

BACKGROUND ON BUSINESS

Hiring Strategies For Entrepreneurs

(NAPSA)—For entrepreneurs, finding and hiring the best employees to help take their companies to the next level is one of the toughest challenges. That's especially true in a strong economy with plenty of job openings, which makes it even harder for smaller businesses to compete for top talent against larger, more established companies with deeper pockets.

The process of identifying and interviewing people who are just the right fit for your company can be very time consuming. And the stakes are high: Making a wrong hiring decision can be costly and disruptive to a growing business.

All too often, entrepreneurs eager to fill a position fall back on making an important hiring decision purely based on one informal interview and their instincts.

While good instincts are very important, there are some more structured approaches that can help you score more "home runs" on the hiring front. Entrepreneurs can find very helpful information on Kauffman eVenturing™ (www.eVenturing.org), a Web site operated by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, a nonpartisan foundation dedicated to advancing entrepreneurship in America.

Tips On Hiring And Interviewing

The site includes a series of original articles on hiring—some written by entrepreneurs who share their own firsthand experiences—filled with practical ideas on how to make good hires. For example:

- Take the time to define hiring specifications in writing, pro-



viding details with respect to job duties and skills required.

- Use a structured, disciplined approach to hiring in order to evaluate a candidate's key strengths.

- Conduct several rounds of interviews for candidates with different members of your team to get a variety of perspectives.

- Follow a written script or series of questions, so you can be sure to question each candidate on a number of different attributes and skills relevant to the job you're trying to fill.

- Create a very specific checklist to identify which candidates have the potential to become true "A" list players.

- Check references on everyone you hire, from your key players to support staff.

"Hiring the right team is absolutely critical for any entrepreneur focused on growing his or her business," observes Judith Cone, vice president of Kauffman Foundation's entrepreneurship initiatives. "It's well worth the time to make sure you select people with the right combination of skills, personality and motivation to move your business forward."

More information on hiring strategies for entrepreneurs, including tools such as a sample job advertisement, can be found on the Kauffman eVenturing site at www.eVenturing.org.