

## Green Recruiting

Gitika Gupta<sup>1</sup> & Ashutosh Gupta<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Rayat-Bahra Institute of Management, Hsp.  
gitika.nagrath@yahoo.co.in

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Khalsa College Layallpur-Institute of Management & Technology, Jalandhar  
gupta.ashutosh@yahoo.co.in

**Abstract:** Recruiting, the most important function of HR is changing its colour. Environmental sustainability & social responsibility has undoubtedly risen to the forefront of discussion. An emerging trend in recruitment is that organizations are looking for candidates with the environment-friendly bent of mind. Also, the younger generation is becoming more and more concerned about the environment and its protection. Young job seekers are savvy, smart, energy driven and wear social & environmental issues up their sleeves. The concept is not very popular; it is slowly catching up with organizations i.e. "Green Recruiting". It is an innovative idea through which companies emphasize environmental protection and concern as an important strategy for recruitment. Green Recruitment means a paper-free recruitment process with a minimal environmental impact. It is sharing of the company's unswerving commitment towards the cause of environment with the candidates whom they are trying to hire. In this paper concept, importance, steps, and other areas related to green recruiting have been discussed.

**Key words:** Environmental; Green Recruiting; Pollution Prevention; Agriculture; Natural Resource Conservation

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Recruitment is the most important function of HR is changing its colour. Environmental sustainability and social responsibility have undoubtedly risen to the forefront of discussion. The environmental issues have gained lot of importance in the wake of raging debates on global warming, recycling, energy conservation initiatives and natural calamities. Young people are seized with environmental issues that are dominating the political discourses across the world. It is not a matter of surprise to see young people look in the eye of employer and question "where did you get that exquisitely carved wooden door installed in the entrance?" Today's young job seekers are savvy, smart, confident, energy driven and wear the social, environmental and political issues up their sleeves. Employers too, are thinking about green big time. Organisations are trying to tap every bit of opportunity, wanting to look different and make a good impression, so that the right candidates with the environment-friendly bent of mind apply for the jobs. In recent times a growing number of big companies are brandishing their environmental record to, not only having decisive edge over other companies but also to the potential hires. Welcome to the world of green recruiting. Going green is not just a trend; it is simply the way the world is changing in order to be efficient. Companies all over the world are catching on it, but it is still in its infancy.

### 2. CONCEPT OF GREEN RECRUITING

The word "Green Recruiting" is coined by John Sullivan, HR Consultant and Professor of Management at the San Francisco State University's College of Business in June 2007. He quoted "If you want an edge in recruiting, green recruiting is the way forward. Time is ripe for the companies to go in for a skill as many organisations have not taken to it currently". Green recruiting refers to sharing of company's unswerving commitment towards the cause of environment with the candidates whom they are trying to hire. It is not a passing fad. World over, companies are joining the green recruiting bandwagon. It can be termed as a paper-free recruitment process with a minimal environmental impact. Applications are invited through online mediums like e-mail, online application forms or the Global Talent Pool. If possible, telephone or video-based interviews are conducted to minimize any travel-related environmental impact. Encouraging small practices at work, like turning off lights and equipments when not in use, shutting down desktops, conducting teleconferences instead of trips, striving to use paperless office etc. can make a whole world of difference and an exciting place to work in. Green recruiting is a chance to differentiate yourself in a recruiting marketplace where standing out from the crowd is already very difficult.

### 3. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The present study has the following three main objectives:-

- a) To understand the steps involved in green recruiting
- b) To study the companies following green recruiting practise
- c) To study the Green jobs trend in Michigan State according to Michigan's Green Jobs Report 2009

### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Present paper is based on the data collected from secondary sources and it helps to clarify the meaning and concept of green recruiting, present trends towards green recruiting in Michigan State and pinpoint the companies adopting green recruiting practices. The secondary data tapped mainly from textbooks, magazines, journals, internet and Michigan's Green Jobs Report 2009 issued by Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth (prepared by Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives).

#### 4.1 Steps to Implement Green Recruiting

John Sullivan suggests these steps for companies interested in green recruiting.

