

TALENT

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feature story

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

There are still job vacancies during this economic downturn,
but one has to dig deeper to unearth them.



Good times or bad, businesses have to continue and they will still need manpower to run them. However, in the current dire economic condition, job vacancies are few and far between. What makes it especially challenging is that there will be more applicants for every advertised vacancy and employers are reviewing every qualified candidate with more stringent requirements.

To survive the job search in such times, job seekers should not rely solely on the traditional newspaper advertisements and online job portals. Although these avenues will continue to be the key sources of employment prospects, job seekers will have to look beyond to explore other channels in order to discover those hidden opportunities and get a head start in the search for jobs.

COMING OUT

With more people being affected by corporate restructuring and downsizing, retrenchments and lay-offs are no longer taboo. Job seekers should not feel ashamed of their circumstances. It is vital that they come to terms with the situation and start their lives afresh. To begin on their job hunt, they are encouraged to mobilise their army of contacts such as friends and ex-colleagues, to help.

NETWORK, NETWORK, NETWORK

Many career advisors maintain that networking remains as one of the most effective job search strategies. These days, whenever a job opening surfaces within an organisation, the HR department would first circulate this piece of information internally and encourage staff referrals for suitable candidates. Unless there is limited success, most of the employers would avoid the use of paid advertisements.

During such alumni, professional affiliation or even recreational club events, job seekers get first-hand information about latest job openings within business ▶

EMPLOYMENT NEWS FLASH

SOCIAL SITES USEFUL FOR WORK

SINGAPORE - An increasing number of people have discovered online networks as a useful tool to expand their pool of friends and acquaintances and even look out for job opportunities.

These websites become more effective tools to manage a large base of contacts when more people sign on to them, said Josh Goh, GMP's senior manager of corporate services. Some companies have leveraged off the popularity of such social networking sites to host recruitment drives.

NO MID-YEAR BONUS FOR CIVIL SERVANTS THIS YEAR

SINGAPORE - More than 60,000 civil servants will not be receiving any mid-year bonus this year. No mid-year bonuses combined with previous pay cuts will see annual civil service salaries drop by 6% to 21% this year. Executives in senior positions will receive the largest reduction.

The decision not to pay any mid-year annual variable component is also in line with the National Wages Council recommendations which were released recently. The labour movement and its eight unions associated to the civil sector said they supported the government's decision.

PROFESSIONALS TURN TO FLIPPING BURGERS AT MCDONALD'S

AUSTRALIA - Because of the slumping job market, McDonald's is seeing an increase in the numbers of graduates and professionals applying for jobs at all levels at their restaurants.

The number of graduates enrolling in the fast-food giant's management programme has increased by almost 50% over the past year, said McDonald's National People Resources manager, John Whitehouse. He added that 80% of them had begun their careers behind restaurant counters, and worked their way up the management chain to head office.

There are currently 85,000 people employed in McDonald's in Australia.



MAS HAS NO PLANS TO LAY OFF STAFF

MALAYSIA - While other airlines are retrenching staff to save costs, Malaysia Airlines has no plans to follow suit.

Despite reporting its first operational loss in over two years, the airline is looking at other methods to curb costs, said its chairman, Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid. He added that pay cuts might not be necessary as the airline may review its remuneration packages instead.

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

EXPERT ADVICE

THE NEW ONLINE FACE OF JOBSEEKING

With the proliferation of Web 2.0 technology, online social networking sites have proven to be unconventional yet useful tools for job seekers. According to a recent survey by CareerBuilder.com, employers are actively using social networking sites to source for ideal candidates and even checking job applicants' profiles on networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn.

Here are quick tips to put your best foot forward in the world of social media.

DO:
Include relevant information. Keep it brief and concise, which would engage potential employers more.

Update your profile regularly. Keeping your profile updated can up your employment opportunities

Becareful with which groups you join. Joining groups you wish to be associated with is a clear indication of what your inclinations are.

