



**“We find the BEST and SCREEN out the rest!”**

April—June 2008



**Attraction Factor:**

**Are we as well matched with our jobs as we are with our mates?**

On Valentine’s Day, many of us turn our attention to our significant others --But what about our jobs? Truthfully, we spend more time at work than with the person Cupid paired us. Are we as well matched with our jobs as we are with our mates? And does it matter?

Susan Head, PhD, a clinical psychologist in private practice in Durham, says many employees don’t realize how important the attraction connection really is, thinking instead along the lines of “I just work for the money.”

“Some people aren’t aware that they need a match between their values and their job,” says Head. “They’ll experience it as job dissatisfaction, but not know that’s why.”

And sustained job dissatisfaction can only lead to one thing: turnover.

Turnover is not good. Not only does a business lose an employee, but it’s out a substantial amount of money too. The employee who quits takes with him all the company knowledge and time invested, leaving the company to start from scratch with a new hire.

Beth Ritter, senior vice president of human resources at Burt’s Bees, says the company’s recruiting efforts often focus on its brand in an effort to appeal to candidates who might find fulfillment in the culture.

“The brand is known for our business model or what we call the *Greater Good*,” says Ritter. “It means that we operate with the highest level of social responsibility. With this business model, we have high standards specifically for the products we make, our environment, how we run our business, and the way we treat our employees as well as our local and global communities. Sharing this business model with candidates is a powerful way to showcase the strength of our company.”

At Burt’s Bees, candidates are often attracted by the company’s social responsibility, but also the perks such as on-site yoga and incentives for hybrid car purchases and those who bike to work. Other people, however, may value more the flexibility of working from home or in a work environment with casual dress. Still others may love a job with travel or a lot of autonomy.

As a result, it’s impossible to predict what qualities the ideal candidate will value. The best bet is to be truthful in job announcements to attract the best pool of candidates.

“You can highlight the fun parts that people would be drawn to, but you also need to be honest about the parts that maybe aren’t so much fun,” says Head, noting excessive paperwork, travel or long hours should be revealed early. “I would encourage employers to be really honest. The job will reveal itself and then you’re going to have a disgruntled employee.”

Ritter says her department’s job announcements often yield hundreds, even thousands, of job applications and she doesn’t try to get too fancy with luring folks in. The brand speaks for itself.

“We try to have accurate job descriptions so candidates can make a selection on the realistic duties and not be lured for only the strategic activities,” Ritter says. “This demonstrates one of our core company beliefs of transparency.”

It should go without saying that in a perfect world, the applicant should be honest about what he or she needs for the best results. In the employer-employee love match, it seems honesty is the best policy.

**Just For Laughs**



**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**April**

- 1—April Fool’s Day
- 19—Passover Begins

**May**

- 11—Mother’s Day
- 26—Memorial Day



**June**

- 14—Flag Day
- 15—Father’s Day



# Eight Major Job Trends for 2008

You've made up your mind. You're going to stop procrastinating, update that résumé and (finally) look for a new job. So what should you expect? Smooth sailing and a fast and easy job search or long months of applying to countless jobs and waiting for just an interview?

That depends on a number of things:

- ◆ Are you applying to jobs that suit your skill set?
- ◆ Is your résumé showing quantifiable results?
- ◆ Does your cover letter tell the employer why you're the best fit for the job?
- ◆ Is it a job seeker's or an employer's market?

In 2007, the job market showed resilience amid economic uncertainties and produced more than 1.3 million new jobs, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 2008, plans for hiring are tracking below last year's projections, but the economy still points to continued job creation.

Employers are taking caution, anticipating the advent of a slower, but still steady hiring environment. The "2008 Job Forecast" survey conducted by Harris Interactive®, tracked projected hiring trends for 2008 surveying 3,016 hiring managers and human resource professionals in private sector companies. Here's what they found:

- ◆ 32 percent of employers plan to add full-time, permanent employees in 2008, down from 40 percent who planned to do so in 2007.
- ◆ Just 8 percent plan to decrease full-time staff levels in 2008, while 47 percent expect no change.
- ◆ 21 percent of employers plan to increase their number of part-time employees in 2008, down from 23 percent who expected to do so in 2007.
- ◆ 6 percent plan to decrease part-time headcount in 2008, while 58 percent expect no change.
- ◆ In addition, nearly one-in-five employers report it typically takes them two months or longer to fill their open positions and 40 percent say they currently have open positions for which they can not find qualified candidates.

What does this mean for you, the job seeker?

We've analyzed the data to give you eight ways employers are trying to make sure they attract and retain qualified employees - that is, ways they can find you (the qualified candidate), get you to accept a job offer, and grow you into a dedicated, hard-working employee who will be an asset for the long-term.

## No. 1: Bigger Paychecks

Continuing an existing trend designed to attract and keep top talent, employers plan to offer more lucrative compensation packages in the coming year. Eighty percent of employers report their companies will increase salaries for existing employees in 2008, similar to last year; and 56 percent of employers expect to increase salaries on initial offers to new employees, up from 49 percent in 2007.

**What you can do:** Do your homework and brush up your negotiation skills when you are ready to talk salary.

## No. 2: More Flexible Work Arrangements

Sixty percent of employers report they currently offer flexible schedules to employees and 39 percent plan to provide more flexible work arrangements in 2008 such as: alternate schedules (come in early and leave early or come in later and leave later); compressed workweeks (work the same hours, but in fewer days); telecommuting options; summer hours; job sharing; and sabbaticals.

