



# “Search” is an Active Verb

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## Faculty Recruiting Strategies

Mary Rezac

Chemical Engineering

Department Head

Kansas State University



# “Searching” is not synonymous with “Screening”

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“Search -- to make *painstaking* investigation or examination”

Passive faculty recruitment with active screening of applicants is unlikely to result in adding diverse individuals to a faculty.

Each member of the *search committee* must truly believe that most of the committee work comes BEFORE *screening* can occur.



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A case study in the use of active recruiting techniques in the search for and hiring of new faculty members: The following details the first year this technique was employed by the Chemical Engineering department at Kansas State University.



# The Faculty Recruiting Process: Step 1: Know your Weakness

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## Prologue: Pre-2004 Faculty Search

- 1 ad placed in Chemical Engineering Progress
- Several interviews and several offers, No hire

I located and called most of the individuals offered (all were in academic positions) and asked why they didn't come to K-State.....

- All indicated *THE DECIDING FACTOR* related to the amount and form of the start-up packages offered.
- Some expressed concern about a lack of research focus in the department
- None indicated a concern about the issues that the existing faculty believed to be problems, including:
  - Location
  - Salary
  - Teaching loads



## Step 2: Minimize its Impact

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Set the recruiting stage by:

- Ensuring VERY COMPETITIVE Start-up Packages
- Complete Strategic Planning for the Department (to allow potential hires to understand how they might fit into the department)
- Promote the belief that the new searches will be successful



## Step 3: Plan for Success

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- Identify which technical areas are of interest and which are not.
- Plan strategies for how and where to recruit
- Communicate openly and widely.



# Communication Strategies

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- Advertised widely and often
  - Chemical Engineering Progress
  - C&E News
  - Websites
    - Our own
    - Advance, KSU
    - WELI (women's engineering leadership institute)
    - CACHE
  - Distributed to participants at an NSF sponsored workshop for female engineers interested in faculty positions
- **Direct solicitations**



# Direct Solicitation

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- Step 1: Based upon strategic vision for the research area(s) that will be targeted, Identify the top 5/10/20 groups in the country/world in this area.
- Step 2: Call the group leader and ask for recommendations on students, post-docs (current and former).
- Step 3: Contact individuals recommended and invite them to apply.
- Step 4: See who's presenting at the national meetings in these areas. If abstracts look good, invite applications.





## Direct Solicitation, continued.

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Step 5: If one exists, go to the “Meet the Candidate” session at this meeting.

Call or email candidates who are participating in the “Meet the Candidate” sessions BEFORE the meeting.

Schedule time for coffee or lunch.

Assume that they’ll be great, convince them that your institution will be great for them.

Step 6 through  $\infty$ : Follow-up



## *Semi - Active* Recruiting: Regional Universities

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- A Colleague visited 3 Colorado Universities
- He presented information sessions about KSU ChE and Open Positions
- No other advance work
- **OUTCOME: 1 applicant,  
0 interviews, 0 hires**  
..... Semi-active wasn't active enough!



## Active Recruiting: National Universities

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- Faculty visits to 3 top-15 ChE Programs
  - Presented Information Sessions
  - Pre-trip contact with faculty to solicit candidate names
  - Pre-trip scheduling of meetings with students
  - Individual meetings and meals with students and select faculty. Typically ~50% prescheduled + 50% determined by info session attendance.
- 17 applicants (1 minority male, 3 female)
  - KSU interviews for 3 (1 female, 2 males)
  - Offered 1, Hired 0

....good idea, but no perfect match this year.



# Active Recruiting: National AIChE Meeting

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1. Pre-trip review of students presenting in sessions with close relationship to our research thrusts
  2. Pre-trip review of students presenting in the “Meet the Faculty Candidate” session
  3. Pre-trip invitations to attractive individuals informing them of open position and inviting them to apply
  4. Pre-trip invitations for coffee meetings to highly attractive candidates
- Private meetings with over 30 individuals including 14 women, 9 of whom applied.
  - Screened 16 technical presentations by potential candidates.
  - KSU interviews for 3
  - Offered 3, Hired 2

....good idea and we got lucky.



# Faculty Recruiting Outcomes

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- 218 applications
- 9\* candidates interviewed
- 3 offers made
- 2 offers accepted (both women)

\*eight candidates interviewed for ChE positions, one female candidate interviewed by MNE