

Four Tips to Building a Championship Team

By Alasdair Plambeck

Think of your company as your favorite sports franchise. You expect your team to take recruitment very seriously, right? After all, the quality of the recruits that your team drafts creates the foundation on which championship franchises are built. Does your company take its talent search this seriously?

That was how Bart Bement, CEO of Fastworkforce.com, framed it in a recent conversation about hiring for valet parking companies.

"Every day, your HR department has an opportunity to improve the company," Bement told me on a recent Valet Parking Podcast (www.thevaletspot.com/valet-parking-podcast).

And Bement should know. He built a transportation staffing company from start-up to employing almost 2,000 people daily, before founding Fastworkforce.com – a provider of Web-based recruiting management solutions – where he now focuses solely on helping large companies recruit and keep frontline talent.

People are the foundation and lifeblood of any successful business, especially in the service industry. That's a cliché, but it's true. Below are four tips from my recent conversation with Bement that will help you build that strong foundation.

The Who Before the What

"I don't know where we should take this company, but I do know that if we start with the right people, ask them the right questions, and engage them in vigorous debate, we will find a way to make this company great."

Jim Collins, "Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... and Others Don't"

As a parking company leader, you already know that your team is going to be involved in parking cars. But what about your service, your culture, your company's message, its personality? What about *who* your company is? Addressing difficult questions such as these are where you can really put some distance between you and your competition.

The companies that take the *who* part of the equation seriously are the ones doing the lion's share of the business – and they're not just surviving but continuing to grow year after year. Finding your company's *what* is challenging enough when you have the right people on your team. Without them, though, you may find your team struggling for direction – or worse yet – your team may never get around to asking the question at all.

People are the foundation and lifeblood of any successful business, especially in the service industry. That's a cliché, but it's true.

Your Job Ad Is a Function of Marketing, not HR.

"The best people are going to look at the 20 valet ads they have to pick from and they are going to pass over ads that are ugly or just text, that aren't presenting a real feel for the company." – Bart Bement on The Valet Parking Podcast

The job ad is a crucial part of your hiring process that often gets overlooked. The job ad is the top of your funnel, and just like any sales department can be only as good as the leads they are working with, your HR department can hire only the best talent that applies for the job.

Get this part wrong, and you can do everything else right and not find the results you are looking for.

To attract the top people, you first have to get them excited about the idea of working for your company. Top talent will have options. Don't make the common mistake of starting with a long, uninspiring job description.

After your company has engaged prospects and effectively moved them to take action, then go ahead and include job descriptions and disqualifiers.

Whether you are using, for example, Indeed.com, Craigslist or another job search platform, your initial ad should be simple, to the point, and have a clear call to action for people to apply. It should – in just a few seconds – give applicants a feeling of what it's like to work with your company.

This is why graphics are so powerful. A few pictures of your team working and having fun can instantly give applicants a feeling for your company culture and what it's like to work with your team.

Not sold on graphics yet? Consider the last time you bought anything on Craigslist. How much time did you spend on postings that didn't include pictures? Exactly.

Speed is of the Essence.

"If you wait too long to respond to applicants, you are going to get the bottom of the barrel... All the good people will already be parking cars for the competition." – Bart Bement on The Valet Parking Podcast

The very best people aren't going to have a problem getting a job. They are going to be hired quickly by the companies that engage them quickly.

Continued on Page 14

Four Tips to Building a Championship Team

from Page 12

Don't string out the hiring process; it's expensive for your company in more ways than one. Make it a practice to respond quickly and decisively to new applicants. Build this into your hiring process.

Referrals, Referrals, Referrals.

"If it's not a top source, either you aren't effectively communicating the referral program or your company is not one that your employees want to refer their friends to work at." – Bart Bement on The Valet Parking Podcast

For a valet company, referrals should be one of your top sources for new hires. Referrals are so valuable because they are "pre-qualified." By the time they apply, they already know about the company culture and environment. Your company's ratio of hires to applicants is going to be much higher with referrals than other hiring channels. Not only are referrals more likely to be hired, they are more likely to stick around, reducing expensive turnover.

There are three important steps to a successful referral program. Like the job ad, a successful referral program also boils down to effective marketing.

First, make sure your company is a place at which people want to work. Second, get a referral program started. And third, reinforce it at every opportunity possible.

Start a Facebook page, where you can highlight and share your team's accomplishments and make it easy for referrals to contact and learn about you. Offer a monthly prize for your top producers.

Encourage your employees to bring in referrals through repetition, recognition and reinforcement. Do this, and your current employees can be your hiring department's greatest assets.

If you follow these tips, you will be following in the footsteps of every great championship franchise in history. By effectively marketing your team, improving your talent pool, and quickly scooping up the all stars, you'll be in a strong position to build a franchise unrivaled at whatever your what happens to be.

Alasdair Plambeck is General Manager of The Valet Spot, a leader in valet parking equipment. To listen to his full conversation with Bart Bement, as well as conversations with other professionals on parking and business, tune into The Valet Parking Podcast at www.thevaletspot.com/valet-parking-podcast.

PT

www.parkingtoday.com

"VIRTUAL INTERCOM
IS SERVED!"

VirtuoSIS®
by Commend

The world's 1st Software Intercom Server
for highest Intercom performance – anytime, anywhere.

Visit the Commend booth #1301 for a live demo of VirtuoSIS®
IPI - International Parking Institute
Dallas, TX
June 1-4, 2014