**What you can do:** If your salary offer isn't as high as you hoped or your employer can't give you a raise, perhaps you can negotiate a flexible schedule, saving you commuting time and transportation costs.

## No. 3: Screening Candidates via the Internet

To ensure they are recruiting the right talent, more employers are leveraging the Internet as a vehicle for screening potential employees. Forty-five percent of employers report they use online search engines and social networking sites to research job candidates and 19 percent say they are likely to start using or increase their use of these resources to research job candidates in 2008.

**What you can do:** Make sure there's nothing in cyberspace you wouldn't want a potential employer to see. Do an online search of your name. Check your pictures on Facebook and MySpace.

## No. 4: Rehiring Retirees

Nearly 30 percent of employers say they are concerned over the loss of intellectual capital at their organizations as a large number of Baby Boomers approach retirement age. Twenty-one percent say they are likely to rehire retirees from other companies in 2008. Another 14 percent plan to provide incentives for workers at or approaching retirement age to stay on with the company longer.

**What you can do:** If you are nearing or at retirement age but want to keep working, make sure your skills are up-to-date and learn which skills are easily transferred to different roles.

## No. 5: Diversity Recruitment

When asked if there is a particular segment of diverse workers they plan to target more aggressively in 2008, employers pointed to Hispanic workers, women, African American workers and mature workers. Almost half of employers said, in addition to English, Spanish is the most important language for bilingual hiring.

**What you can do:** Make sure to highlight your diversity or language fluency.

## No. 6: Freelance or Contract Hiring

Employers are turning to freelance or contract workers to help support business initiatives as they monitor their pace in recruiting permanent employees. Thirty-one percent of employers anticipate working with freelancers or contractors in 2008.

**What you can do:** Search job boards using keywords like "freelance" and "contract." Put your résumé on freelance-specific sites.

## No. 7: More Comprehensive Healthcare Benefits and Special Perks

In light of rising healthcare costs, 19 percent of employers report their companies plan to offer more comprehensive or better health benefits to employees in 2008. One-in-ten employers plan to offer more perks such as bonuses, discounts, company cars, stock options, free childcare, educational reimbursement, transit passes and wellness programs.

**What you can do:** Keep your benefits package in mind when you are weighing a job offer. Calculate the worth of the benefits available to you and take

## Eight Major Job Trends for 2008 (Continued)

advantage of as much as you can so you don't leave any money on the table.

### No. 8: Career Advancement

Employers are taking action to carve out career paths for employees. One-in-four employers (26 percent) plan to provide more promotions and career advancement opportunities in 2008.

**What you can do:** Ask about tuition reimbursement and training opportunities. Ask the hiring manager how he or she sees where role will lead in 5, 10 and 20 years.

Contents courtesy of Matt Ferguson, CEO CareerBuilder.com

## Confessions of Hiring Experts

If you worry about every possible way you can blow a job interview -- from mispronouncing the boss's name to babbling incessantly when you don't know what else to say -- you're going to walk in there feeling like you're destined to fail. True, job interviews are rife with opportunities for you to embarrass yourself, but hiring managers are more forgiving than you might think.

We consulted some hiring experts about what is really going on inside their heads when interviewing job applicants. They offered the following insights:

### They like you. They really like you.

"I tend to walk into every interview wanting to hire that person," says Christine Peterson, Senior Vice President of Marketing for TripAdvisor. In addition to having the right skills and experience, she says, candidates who come across as "nice, smart and fun...are going to have to work pretty hard to convince me NOT to hire them," Peterson says. She's seen her fair share of applicants who didn't meet these standards, including one otherwise-qualified candidate who was cut from consideration after she insisted that the receptionist who greeted her for her interview throw out a perfectly good pot of coffee and make her a fresh pot. While Peterson is willing to give most applicants the benefit of the doubt -- after all, they put in the time and effort to submit an application and come in for an interview -- she believes no amount of qualifications will make up for "jerkness."

### They don't want to hear what you think they want to hear.

"Interviewers have gotten very smart to pick up if someone's saying just what a book is telling them to say," says Mary Gormandy White, a professional consultant in Mobile Ala.. By only saying what they think the employer wants to hear, job candidates are simply putting on an act, and employers can see right through that. "You have to be yourself in an interview and you have to be sincere," she says.

### They don't expect you to have all the answers.

"Employers are more interested in how you find answers to things you don't know than in having you pretend to know something you don't," says Linda Finkle, executive coach at a management consulting firm. In some cases, she says, the interviewer may ask a question that he or she doesn't expect you to be able to answer simply to see how you handle it. If you ever find that you don't know the answer to an interviewer's question, the best thing to do is to admit that you don't know, but either add that you could give an educated guess or provide a way you might go about finding the answer. Most importantly, if you don't know, don't try to fake it. "Not knowing is OK. Making something up or pretending to know is not," Finkle says.

### They want you to want them.

According to Michele Minten, director of Centralized Recruiting for a Chicago-based recruiting company, one of the worst things a job candidate can do is not express genuine interest in the job or the company. As much as the recruiter wants to sell the candidate on the position and company, he or she also wants to know that the candidate actually wants to work in that position or for that company. Peterson agrees. "When I hear applicants expressing energy and enthusiasm for our company and our product, I want to hire them," she says.

Contents courtesy of Mary Lorenz, CareerBuilder.com



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