

The Local Government Job Market
*Employer and employee trends related to
hiring, negotiating and retaining executive and management positions*

by Peckham & McKenney Executive Search

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“How do we know the state of recruitment, hiring and retention?”

Who are we to answer this?

Briefly About Us

- Peckham & McKenney is a well-known boutique executive search firm based in Roseville, CA that prides itself on the placement of diverse candidates, customer service, communications, direct outreach, and personalization of every search for long-lasting placements.
- Each Peckham & McKenney recruiter limits their number of concurrent searches in order to learn about and represent the individual needs and interests of each client municipality. Each search is tailored.
- Through personal and direct outreach for applicants to achieve successful placements, we learn and gain insight into applicant needs and interests. We do not recycle applicants among searches.
- Our recruiting team are retired city professionals with expertise in and knowledge of all aspects of city management and public safety.
- While we have conducted searches throughout the western states, we are primarily focused on California, and we only serve cities, counties and special districts.



Hiring Landscape

Why employees leave their jobs

Higher pay elsewhere

Lack of respect

No opportunity for upward opportunity

Flexibility in hours and schedules

Opportunity to be their own boss

Summary outcome

More jobs than there are qualified applicants

Fewer individuals in the work force interested in applying to fill vacancies

Not everyone accepts the position that is offered

Personnel leave job in one or two years

Flexibility and Well-Being are key descriptors that applicants are looking for

Hiring Landscape

From the city perspective, finding and selecting a new employee is very difficult and competitive because:

1. Many positions
 1. Retirements have caused openings
 2. COVID exhausted people and have caused retirements
 3. There are many openings that draw existing staff to other agencies
2. Cities find that applicants want a hybrid work environment that the city is not interested in providing
3. Prospective new staff are not vaccinated (as required by the city)
4. Pool of applicants is not desirable because the city sees:
 1. Applicants with a lack of training, experience and seasoning that the agency is willing to accept
 2. Applicants with a lack of longevity in prior positions or time-off that the agency wants or is willing to accept
 3. Applicants with a background check (e.g., credit report), social media presence, etc. that the agency is willing to accept
5. Applicants do not apply
 1. City has cumbersome and long recruitment and hiring process
 2. City has undesirable compensation package (salary and benefits)
 1. Applicants believe they will not get the top of range
 2. Lower CalPERS tier(s)
 3. City has undesirable work / life balance
 4. Organization and/or City does not have a positive reputation, presence or image
 5. City is a difficult work environment (e.g., too many meetings, lack of funding, few support staff, etc.)
 6. Requirements for the position are too strict (intrinsic bias)
 7. Mentors or coaches may not exist to encourage an individual to apply
6. Candidates have multiple job offers and select another agency

Hiring Landscape

Consistent with what cities are seeing from a search process, an applicant may not apply because:

1. A hybrid work environment is not being provided
 1. Commute is too long
 2. Work / life balance is desired
2. Intrinsic and / or perceived bias in the process
 1. City unwilling to accept a non-traditional background (e.g., regarding educational background, private sector / non-profit experience, multiple job transitions / time-off between jobs, being in transition, etc.)
3. City is not desirable
 1. Candidates look at organization (including elected officials) for stability, civility, leadership, culture, professionalism
 2. Agency must be an attractive, welcoming and inviting organization / culture / environment
4. Salaries are too low
5. Benefits (including CalPERS formula) are not competitive with current employer
6. Application and selection process is slow
7. There are internal candidates

What to do to address the hiring Landscape

For cities to attract applicants:

1. Have an easy and expeditious search and hiring process
2. Provide a good salary and compensation (and something to compensate for lower CalPERS benefit)
3. Be an environment with strong job satisfaction and challenges
4. Provide work / life balance
5. Have a strong, positive organizational culture, institutional support of staff, and engagement in DEI
 1. Have a culture (and reputation) of mentorship and training
6. In support of DEI, accept unconventional background and experiences
7. Be flexible in the requirements of the position (e.g., willingness to accept shorter tenures in prior jobs)
8. Have tolerance for blemishes in the background check (e.g., credit report, DUI, etc.)
9. Provide a hybrid work environment
10. Provide relocation costs
11. Be known as an agency that is transparent and effective at communicating
12. Have a positive political environment and council dynamics
13. Be an organization known for civility, professionalism and quality
14. Post position on city's social media and on website

What to do to address the hiring Landscape

For applicants:

