

Client: Talentpath
Publication: Wealth Creator Newsletter
Page: N/A
Date: 05/12/07
PR Value: \$1000
Circulation: 25,000+

Time To Hire



News: 5 December 2007

Employers are being urged to begin recruiting staff for the new year, as unemployment levels and the skills shortage continues to intensify. Brisbane recruitment agency Talentpath said firms that did not start planning now for their new year staff requirements would be caught short.

The warning comes as Australia's unemployment rate has dropped to a record low of 4.5 per cent - the lowest level in 31 years.

Talentpath spokeswoman Jody Fazldeen said: "Christmas is a busy enough time as it is without having to worry about finding new staff with employers sometimes spending about a third of their time on recruitment procedures for Christmas staff."

She added: "Employers wanting to get a head start and recruit their Christmas temps for general jobs early should brief their agencies as soon as possible."

The company said some employers were going to new lengths to secure the best staff, including guaranteeing each job applicant an interview, offering jobs quickly and secure new staff before the holiday season.

The variety of work available presents invaluable opportunities for inexperienced workers as well as the chance to kick start a new career. "Experienced candidates who have decided to make a fresh career start in the New Year are happy to fill temporary vacancies in the lead up to the holiday break before they begin a more strategic job search in the New Year," Fazldeen said.

She added that creativity was the key when hiring at Christmas: "If you can be flexible about general hours and extended starting dates to allow people the option of taking a holiday during the Christmas period before starting permanent employment you may be able to expand your search for the quality people you need."

"Experienced candidates who have decided to make a fresh career start in the New Year are happy to fill temporary vacancies in the lead up to the holiday break before they begin a more strategic job search in the New Year," Jody Fazldeen

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