- a) **Ascertain the decision barometer for selecting the candidate:** HR manager must ensure that a large number of quality applicants consider a firm's environmental credentials as one of their primary criteria for selecting a job otherwise it will be highly impossible to get the senior management to support green recruitment initiatives. For this purpose HR people can initiate focus group discussions at industry forums to identify what "green" factors would be important to individuals seeking new jobs. Other option is to ask the candidates during interviews their decision criteria for selecting a job or on the Web site to list their decision criteria. During orientation, ask those who accepted jobs what criteria they used to make the decision. Finally, contact those who rejected your offers three to six months down the line to identify positives and negatives. Use this information to modify your recruiting processes and focus.
- b) **Benchmark:** With the help of different sources like surfing the Web, contacting recruiting consultants HR manager must identify the best environmental practices of other firms. Use this competitive analysis to figure out the extent of success and progress the company has made and to chalk out the future course of action.
- c) **Your Web site.** Companies should make it visible their green efforts and the results of those efforts on your corporate careers Web site. Companies should reveal the recycling statistics, as well as whether they are carbon neutral, efforts limiting greenhouse gases or win environmental awards. The website should also include narrative or video profiles of company's environmentally conscious employees.
- d) **Becoming a talking point:** If the company has strong environmental record, it is important to publicise it. The company's impressive environmental credentials featured in business journals, professional and industry publications as well as in newspapers and on TV. Company should focus on short environment oriented initiative press releases from time to time in order to create its presence towards social responsiveness. Work with the PR department in order to identify which of the company's practices are most likely to be appealing to the media. It is important to identify and designate an individual to be available for interviews to media. It's also critical to constantly scan the Web to identify and quickly locate any negative comments on company's environmental record.
- e) **Recruitment advertising.** Companies would advertise in magazines and newspapers that candidates who are sensitive to the environment are likely to read. Highlight in the recruitment ads a few eye-catching and facts and prestigious environmental awards that company might have won. If the company use brochures or paper recruiting materials make sure they're from recyclable stock and the same should be mentioned on the document.
- f) **Job descriptions:** It is a matter of utmost importance that HR manager will have to ensure that due allowances are made for including responsibilities for combating negative environmental fallout in the job description. This is critical because if job seekers don't see being environmentally friendly integrated into "every job" at the company, they might see your "green recruiting" as merely PR effort. If the company is really serious about green recruiting, it should ensure that the knowledge of environmental effects are brought within the ambit of skills required section of a typical job description.
- g) **Interviews:** During the interview managers should be provided with extensive green fact sheets outlining the company's environment-friendly credentials. If the company is really aggressive and competitive, it should provide candidates with a side-by-side comparison showing how company's environmental record is superior to other competitive firms they might be considering. It will help the candidate to understand the edge of the company in comparison to competitors.
- h) **Sourcing:** One of the best ways to enhance the company's environmental image is to hire lots of environmentally friendly employees who can spread company's green in initiatives through word of mouth. It becomes the responsibility of company's recruiting team identify the sources from where the highest-quality environmentally friendly candidates can be approached.
- i) **Referrals:** Employees are the ultimate ambassadors of the company and whatever they say has a far reaching impact. It is true for the recruitment process too. Let the existing employees of the company spread the word which will help both recruiting and product sales. Employer can take the support of current employees to intentionally talk about the company's "greenness" to the right people in environment circles and seek out prospective candidates to provide you with names.
- j) **Winning Awards:** Winning awards for excellence is always a major element of building an employment brand. Winning high coveted, high profile environmental awards should be a major element of company's strategy.
- k) **Advisory group:** HR manager should ask the advice of six to eight environmentally activist employees about measuring the quality of the message company is sending on green issues. These employees need to reflect on how to ascertain the quality of message and influence more applicants on the basis of "green" record of the company.
- l) **Product Image:** In case the applicants are environment conscious they want to know that the products they will be helping to produce and roll out in the market are environmentally friendly and do not upset the fragile eco-balance. This means putting pressure on product advertising and marketing to highlight the fact that the product is eco-friendly. The packaging will have to highlight the greenness that the company claims to follow.
- m) **Value statements:** Company should ensure that corporate vision, mission, goals, values includes environmental elements.
- n) **Annual report:** it is not a matter of surprise that many applicants take enough time to read company's annual report. Company should ensure that annual report must include sections that highlight environmental record and the fact that you recruit environmentally friendly employees.

- o) **Employee benefits:** HR manager can consider the employees for benefits who do any effort for environmental cause. For instance company can donate liberally for supporting environmental causes, paid time to volunteer for environmental causes, matching donations to green causes, and support for alternative transportation options.
- p) **Reward criteria:** HR manager can add one more dimension in the formal performance-appraisal system for all employees. Use it as a critical element in promotions, bonuses and pay increases.
- q) **Develop metrics and rewards.** Green recruiting can be successful if the candidates know that the environment based recruiting metrics match with the rewards in terms of hiring decision. The metrics should include the extent to which candidates are aware of company's strong environmental record, the number of candidates who reject offers because of a poor record and the extent to which the potential hires cite the company's strong environmental record as one of the main reasons for accepting the offer. Finally HR manager can organise exit interviews with your top performers to identify whether environmental factors contributed to their exit.