1. Be on social media and list serves to see positions
2. Have a coach / mentor who promotes your professional development (e.g., advise you of and recommend you for positions too)
3. Be on LinkedIn and make yourself known to recruiters
4. Don't wait or expect a call; scan sites for openings
5. Call the recruiter for insight into the position
6. Apply
7. Seek counsel and advice for going through the hiring process
 1. Have someone review your resume and cover letter
 2. Practice for the interview
8. For a supplemental questionnaire, read the question closely to provide applicable responses
9. Be flexible and open to what the city can provide as salary and benefits
10. Don't take too long to seal the deal

Tips for Hiring and Retention Success

To the city:

1. Be open to the #2 or #3 candidate
2. Offer top of range
3. Provide for some level of remote working / telecommuting
4. Streamline application process
5. Eliminate accrual of vacation leave and offer unlimited leave on request (eliminates unfunded liability)
6. Train
 1. Train internal staff
 2. Train the newly hired individual
7. Hire from within
8. Welcome and encourage diversity
9. Provide a leave bank upon hire
10. Coach the City Council to be mindful that their activities influence hiring and retention
11. Modify job requirements to accommodate untraditional backgrounds and experiences

From Great Resignation to the Great Regret

The grass is not always greener. Here's how to help your company manage the 'Big Quit'

There's a lot of conversation around the "Great Resignation" as employers are losing talent to other companies that boast higher pay, cool perks, flexible work, sign-on incentives and professional growth opportunities. It's an interesting phenomena but we don't speak enough to the other side of the coin, something called the 'Great Regret' or the 'The Big Mistake' -- where an employee leaves one company for another believing the grass to be greener and it turns out to be, in fact worse than where they left.

Early in my career, I had a Great Regret moment back in 2008 where I left a job for more money and what seemed to be an amazing opportunity. From day one of my new job, I immediately had negative, early indicators about what was to come. It was a terrible six months in a role punctuated with a culture of high turnover, low morale, scandals and toxic leadership. I deeply regretted my decision to leave my prior company where I was valued, had great leaders, wonderful colleagues, a positive environment, and truly enjoyed my work.

Companies can avoid the Great Regret altogether by being proactive and constantly ensuring the culture is optimal.

There's a saying the best offense is a good defense. And that defense is focusing on the fundamentals of what makes an extraordinary environment and that reminds staff why they stay and/or joined in the first place:

Nailing the Fundamentals

The key to an enduring culture is getting the employee journey right. Many people leave companies for the same few reasons, a bad manager, more money and greater opportunity. It's important to not lose sight of your values.

Fundamentally, the values along with the people and product are what brought people in the first place so double down on what makes your employee value proposition stand out.

Returners

Everyone knows there is a war for talent and recruiters everywhere are scrambling to find new talent. Recruiters needn't look too far, they should look at former employees. It doesn't hurt to point out to former employees what they left behind for reminding them of how wonderful the experience was and is.

Consider building out an alumni program to reach former talent. Communicate the latest news, share cultural moments and all the great things they're missing. The grass is often not greener and former talent might just need a nudge to consider coming back. I did after my Great Regret

Inc Magazine, March 19, 2022
Hiring Isn't Enough. Winning the Talent Game Starts with Retention
Here are four ways to future-proof your retention and hiring strategy.

Many are returning to the office this spring, perhaps for the first time since March 2020, but it is not the same as when we left it. The Covid-19 pandemic spurred rapid behavioral change forcing people to rethink their priorities and purpose. As a result, our world has changed drastically and business leaders are tasked with completely re-imagining the workplace to address a hybrid workforce, the notion of tele-everything, and an ongoing talent labor shortage.

2021 was a year of transition from the uncertainty and horrors of the lockdown in 2020, to a sense of hope and then disillusionment when Covid reared its ugly head and returned in the form of the Delta variant. This disruption caused employees to re-evaluate their lives en masse, accelerating the Great Resignation. Ten years ago, in the aftermath of the Great Recession, there were often ten applicants for every job. Now, as a result of the Great Resignation, there are often ten jobs for every applicant. For some people, resignation means leaving the workforce, but for the majority, it means going to another job-678,000 jobs were added in February, but employment dropped down to 3.8 percent, and employees have more leverage than ever before.

