



# Finding Good Employees



Over the last few years I've spoken to dozens of towing company owners about problems facing the towing industry. No matter the size of the company or how long they have been in business, the number one question owners consistently ask is, "How can I attract and keep good employees in this day and age?"

BY BRAD McINTOSH

**B**ased on the number of times this question has arisen, it's safe to say that this is one of the biggest issues facing towing companies today. This shouldn't come as a surprise to any owner. The nature of the work is hard, the working conditions are extreme – and let's face it – towing can be a very dangerous job. So how do you attract qualified and dedicated employees?

## Identify your ideal candidate

Knowing the *type* of employee you're looking for makes all the difference in the world. Identifying your target candidates will tell you where to look for your new employee. What age range are you looking for? Do they need to be good with technology? What type of education and training do they have? Answering these types of questions first can save you a lot of time and money when you post your job openings.



## Marketing

Finding good employees requires a concentrated marketing effort. Many people only associate marketing with attracting new customers but

it's equally as important when trying to find your ideal job candidate. The media outlets that you choose to post your openings will reflect the type of employee you attract. There are several types of places you can choose to post your job openings, but we'll focus on newspaper ads, social media, career websites and industry publications.

**Newspaper ads.** Many longtime business owners believe everyone looks in the classifieds to find a job. The classifieds still have a place in employment marketing but they do not attract the attention and high-quality candidates they once did and the posting costs are relatively high. According to a study by Pew Research Center, only seven percent of 18–24 year-olds get news from a print newspaper, 11 percent of 25–29 year-olds and 15 percent of 30–39 year-olds. Those percentages greatly increase for online newspapers.

If you're searching for a younger, potentially long-term employee you need to post the position where he or she will see it and this may not be the newspaper. However, if your

target candidate is in an older demographic, the newspaper might be a viable resource for your job posting. Just make certain that your listing is viewable in the newspaper's online version.

**Social media.** Depending on the type of employee you're attempting to attract, social media can prove to be highly effective in reaching a large number of potential candidates. There are downfalls associated with social media – having to weed through a large number of applications being the most daunting – but being able to reach thousands of people within seconds is very powerful and cost-effective. According to

the 2014 Job Seeker Nation Study, 21 percent of those surveyed listed online social network as the source where job seekers found their favorite job, second only to personal referrals. If you have company social media sites, post your opening(s) and offer your current employees a referral bonus if they share your posts and end



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up attracting a new employee. If you are looking to attract a younger, more tech-savvy workforce, social media is a great free resource.

**Career websites.** We've all seen the commercials and advertisements for career websites such as Monster.com, Careerbuilder.com, Indeed.com, etc. Sites of this nature are the number one recruiting resource for employers in today's business environment. On these sites you select how long you want your ad to run, enter the job details, enter your contact info and sit back and wait for the resumes to come in. Make sure to list all information requirements you need (driver's license info, accident records, etc.) so you can do your due diligence without investing a lot of time into potential candidates.

These sites tend to attract candidates with higher levels of education (accounting, HR and managerial personnel) but are also effective for attracting drivers and dispatchers. Although these sites are fee-based, they can be well worth the money and save you a lot of time and effort. Many of these sites partner with local newspapers and other recruiting outlets to offer you a bundled package for your listings.

According to the report from Manpower Group Solutions "When Engaging the Right Talent, One Size Does Not Fit All," some of the online job search site preferences for younger candidates include CareerBuilder, Glassdoor, SimplyHired and Jobs.com.

**Industry publications.** Industry specific trade publications can also be a very effective tool for finding your desired candidate. Magazines, website forums, trade associations, etc., can help you find a new employee from anywhere



in the country. These resources are best served when looking for a unique set of skills or experience (i.e. rotator operator, terminal manager, towing service sales, etc.) that will not draw a large number of qualified applicants. Drawing from a nationwide pool of candidates can be costly, especially if you will be paying moving expenses, but can be well worth the money if you find your ideal candidate for your opening and obtain a long-term employee. When using industry media, specify if you will or will not be paying moving expenses. It can save misunderstandings and time considering candidates who, if required to pay for the move themselves, will no longer be interested.

### Interviewing

Once you have a good pool of qualified candidates, you need to begin the interview process immediately. Depending upon whether your company's position is already vacant or not, delays in the process can mean missed revenue that you will never get back. Be selective and thorough, but do not delay scheduling your interviews. Based on the number of qualified applicants you have, trim your list down to a handful of applicants that you're interested in.

One means of trimming down applicants is to host telephone interviews. Schedule a day/time with the potential candidate, give a detailed job description mentioning the position's pros and cons and ask a few questions targeted to weed out any applicants who do not fit. For example, if the position is for a light-duty driver, you can explain that the position will require passing a drug test and ask questions such as does the applicant have any driving tickets, arrests, etc.



**Do you take job applications on your website? Do you offer a mobile-friendly application? According to the 2014 Job Seeker Nation Survey, 43 percent of those surveyed searched or applied for a job on their mobile device with the highest percentage being 18-29 year-olds, followed closely by 30-39 year-olds.**

Once you narrow your applicants, the following steps can simplify your interview process and make it more successful:

1. Have your interview questions ready and think outside the box when compiling your questions.
2. Take note of their appearance and how they handle themselves.
3. Be aware of how they take care of their vehicle or other personal items they bring to the interview.
4. Consider having a current manager or lead driver sit in on the interview or possibly host a second interview.
5. Get references and check them.

Finding, hiring and keeping good employees is the lead topic for this year's Towing & Recovery Management Summit. For more information about the Summit, visit [TowSummit.com](http://TowSummit.com) or see the ad on pages 4 - 5.

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