



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Double-Edged Sword

Recruiting through the Internet is a double-edged sword. If it makes it much easier for HR to hire experienced employees, it also enables competitors to poach the very same employees. Employees in the Internet era can forget the advice that they need to market themselves in order to advance their careers. If they are good at what they do, recruiters will find them.

Many employers are ready to snap up others' employees, especially since everything moves quickly in the online world.

The proliferation of online information about pay and benefits is making retention even more difficult since compensation is a key reason for employees leaving their jobs. Using resources like salary surveys, employees can quickly compare their salaries to those offered elsewhere. Online job services give employees unprecedented access to free information, and this has shifted some of the power to employees in the employee-employer relationship.

Loyalty towards the organization can also suffer because of the sheer number of choices available through the Internet. With so many organizations recruiting on-line, employees can receive numerous job offers.

However, organizations can reverse the destabilizing effects of online recruitment.

First, managers must be careful to avoid situations that might make employees consider leaving. With the Internet only a click away, there's no time for an irate employee to cool off. An employee can post a résumé on a job board in minutes and be contacted by potential employers within the day. Once an employee starts looking, it's often too late to patch things up.

At the same time, companies should help employees make sense of online salary information, especially its limitations. Such data typically ignores stock options, for instance, and can't help an employee measure which jobs have the best advancement prospects. Sometimes employees are wooed away to new jobs because they don't see how good their present situations are. A strong employee communications program that emphasizes the economic and social advantages of working in the company is essential.

Should HR prevent employees from being contacted by online recruiters? Though some organizations prevent such contacts, a more promising approach, especially for large organizations with many openings, is to pre-empt online hiring by building an internal online job network. An internal online hiring system may be the best way to satisfy employees' desires for new challenges.