## 5. COMPANY EXAMPLES

### Mc Donald

Mc Donald's adopts green recruiting in many ways. The company gives extends environmental commitment to head-hunters, recruiting agencies and prospective candidates. Job candidates are provided with a pre hand information in the form of pamphlets and brochures through mail highlighting the McDonald's environmental friendly initiatives before conducting the interviews. Candidates are encouraged to read and download the information available on the company website that highlights the company's commitment to green issues. One such footage throws light on coming together of McDonald's and activist group, Greenpeace, to fight the issue of deforestation Amazon forests by soy farmers. McDonald's supply chain and environmental sustainability is being studied and discussed in prime institutions like Harvard Business School and Berkeley Hass School of Business.

### General Electric

General electric has adopted green initiative in a unique way. In the year 2006, GE conducted a contest for college students. College goers were required to design an environment project within the budget of \$25,000 and the same was supposed to be implemented in the college campus. The contest was named as "Ecoimagination Challenge". Many of the students came up with exceptionally great ideas. Some of the members of the winning team were hired by the company subsequently. On the bottom left-hand corner the website carried a link that gleamed in green colour stating "Jobs@ GE". The idea behind it is very simple the play the environment-friendly card and attract the talent.

### Google

Google has successful used their environmental policies. Company has hired a director who coordinates corporate environmental efforts in an attempt to match their corporate business strategy with their environmental efforts. Some initiatives that support environmental issues at Google include are providing subsidies for employees buying hybrid cars, company dining facilities that serves organic sustainability food, charitable contributions to organisations that fight global warming, use of green fuel and solar power etc.

## 6. GREEN RECRUITING IN IT COMPANIES

IT companies in India are going big on the green concept.

**Wipro** encourages its employees to circulate used paper to cut down on paper consumption.

**Microsoft** by tying up with Nityata, an NGO working with school children in the tribal areas of Nagarhole distribute notebooks made by binding together used office sheets. In one of the building in Bangalore company have sensor based lightning in order to save energy.

**Unisys** use campaigns like "Vanishing Tree" to spread awareness on reducing paper waste among employees. Moreover during winter & monsoons company drew fresh air in order to minimise the load of chillers and subsequently conserve energy. The company has tie up with Saahas, an NGO for e-waste disposal. The volunteers clear the drop boxes once in a month and send it to E-Parisara an authorised e-waste recycling agency. This way the used dry cells and CD's get disposed in the right way.

In **Satyam** only vehicles with pollution check labels get parking space. Employees are encouraged to use company's transport to cut down on carbon footprint.

Many small and big IT companies are taking small initiatives but marking a large difference like saying goodbye to paper cups at water stations, using both sides of A4 sheets, sipping water from transparent eco friendly sippers made of bio-degradable plastic, avoiding face-to-face meetings, encouraging car pools etc.

### Michigan Green Jobs Report 2009

The idea of green jobs is not a popular phenomenon in developing countries. A Green jobs study was conducted in Michigan State in order to know number of jobs presently exist in the state and what are the prospects for growth.

**Exhibit 1. Michigan's Direct Green Jobs by Core Areas**

Core Area	Total Direct Green Jobs	%age share of Total Direct Green Jobs
<b>TOTAL DIRECT GREEN JOBS</b>	<b>96,767</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Clean Transportation and Fuels	39,317	40.6%
Increasing Energy Efficiency	22,236	23.0%
Pollution Prevention and Environmental Cleanup	12,345	12.8%

Agriculture and Natural Resource Conservation	11,986	12.4%
Renewable Energy Production	8,843	9.1%
Green Jobs Not Assigned to a Core Area	2,040	2.1%

**Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth**

According to the report Green jobs means primary occupations engaged in generating a firm's green-related products or services, and the other support jobs created by the firm's green related revenue. Specifically direct green jobs means the employees whose primary function is the production of green related products or services for a particular firm. As exhibit 1 indicates, an estimated 96,800 direct green jobs currently exist among Michigan private employers. Further Figure 1 also displays how those jobs are distributed among the five core green areas. The Clean Transportation and Fuels core area accounts for the largest number of the state's green jobs, roughly 39,300 or 41 percent. Nearly one-quarter of green Jobs in the state were attributable to the Energy Efficiency core area. The remaining third of green jobs was distributed among the other three core areas. Pollution Prevention & Environmental Cleanup and Agriculture and Natural Resource Conservation supplied about 12,000 green jobs each, while Renewable Energy chipped in nearly 9,000 green jobs.

