



Global Promotions & Incentives

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Promotional Merchandise News & Tips

Win the War for Talent

If you've got a job opening on your team, you're not alone. After a relatively soft job market the past few years, the war for talent is again heating up, especially for entry-level employees. The job market for workers at other levels is becoming more competitive as well.

One way to catch the eye of new recruits is by using promotional products, says Tom Darrow, principal with, a recruiting firm in Atlanta, and president of the Atlanta chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

"With a passive candidate," Darrow says, "you have to go the extra step in getting his or her attention. That's when a promotional product really can be helpful."

A Tee or Tumbler?

One of the main functions of promotional gifts in the employee-recruitment game is to lure candidates to job fairs and to help them remember you after they leave.

"You're sending a message," Darrow warns. "If you're at a job fair where the attendees are smart, senior-level people, you don't want to give away cheap pens. You'll want leather portfolios or steel mugs."

Another compelling idea: Instead of regular business cards, have your personal contact information imprinted on card-size magnets. Many companies offer items that relate to a candidate's job search. For example, since attendees come to job fairs equipped with their résumés, you might give out pad holders to help them better manage their bundle.

Pens and calculators also are appreciated, as are custom posters that advertise your company or the jobs available. After all, something has

to adorn those dorm-room walls, and what better than your message? Another popular item is bottled water (customized with your company's logo), which thirsty show-goers will appreciate.

Tricks of the Recruiters' Trade

The use of promotional products isn't just the purview of in-house HR departments or job fairs. Their value also is demonstrated effectively by outside recruiters, whose very existence depends on reeling in those top prospects. If these hired guns are using promotional products as a recruitment tool, you know it's a good idea.

As far as what items to choose, present a gift that is a memory of the encounter such as inexpensive wireless mouse. Giving out sexy, wireless, optical mice as a thank-you can send a powerful message of the type of company – i.e., hip, with it, and "not cheap!"

Gifts Speak Volumes

Ideally, any gift given as a recruiting aid should say something about your company. Starbucks gives every job candidate a pound of coffee, for example. Another favorite: high – capacity USB flash drives, with logos all over them.

One popular giveaway at job fairs – a seemingly generic product but one that speaks volumes about the giver – is ringtone cards. Young adults and college students love music, and equally love to customize their cell phones with unique musical jingles that play when a call comes in.

One important thing about promotional gifts and recruiting: You never know when the two will actually reinforce one another. That's why providing gifts with strong memorability and longtime usefulness is key.

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