

Marketing Your Company on Campus

"How can I improve the number of quality candidates that I see on campus?" "I want to improve the image of my company, what can I do?" These questions and variations thereof, are asked daily by company recruiting representatives from the largest to the smallest organizations. Interpreted, these questions usually mean "how can I attract and hire the best quality candidates?" There are no simple answers, or the questions would not be so frequently asked. The following ideas and thoughts, while not necessarily unique, may provide some insight and assistance in marketing your company. Many of the suggestions are interrelated. These are in no particular order or priority.

Successful recruiting is a 12-month process. You cannot show up on the day of your schedule and expect to attract the highest quality candidates. This is true whether you are an IBM, a GE, or a small, entrepreneurial organization.

Name recognition is important. This does not infer that your company name be a household word. What it means is that you need visibility, presence, and image with students.

The recruiting team members should have continuity on the team and consistently represent the company. While this is not easy to do, it should be done to the extent possible. It is particularly true for the "team leader" or the coordinator for the campus/company. Experience, interest, and enthusiasm in recruiting and interviewing are mandatory.

Have top-down commitment for the importance and role of recruiting and university relations.

Support a proactive co-op, summer hire, and/or internship program. These are among the best recruitment tools available, and can be relatively inexpensive. These must be good, quality assignments.

Follow up and follow through on all campus contacts. "If you see somebody special, do something special." Give the recruiting team a proxy to enable quick action.

Plan your visit thoroughly. Make certain each team member is aware of scheduling and arrangements. Be professional, and be on time.

Consider the use of a single main point of contact for the campus. This should be a well-positioned individual in the company who can get to people to make things happen internally. He/she must have a frequent, strong, continuing presence on campus and be known/recognized by faculty/staff/students.

Sell your company! Be enthusiastic and positive about it. Your company should be represented by the best people, not the best available.

Provide specific, well thought-out information for the positions you are seeking to fill. Interviewers must be knowledgeable about these positions as well as the company, training programs, products, location, etc.

Identify a key executive in the company to be a liaison representative for the school. He or she need not be an alumnus, but that is helpful. The key attribute is interest and enthusiasm in doing jobs with the assigned school. Their principal interaction would be with the university executives (president, deans, and directors) and with your recruiting team.

Be present and well represented at the campus career fair/career day. This is an excellent opportunity to use "recent hires" to represent the company.

Maintain current, relevant recruiting literature on the campus.

Information sessions on the company can be useful if these are done the evening prior to interviewing and can save valuable time during the interview.

Participate actively in membership on key advisory committees.

There should be strong, positive interaction between the company representatives and faculty/staff members. University personnel need to know your company, your programs, and your people. Students do seek advice and counsel from both faculty and staff.

It is very profitable if members of your company make themselves available for presentations, speeches, and meetings with student professional societies. These should not be direct recruiting pushes, but should have "technical" bent.

Sponsor and host trips for students and faculty to your facilities.

Be ethical, moral and honest at all times with students, faculty, and staff.

Know and honor the rules and procedures of the placement office. Policies vary from school to school.

Promote successful alumni in your company on their campuses, e.g., special days.

Invest in the colleges that are training and educating you future corporate leaders and employees. This implies an investment of both human as well as financial resources.

Provide support and assistance to student groups in other ways. There is always a need for financial assistance to attend society meetings and seminars, supply furnishings to outfit a lounge, etc.

Scholarships and equipment gifts enhance corporate visibility if properly leveraged.

Consider hiring a key student to represent your company on campus, e.g., assigned to assist in the placement office.

Plant trips are extremely important in recruiting and hiring. Plan them thoroughly and well. Reimburse students promptly. Follow through. Interviewing managers need training as well as do recruiters.

Provide an award in your company's name to be given to a special student or faculty member at an annual awards ceremony.

This listing is not comprehensive or complete. Many of the items are strongly interrelated and connected. Successful marketing of your company takes planning, time, commitment, interest, enthusiasm, and resources. It should be a nearly year round activity.

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