**Exhibit 2: Top Michigan Industries Generating the Largest Number of Direct Green Jobs**

Industry	Total Direct Green Jobs	Total Industry Employment	Green Jobs As % Of Industry Employment
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	25,780	176,254	14.6%
Professional, Scientific, And Technical Services	22,178	241,786	9.2%
Specialty Trade Contractors	9,825	102,467	9.6%
Construction Of Buildings	3,571	34,423	10.4%
Crop Production	3,503	15,942	22.0%
Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	2,793	94,879	2.9%
Administrative Services	2,698	258,314	1.0%
Utilities	2,608	20,518	12.7%
Waste Management And Remediation Services	2,168	11,410	19.0%
Fabricated Metal Manufacturing	1,995	78,488	2.5%
Machinery Manufacturing	1,664	68,848	2.4%
Non-metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	1,448	13,276	10.9%
Computer And Electronic Product Manufacturing	1,304	20,848	6.3%
Paper Manufacturing	1,100	13,317	8.3%
Chemical Manufacturing	1,024	27,876	3.7%
Wood Product Manufacturing	982	9,639	10.2%
Heavy And Civil Engineering Construction	903	16,826	5.4%
Primary Metal Manufacturing	863	23,587	3.7%
Management Of Companies And Enterprises	716	55,090	1.3%
Repair And Maintenance	656	36,951	1.8%
Forestry And Logging	415s	1,400	29.7%

**Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth**

Exhibit 2 presents the number of direct green jobs against total jobs present in top industries of Michigan State. 21 primary industries of Michigan were taken into for the study. Of the 21 industries, 13 were engaged in the production of goods, and the majority of those were concentrated in either manufacturing or construction. On the basis of total number of direct green jobs in to top industries, Michigan's auto sector led the way in the creation of green employment, as Transportation equipment manufacturing supplied about 25,800 jobs to the green economy. However, green jobs were found across a wide range of industries. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services ranked second behind auto manufacturing with over 22, 000 green jobs.

**6. CONCLUSION**

Environmental issues are green in everyone's mind. Green recruiting provides the company with an opportunity to stand out from the rest of the pack in a crowded recruiting landscape. Even though there are plenty of companies using green initiatives on daily basis, it is still uncommon for the recruiter to use it as recruiting tool. The time has come for all employers to assess the degree of greenness in which they operate. Companies are vying to implement the best practices in greenness. At one level companies can use its greenness to attract top –notch talent. At another level, it is a perfect

opportunity for head hunters to contribute towards preserving the environment. The greenness claims by the companies show their commitment towards environment and society. If the company is to have a decisive edge, it becomes necessary to spread environment-friendly messages with firm's recruitment process.

## 7. REFERENCES

- [1] Aravamudhan NR. (2010). Green Recruiting: Is It a Concept Whose Time Has Come?.
- [2] *HRM Review*, X, III: 10-17.
- [3] Charlotte Huff (2007). Green Recruiting Helps Bring in Top Talent.
- [4] <http://www.workforce.com/section/06/feature/25/06/24/index.html>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 4.
- [5] Corporate Environmental Behaviour and the Impact on Brand Values.
- [6] <http://www.ivci.com/pdf/corporate-environmental-behaviour-and-the-impact-on-brand-values.pdf>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 5.
- [7] Cynthia. (2009). April 22. Recruiting Goes Green. <http://www.corporateeye.com/blog/2009/04/recruiting-goes-green>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 8.
- [8] Employment brand goes green. <http://jobingfoundation.org/2009/07/10/employment-brand-goes-green>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 4.
- [9] Green Jobs India Fair. (2009). September 16. <http://www.techtipspro.com/2009/09/green-job-fair-at-india-habitat-centre.html>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 6.
- [10] John Sullivan (2007) June 3. Green Recruiting: Building Your Environmental Employment Brand. <http://www.ere.net/2007/06/04/green-recruiting-building-your-environmental-brand>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 8.
- [11] John Sullivan (2009). November 17. Steps to Implement Green Recruiting. <http://www.hronline.com/HRE/story.jsp?storyId=26541280>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 6.
- [12] Joseph V. (2007) November 26. It's time for techies to go green! <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/software/its-time-for-techies-to-go-green/articleshow/2572968.cms>. Accessed Nov, 8.
- [13] Katie L. Does Green Recruiting Offer an Edge? [http://in.groups.yahoo.com/groups/trainers\\_forum/message/34037](http://in.groups.yahoo.com/groups/trainers_forum/message/34037). Accessed 2010 Nov, 9.
- [14] Michigan Green Jobs Report. (2009). May. <[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/nwlb/GJC\\_GreenReport](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/nwlb/GJC_GreenReport)>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 8.
- [15] O'Brien MF. Debating Green Recruiting. <http://www.hreonline.com/HR E/story.jsp?storyId=46706256>. Accessed 2010 Nov, 5.