



# Gene Siciliano



## How to Hire the Very Best

Everyone we know who is seriously trying to grow their company is handicapped by the shortage of good people. As the economy grows this situation gets even more acute. Yet hiring skills are often the weakest among line managers and CEOs who actually perform the critical interviews that lead to hiring decisions.

Often there is not even sufficient effort spent to quantify what kind of work is really being done, what skills are needed to succeed, and how to attract the best people. In this last area, it seems that CEOs often overlook the old cliché that says, "If you keep doing what you've been doing, you'll keep getting the same results."

A tight labor market, especially challenging in high skill positions and fast growing industries, requires new ways to attract people before they decide to work for someone else (like your competitor).



### OK, smart guy, so how do you hire better people?

I'm glad you asked...

One way is to give prospective employees what they want from a job, and to announce clearly what you offer in your help wanted advertising, instead of following the traditional method of simply listing what you want from them.

Too many employers seem to think their ads need only announce the availability of work at their address, and then stand back for the flood of applicants. Well, that may be true if you're hiring for people to keep the temperature of the building above freezing.

**Finance for Non-financial Managers, 2nd Edition**, McGraw-Hill 2014, covers 14 key topics in the increasingly demanding world of business finance.

This new and significantly expanded revision includes a wealth of new material, following on the heels of the best selling original.

Because managers can no longer afford to be non-financial.



But if you really want to hire top notch people, you need to remember this: the word "advertising" means more than just announcing the availability of something you are selling – in this case a job. It also means enticing the "buyer" to want to buy it.



In our example the buyer is the prospective employee, or more particularly the exceptional individual who will be outstandingly successful in the position. Forget the traditional thinking that you are the buyer and the applicant is the seller. This is increasingly a seller's market, which means the roles are reversed. **You must sell good people on considering your company, not simply reject the unacceptable applicants, in order to get the people you need to grow.**

If you accept that idea, then the next question becomes: what are some good selling tools to use?



We like some of the ideas that came out of a *McKinsey & Co.* report a few years ago, which said that certain kinds of people are attracted by certain kinds of recruiting campaigns and that there are four kinds of messages that the best people respond to:

**"Go with a winner."** For people who want a high-performing company offering lots of advancement opportunities. This is the typical attraction of the big company, where size enables a company to offer more responsibility and bigger budgets at younger ages.

**"Big risk, big reward."** For people attracted to an environment where they are challenged to do exceptionally well or to leave. This is the classic startup attraction, and you probably don't have to tell these folks about the rewards of connecting with the next tech home run – you just have to convince them that you have a shot at it.

**"Save the world."** This attracts people who want a company with an inspiring mission and an exciting challenge, like not-for-profits, high tech or biotech companies. Today's younger generations are more often attracted to this idea than any recent generation of workers.



**"Lifestyle."** People drawn to this message seek companies that offer them more flexibility and better lifestyle benefits, such as a good location or very flexible hours. Software developers are often drawn to such enticements.

Clarity about which of these your company offers should be readily apparent from reading your corporate vision/mission statement. If it isn't, or if you don't necessarily bring your vision/mission statement into the workplace, you may need to start with a strategic redirection of your company.

The best people want to work somewhere that makes a difference—to them, to the world, or both—and your company should, I suggest, exist for similar reasons. Find your special reason, and then tell your applicants about it.

**One final thought:** Look for chemistry and a complementary culture from those candidates who *you already know* fit the bill for the skills you need in that position. Avoid the reverse, which is falling in love with candidates and then trying to find a qualified person among those you've fallen in love with. So, qualifications first, then chemistry. Too many new hires fail because the search was conducted in the reverse.



Now you can interview for the people who are truly attracted to your message, and you're on your way to hiring the very best people for your company.

Should you consider doing something today? Yes, yes, and yes!

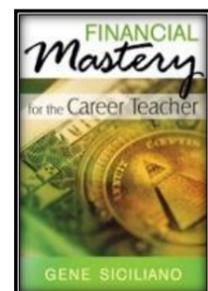
And if you have decided to get started and you want help doing it, call me. I can help you 310-645-1091 or 888-788-6534.

Or [e-mail me](mailto:info@CFOforRent.com) for more information.

Gene Siciliano, **Your CFO for Rent®**



Gene brings his extensive financial management acumen and plain language writing style to the world of personal finance with **Financial Mastery for the Career Teacher**,



Corwin Press 2010. Written at the urging of an educational publisher, the guidance and strategies in this book will work for professional

people well beyond the education industry.

**Gene Siciliano** is the founder and president of Western Management Associates, source of *Your CFO for Rent*® services for over 25 years. The firm provides interim and part-time CFO/Controller services, executive coaching and guidance in operational finance and exit strategy. Gene and his team of seasoned CFOs and controllers have a clear mission in their work with CEOs and owner/operators of privately owned companies. Our value proposition:

- Increase the company's net worth and profitability by improving the management team's financial proficiency and bottom line results, and
- Develop and execute strategies that will make your company more appealing to a buyer or investor, if and when the time comes for an ownership transition.