Review the things you post. Would the photos and personal information you disclose compromise your image?

DON'T:
Badmouth your current or previous employer. On social networking sites, word does get around.

Forget others can see your friends. People on your network list can view the contacts you are connected with. Be careful of whom you befriend.

Publicise your job search if you are still employed. If this is not known to your boss, someone can forward the information to him or her.

“There are still job vacancies, but they are few and far between because there are more applicants for every advertised job.”



▶ associates' or ex-schoolmates' companies. A referral or favourable recommendation from a senior executive could also increase a job seeker's chance of gaining an interview and landing a job.

Another prevalent networking avenue is through professional networking portals such as LinkedIn, XING and Spoke. As these sites are popular with professionals, many head hunters and recruiters use them to network and source for potential candidates.

KNOW YOUR RECRUITER

It pays to build a relationship and know your recruiter better regardless of the market situation. Many people reject calls from recruiters during boom time and have the misconception that they should only contact recruitment agencies or search firms when they need a job. Recruiters are like financial planners; working adults should maintain contact with them. This is because a good recruiter would remember their candidates and be the first to contact them whenever there is a suitable career opportunity.

HELP FROM COMMUNITY GROUPS

Community groups such as the Community Development Councils (CDCs) and NTUC Women's Development Secretariat are very active in organising workshops and recruitment drives to assist unemployed professionals and women in their job search. These events equip participants with job-hunting skills and link them up with prospective employers. These are excellent settings for

job seekers to meet up with the potential employers and find out more about the available openings.

A WELL-MANAGED DIVERSITY PLAN

While the costs of managing a varied workforce might seem to surpass its immediate gains, but engaging a diverse workforce does have its long-term benefits. An inclusive environment with diverse talents allows employees to state their views and be themselves. Research has proven that a diverse workforce encourages creativity. And when it comes to performing out-of-the-ordinary tasks, the diverse pool of talents tends to outshine a homogenous group. Indirectly, it encourages critical analysis.

An inclusive environment helps to promote goodwill among diverse employees. When employees are happy, the corporate culture will improve and customers will most likely be well taken care by them. And in the long run, the positive vibe will help to attract the best talents and develops the company's brand as an employer of choice.

Promoting diversity is going to take time and few attempts to find the right balance. It will not be a smooth sailing process. But eventually, the end result would be very rewarding when the organisation is equipped to meet the workforce challenges.

HOT JOBS @ GMPRECRUIT.COM

Think it's time to make that career leap? GMP's database boasts hundred of rewarding jobs in all levels and across all industries. You've got absolutely nothing to lose and a world of opportunities to gain when you sign up with us at our website.

Simply log on to www.gmprecruit.com and search for the following fantastic jobs currently available using the reference numbers provided.

SENIOR / PROCESS TECHNICIANS (ref no: 092054)

Nitec/Higher Nitec or Diploma in Chemical/Mechanical Engineering/Chemical Process | Min. 5 years' relevant experience for Senior Technicians

QUALITY ENGINEER (ref no: 092040)

Bachelor Degree/Diploma in Marine/Shipbuilding/Naval Architecture or relevant | 2-3 years' working experience as Supplier Quality Engineer in marine industry or related

RELATIONSHIP MANAGER (ref no: 092049)

Degree | Min. 2 years' experience in corporate/SME sales in banks | Knowledge of loan products, trade finance & treasury products | Credit analysis skills required

DATA & ACCOUNT DOCUMENTATION

OFFICER (ref no: 092045)

Diploma in Banking/Business/Accountancy | Fresh diploma graduates in Banking welcome to apply

SALES COORDINATOR (ref no: 092047)

Min. GCE 'O' Levels; Min. 2 years' experience in sales coordination | Good knowledge of marine parts

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (ref no: 091124)

Knowledge in Oracle Distribution software advantageous | Fresh graduates welcomed