As sophisticated as we are and as many technological advances as we have, people remain the most integral part of the workplace-people are the fossil fuel for the growth engine. Heading into 2022, 76 percent of small and midsize business (SMB) CEOs planned to increase headcount, the highest amount on record since we began the quarterly survey at my workplace Vistage in

Many resources about the job market

8/10/2021

Trouble-Shooting the Hiring Process for a Public Agency | California Public Agency Labor & Employment Blog

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USEFUL INFORMATION FOR NAVIGATING LEGAL CHALLENGES

Trouble-Shooting the Hiring Process for a Public Agency

By David Urban on August 3, 2021



This article was reviewed in August 2021 and is up-to-date.

The stock market has reached all-time highs and the economy in general continues to be strong. In this scenario, many public sector employers are hiring. Although this is certainly welcome news, the hiring process does, however, carry legal risks.

The following are six areas of the hiring process in the public sector that deserve particular attention from a legal perspective. This is not an exhaustive list of such areas, or a complete list of considerations, but it provides a general framework for what to trouble-shoot before hiring begins in earnest.

1. **Utilize Accurate Job Descriptions:** At the very outset of the hiring process, it is critical to develop accurate and sufficiently detailed job descriptions. These will prove important not only for hiring, but also for legal issues that may arise later during the course of the employment relationship. An accurate job description will help the agency

<https://www.calpublicagencylaboremplmentblog.com/employment/trouble-shooting-the-hiring-process-for-a-public-agency-2/>

1/5

The Guardian 3/20/22

Turns out the Great Resignation may be followed by the Great Regret

, there's lots of turnover and people changing jobs – but maybe the problem isn't all with the employer

1 UTC Sunday, 20 March 2022

Workers across the US have been dealing with a historic shift in labor thanks to the pandemic. Now it is the Great Resignation, and the pundits have been falling over themselves to explain to us why employers are at fault. Now it looks like the Great Resignation may be followed by the Great Regret.

It's no doubt employers have a lot to learn from the unprecedented rate of job turnover. Researchers at the consulting firm McKinsey, for example, say that employees are tired, and many are grieving. "They want a renewed and revised sense of purpose in their work," write its researchers. "They want social and interpersonal connections with their colleagues and managers. They want to feel a sense of shared identity. They want meaningful – though not necessarily in-person – interactions, not just transactions." Unfortunately, some of us are not sympathetic to these needs. So our employees leave.

A recent firm Gartner says this week that more than 70% of information technology workers are looking to change jobs this year and urges employers to adopt a more "human-centric" hiring model that includes better working hours, more productive meetings and greater flexibility to reduce this turnover.

There's the "low pay, a lack of opportunities for advancement and feeling disrespected at work", which are the top reasons why Americans quit their jobs last year according to Pew Research in a new study. The study also found "those who quit and are now employed elsewhere are more likely than not to say their current job has better pay, more opportunities for advancement and more work-life balance and flexibility".

But are they? Are all these workers leaving their jobs for new jobs finding that the new jobs are that much better than their old jobs? That their new employers are that much better than their

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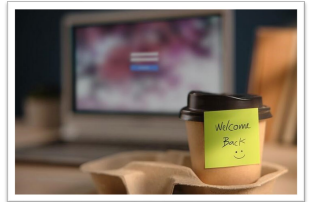
Career Compass No. 95: Use Return-to-Office as Your Opportunity to Reset Culture

Instead of "returning to normal," leaders must look to the return-to-the-office transition as a rare opportunity to reset organizational culture and become more effective than ever. Here's how.

By Dr. Frank Benest | Apr 4, 2022 | ARTICLE

Dear Frank:

I'm the HR manager in a northwestern city. I serve on a team led by the HR director with representatives from all departments. We are tasked by the manager and executive team with designing our return-to-the-office approach as the pandemic becomes more manageable. It is clear that we will be offering some kind of hybrid model of work, allowing work from home part of the week. However, the team is struggling with a whole array of other issues, such as



- Who decides which days of the week people can work from home?
- Should we do away with vaccination mandates and other safety protocols?
- What about those who can't work from home? How do we support them?
- What are better ways to manage employees whom a supervisor may not see (except virtually) most of the week?
- How do we enhance collaboration among teams in a hybrid situation?

As we look to develop return-to-the-office policies, many of our managers are pushing us to "get back to normal." Just as employees feel frustrated and exhausted, managers, too, are feeling discouraged and overwhelmed as they try to maintain productivity and deal with workers they don't see in person. As we transition back to the office, a certain number of managers are basically telling employees to "just deal with it."

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"All about fit"

Thank You

Questions?