies, not just job seekers, contribute to the problem through communication lapses, over-reliance on technology and poor follow-through.

### **POOR COMMUNICATION**

Korn Ferry Institute reports from a survey of 250 chief human resource officers and human resources leaders in its client companies that, for 35 per cent, recruitment is a strategic priority, second only to leadership development, for 49 per cent. What are companies doing to sabotage themselves?

One HR manager recently emailed me that answers to her company's questions about race and disability that I'd written were discriminatory weren't used in hiring but instead gathered for federal reporting.

Was that purpose stated on applications? It was not. People applying feared discrimination. I'd questioned other similar practices for them, once on the job. I gently told her that HR can't just BE conscientious. HR has to ACT with conscience, diligence and thoroughness. If companies aren't explaining their policies, it should be no surprise that smart applicants resist recruitment.

Specifying skill sets can be another problem. Shane Bernstein, managing director of Los Angeles' talent firm [Q Connects](#), points out that “when it comes to complex skill sets ... most companies aren't



able to articulate and highlight what they’re looking for. They will typically ask to include everything instead of drilling to specifics.”

One savvy logistics company, [Total Quality Logistics LLC](#), headquartered in Cincinnati, now states very clearly that it wants hard workers. “‘Slackers Need Not Apply’ is what we say right in our job description now,” reports Kristine Glenn, senior communications specialist. Not quite as many people are applying, but TQL is getting better people. Hiring has increased about 40 per cent. That means less work and more results. Glenn observes that “transparency” works.

A personal example comes from Saumya Ganguly, founder of [Obligent Consulting LLC](#), a small-business consulting firm in Woodbridge, N.J. “Having accurate (targeted) job descriptions results in receiving applications from candidates who are more likely to fit requirements. Casting a wide net increases the workload of the HR function and reduces the interest of serious candidates.”

## **LAZINESS**

Technology is the weakness of many companies. David Lewis, president and CEO of the HR outsourcing and consulting firm [Operations Inc.](#), in Norwalk, Connecticut, attributes part of the problem to it. While technology increases efficiency, it also hampers “many companies and their hiring practices. Companies who really don’t need to filter candidates via an Applicant Tracking System are using one .... and as a result are eliminating many applicants.”

One word, consistency, suffices for corporate recruiter Kim Caccamise at Oldcastle Inc., a leading manufacturer and distributor of building materials headquartered in Atlanta. “Many companies ‘post & pray’, excuse themselves from social media because of the time involved; and if they have internal referral programs, they don’t reward employees well and don’t promote.” Others don’t use a mobile-friendly system or maintain regular contact with their talent pools.

Many HR departments need to schedule a review of their hiring practices and streamline them. Although HR’s focus is primarily internal, when they’re recruiting, they need to think about the perspective of the people on either side of the hiring desk.