

Balancing the Important Issue of Relocation in Today's Job Market

By Stacy Pursell

The VET Recruiter ®

www.thevetrecruiter.com

Relocation is an important, yet sometimes overlooked, factor in the employment marketplace. There are many reasons why this is the case, but I'll start with the easiest and most evident.

It's pretty much common knowledge that **two of the most stressful events** in a person's life are:

1. Getting a new job
2. Moving

So when it comes to relocation, you're talking about combining two of the most stressful events in a person's life into **one big stressful event!** It's no wonder that relocation is such an important and sensitive issue, not only for job seekers and candidates, but also for the employers that are attempting to recruit and hire those job seekers and candidates for their open positions.

Priorities from the candidate side

In addition to the potential for and existence of stress, there are two other important factors that impact the issue of relocation from the candidate side. Those two factors are **family** and **point of view**.

It's one thing if the job seeker or candidate involved is single (although their parents or siblings might still live in the area, which could influence their decision). Theoretically, the fact that they're single, or at least not married, would make the relocation process simpler. However, if a person is married or married with children and is faced with relocation, that can change the situation dramatically. There are other considerations to take into account and another layer that's added to the decision-making process.

In addition, not everybody holds the same point of view regarding relocation. There are a number of reasons why this is the case. First, everyone has a different and distinct personality. Some people like the idea of relocating. They're more of a "free spirit" and are open to exploring new opportunities in new locations. On the other hand, some people dislike the idea of relocating. They're more inclined to seek familiar surroundings, both personally and professionally. As a result, the prospect of picking up and moving would terrify them, not enthrall them.

This brings us to the topic of **priorities**, which is central to the issue of relocation, especially from the candidate side of the equation. A job seeker should ask themselves a series of questions designed to help them identify their priorities. It's not something you want to figure out while you're in the midst of a job search. (That will just add to the stress level.)

When determining your priorities in the face of possible relocation, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this position more beneficial for my family in regards to income and benefits?

- Will our children be able to adjust to the move?
- Will this part of the country to which we are relocating benefit my family?
- Will my spouse or partner be able to find a job?
- Will this position be essential for furthering my career? Or not?
- What will we gain or lose by relocating?

If a job seeker has a spouse or partner and/or children, then they'll need to discuss the answers to these questions with their family members. This is especially the case with their spouse or partner. There should be open lines of communication and a consensus regarding the top priorities for the family.

Priorities from the employer side

Now that we've discussed priorities from the candidate side, let's address priorities from the employer side. Regardless of the issue of relocation, the priority for the employer should remain the same: to **hire the best candidate** in the marketplace for the position. This doesn't mean just hiring the best person looking for a new position, nor does it mean hiring the best person who applied online. It means hiring the best person who exists in the world for the position, if possible.

Even if it means that the person has to relocate.

If you're an employer and you're attempting to hire a top candidate and that candidate would have to relocate, then you absolutely **MUST "sell"** the position to that candidate. In fact, you'd have to "sell" both the position and the organization even if the candidate did not have to relocate. However, since they would have to relocate, it means you have to **"sell" even harder** to convince the candidate that your opportunity is the next logical step in their career trajectory.

There are also some other things which employers should be prepared to do if they are fully committed to hiring the best candidate:

- Pay for part of the candidate's relocation expenses.
- Pay for all of the candidate's relocation expenses.
- Offset relocation expenses with a signing bonus if the candidate accepts the offers.
- Use company resources and/or connections to help the candidate with their move.

The days of the housing market collapse are far behind us. During those dark times, there were many a candidate who could not relocate because they were "under water" with their mortgage and couldn't sell their house. In some select situations, their potential employer wanted to hire them so badly that the company bought their house. (And of course, they later sold it, hoping to recoup their expense.)

Balancing the issue of relocation in today's market is a matter of **priorities**. Both candidates and employers must decide what is most important to them and exactly how important it is. Because priorities dictate actions, and the actions that candidates and employers take ultimately decide how successful they are in their careers or how successful they are in their hiring efforts.