

Recruiter's News

Recruiting for the ARS Future!

Issue 5, May 2005

The Value of Planning

One of the critical steps in the recruitment process involves the actions you take to market your job opportunities. Simply posting vacancy announcements on USAJOBS and the ARS website will not guarantee that you receive quality applications for your job.

The steps you take to market your job opportunities should help ensure that you receive a certificate of eligibles with quality candidates from which to select.

Before beginning the recruitment process:

- Review the job description to ensure it accurately reflects the duties and responsibilities of the position. This is important if the position description has not been reviewed in a while. Making sure that the job description is accurate will ensure that the vacancy announcement accurately reflects the job and knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required.
 - Identify KSAs the candidate will need to perform the major functions of the job. Do these KSAs relate directly back to duties and responsibilities in the job description?
 - Identify any special skills needed by the candidate (for example, specialized scientific equipment).
 - Determine who the applicants are you are trying to reach. Will you have to search nationwide or are there a sufficient number of candidates in the local commuting area to give you a diverse applicant pool from which to select?
 - Determine if offering a recruitment incentive will increase the chances of reaching the applicant pool.
 - Consider alternative hiring methods that could be used to fill the position (for example, Student Career Experience Program (SCEP), Federal Career Intern Program, Career Enhancement, USDA Direct Hire Authority, special hiring authorities for individuals with disabilities or veterans, or other special hiring authorities).
 - Contact your servicing Human Resources (HR) Specialist to discuss recruitment strategies and alternatives.
 - Submit all required paperwork.
- Identify ways to market the job announcement to reach potential applicants.
 - Visit the Career Center, Deans, and Professors on the college campus where you are situated to promote ARS and the many career opportunities available.
 - Identify colleagues (both within and outside the agency) who can help in marketing the job.
 - Identify colleges and universities or professional societies and organizations where the announcement should be sent. Develop a list and gather mailing information.
 - Identify newspapers, journals, or online advertising sites that might be useful in marketing the job.
 - Enlist the support of your employees or those at your location to help further market the job opportunity.
 - Contact the Recruitment Office and your Area Civil Rights Manager for other ideas on how to reach a diverse candidate pool.
 - Document your efforts.

Be prepared – when the job announcement is posted, conduct your marketing:

- Be PROACTIVE!
- Place ads in journals and online.
- Send the announcement to individuals and organizations you have identified.
- E-mail the announcement to co-workers, colleagues, stakeholders, and peers with a brief note asking for their assistance in publicizing the job opportunity.
- Send the announcement to potential candidates you know encouraging them to apply – **be cautious, however, and don't give the impression they will get the job.**

After completing the marketing, identify selection panel members and block out dates to conduct the panel and interviews. As soon as you receive your certificate of eligibles, begin scheduling and conducting the interviews. **Act quickly so the best candidates don't get away!**

And, most importantly, before making that tentative selection offer, **conduct reference checks on your tentative selectee.**

REMEMBER, THE SERVICING HR SPECIALIST MUST MAKE THE OFFICIAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT.

Next, begin developing a recruitment marketing strategy for your job:

Throughout the entire process, communicate with your servicing HR Specialist. You can send e-mails or make phone calls to keep on top of the activity your job announcement is generating.

Tidbits of Information

Did you know –

- You can advertise a job once an employee tells you they intend to resign or retire? You can post a job announcement and complete all the steps except making the job offer. If the employee later decides to change his/her mind about leaving, you can cancel the recruitment action and notify the candidates that the job announcement has been cancelled.
- The Recruitment Office staff can help you identify ways to market your job opportunity? While we can't do the marketing for you, we may be able to help you find some additional sources to use in your marketing efforts.

Upcoming Events

The Recruitment Office will host exhibit booths at the following events. Information on careers with ARS will be available at all exhibits. Consider keeping vacancy announcements open to allow time for potential candidates attending these events to apply.

June 5-9, 2005

105th General Meeting - American Society for Microbiology, Atlanta, GA
<http://www.asm.org/Meetings/index.asp?bid=697>

July 16-19, 2005

142nd AVMA Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN
<http://www.avmaconvention.org/>

July 17-19, 2005

Institute of Food Technologists Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA
<http://www.ift.org/cms/?pid=1000501>

July 17-20, 2005

ASAE Annual International Meeting, Tampa, FL
<http://www.asae.org/>

August 29-31, 2005

American Chemical Society National Meeting, Washington, DC
<http://www.acs.org/>

September 29 - October 1, 2005

Society for the Advancement of Chicanos & Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Conference, Denver, CO
<http://www.sacnas.org/>

Useful Web Sites

ARS Careers

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers>

Recruiters Resources

<http://arsnet.usda.gov/HR/recruiters/index.html>

Interviewing: A Practical Guide for Selecting Officials
<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/hrd/hrdhomepage/webforms/INTERV.PDF>

Understanding Merit System Principles and Prohibited Personnel Practices

<http://arsnet.usda.gov/HR/recruiters/principles.html>

National Center for Education Statistics, Search for Schools, Colleges, and Libraries

<http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/>

Contact Information

Cecelia Stortzum

Director, ARS Recruitment Office

Phone: 301-504-3271

E-mail: cstortzum@ars.usda.gov

Contact for: Headquarters Offices, NAL, MSA, and SAA

Jennifer Woodward-Greene

Program Analyst

Phone: 301-504-1174

E-mail: jwoodward@ars.usda.gov

Contact for: BA, MWA, and SPA

Amy Hegarty

Program Analyst

Phone: 301-504-1480

E-mail: ahegarty@ars.usda.gov

Contact for: NAA, NPA, and PWA

Cassie Youhouse

Office Automation Assistant

Phone: 301-504-1709

E-mail: cyouhouse@ars.usda.gov