

Title:

Enticing New Employees With Corporate Stability

Word Count:

704

Summary:

Employment is on the rise and with it, the return to attractive compensation packages and salary levels. After several down years in the employment market that was the result of the normalization of an inflated stock market and the beginning of the War on Terror, employers are constructing compensation packages with an eye to drawing dedicated employees.

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Keywords:

Article Body:

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During the economic bubble of the late nineties, employers were in head-to-head competition with each other to offer benefits and salaries that would draw the best employees. For job seekers, that environment was almost a pick and choose situation in which they could nearly name their salary and benefits package. Many of the dot coms, flush with venture capital, were offering performance incentives that included sports cars, trips around the world, in-office massages, and ping pong tables in the employee lounge. The goal was to attract and retain quality employees.

Employees are looking for something other than Aeron chairs and Hermann Miller office accoutrements in today's job market. Workers who were bitten hard by the post-9/11 reduction in force and layoff epidemic are looking more toward corporate stability as an attraction in a new employer.

"I was laid off three times in the twelve months after 9/11. Each time, the

company had lost funding and run out of cash," states Randy McEwen, a sales executive, "Now I am just looking for a company that has a stable record of growth and a good future. Latte machines in the lounge are nice but I'd prefer a group insurance plan that includes dental."

McEwen's concern about stability and traditional benefits is not unusual among job seekers. With the rising cost of health care, insurance coverage tops the list of desired benefits. Corporate soundness is also a high priority as employees recover from the layoffs of the first half of this decade. Employees are less likely to apply to a company that offers stock options as an incentive since so many still hold worthless stock options from previous employers. The term "pre-IPO" no longer holds pull with job seekers.

"Pre-IPO just means they throw lots of promises at you but no real benefits," states McEwen, "Give me a good 401K match instead." Such cynicism is fairly common among professionals who were burned by start-ups. Caution is being exercised by job seekers as they seek to make a career step or change.

As a job seeker, what can you do to weed out the stable companies from the ones on wobbly legs? Here are a few tips:

Examine the company record. You should find out about the company before you go on the first interview. Is it public or private? If it is public, what is the stock trading at and what has been the performance record for the past 18 months? If it is private, how long has it been in business and how large is its market? This information will give you a starting point on gaining perspective and will also provide you with fodder for the interview.

Look at the market. Is the market the company services growing or shrinking? Is it a niche market with one large customer or is it broad and ripe with competition? Who is the competition?

Think like an investor. As an employee, you will be investing a majority of your life in this company; therefore, you need to think like an investor. Is this a company you feel is on the right path to success? Is the leadership sound? Are the numbers in the financials good? Do they have a high employee turnover rate?

What is in the benefit package? Benefits like 401K matching, profit sharing, and good health plans show a company cares about investing in its employees. These are the benefits that show the degree of value a company places in its employees.

Evaluating a company before entering into the dance of interviewing can save

both parties a great deal of time and effort. Companies do not want to make a bad hire and job seekers do not want to sign on with a company only to have to start looking for a job again in six months. Doing a little homework ahead of time will serve you well.