

Job Recruitment

Finding a job in today's contracting job market can be both a challenging and frustrating experience. The average job seeker is forced to face fierce competition from those who have the required job qualifications and skills; and in some cases, the work experience.

Both qualifications and work experience are important, but it is not always the case that one overrides the other. The decision as to which of the two is given priority in the recruitment process, rests entirely with the employer. It may be argued by some employers that work experience matters most. While there is merit in this, it does not necessarily follow that this will automatically make a difference in the level of the employee's performance. Additionally, it does not provide a measure of comfort for the employer that the employee has the requisite knowledge. It has long been accepted that the individual who holds certification from a reputable education or training institution, is in a better position to satisfy a prospective employer of his /her knowledge base, competence and skill level.

It is known that some individuals hold the requisite qualification for the job, but fall woefully short of the skills necessary to effectively play the role that is required. This is one of the shortcomings that the job interview process throws up. It is those individuals who have the ability to handle the interview process better than most that get the nod over their competitors. They simply have the ability to be articulate and convincing. The argument has been made that placing the primary emphasis on the interview process is flawed and needs to be re-examined. While the interviewing process used for the recruitment of employees might be called into question, arguments posed against it may be countered by the view that it is the fairest system of all.

The question is what are the solutions if any? If the playing field is to be level, then it should demand that persons who are applying for a job vacancy or even a promotional opportunity, should ensure that at least, they have the minimum requirements for the job. There is no basis on which the applicant can cry foul if the individual fails to meet the basic requirements or expectations.

To get around this, it is best that individuals make an early decision of their career path, and pursue both education and training programmes that equip them for the vocation of choice. It is not always possible that an individual may find a suitable job in the specific area of training, and for which they were educated. This is where the benefit of cross training or being multi skilled has its place. Today's job market demands

that employees are multi skilled. This is certainly one way for individuals to ensure that they stay ahead of the competition.

Employers are more likely to employ an individual who brings a sound knowledge base and a variety of skills and talents to the table. This is where the argument of experience becomes a talking point. Nothing can and will ever beat experience. However, if experience is all that counts, it certainly reduces the importance that is to be attached to the knowledge factor.

The contention can be made that most employers who are concerned with developing and enhancing their business, are most likely to search for prospective employees who have the knowledge and skills, and are trainable to do the job. Using on the job training as a means to an end, today's employers are expected to be more supportive of apprenticeship or job attachment programmes. The support for these schemes, rest with the understanding that such engagement allows them the opportunity to assess the individual. Based on a good performance report, the employer can exercise the option of offering full time employment, or engagement on a contract basis. This approach may also be seen as a cost effective measure to the employer, as it can lead in the short and medium term, to the reduction of expenditure on the training and retraining of staff.