

NEWSWORTHY



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From the Team

Greetings! We hope you're off to a profitable 2017!

We're excited by the buzz we hear around Michigan and the auto industry's investments here. Jobs, jobs, jobs is the watchword of the New Year. Of course that means the already tight talent market may get more challenging.

We've been reading a lot about economic predictions for 2017, and we've felt the talent war's impact. In its annual coming-year-predictions edition, for example, MiBiz's Outlook 2017 features dozens of local leader viewpoints from across a vast array of industries. These experts cite everything from talent's affect on mergers and acquisitions (it's a way to leverage existing talent by consolidating business) to employers' recognition of the need to help current employees achieve skills and training in-house. Some go so far as to cite talent as the top challenge facing economic development throughout the region.

Not to worry, we'll remain in the talent attraction trenches with you. Our collective talent community, *KzooConnect*, continues to generate interest and discussion among young professionals. And we have another year of talent research, best practices and trends to share through this quarterly newsletter. We'd love to brainstorm about individual challenges or opportunities with you any time. Just give us a call!

The Welsh & Associates Team

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Evergreen Jobs

A radical idea for a competitive advantage

For most companies, hiring begins when a requisition for a new position is filed with Human Resources. In a perfect world — one with an ample supply of ready talent — companies would use just-in-time supply principles borrowed from purchasing to fill those open slots. But today's hiring environment is far from perfect.

According to Talent Economy (Fall 2016), a publication of Human Capital Media, the skills mismatch of today has created an “arms race of lavish perks and one-upmanship.” Our experience has found that individuals hired in a bidding war can create a ripple effect of entirely new challenges. This is especially true with young professionals who expect a corporate culture transparency around salary and benefits.

We'd like to propose what may be to many a radical concept: **Create evergreen jobs.**

Evergreen jobs are those mission-critical roles that always seem to be open. Regardless of the function performed, these jobs are a drag on resources. The hiring team is constantly filling them, and the ongoing churn affects both productivity and moral.

The idea of evergreen jobs is a little-known strategy that only a few companies use. But it is gaining traction and becoming increasingly popular among employers looking to establish a long-term competitive talent advantage. It's particularly popular in healthcare, retail, technology and customer service.

There are risks of course, to creating evergreen jobs. When candidates see a job that's constantly being filled, for example, they may hesitate to apply. But this is easy to address with that same philosophy of transparency young professionals today seek. Tell them honestly that you're always looking for top talent and that you strive to create a deep bench of expertise. Here are a few of the advantages you'll gain:

An open door for top talent

Traditional hiring requires both the company and the candidate to be searching for one another at the same time. When you create an evergreen job, you're always ready when great talent knocks. This may even allow you to be more selective — or at least to adjust your selectivity.

No longer either, or

If two top candidates apply at once, you can hire both to fill evergreen jobs. You may have a talent overlap for a period of time, but chances are the cost of carrying two employees will still outweigh the cost of an open position.

Conflated costs and other resources

Evergreen jobs create a pipeline of talent. This enables you to schedule regular hiring and training in a manner and at a pace that's most conducive to workflow and best utilizes all resources.





Taking Stock of How We're Doing

Each December, we review our business from both a financial and a relational perspective. Ours is relationship-driven industry, and we pride ourselves on our longstanding associations. So we were surprised to discover that a full 50% of our business came from new clients in 2016. These are companies we've never done business with before! When we dug deeper, we learned that 90% of those new relationships were referrals from other W&A clients. And though we have no hard data, we believe — based on conversations — that our existing clients are doing a great job of retaining talent. We love to hear that!

We built W&A on the strength of our candidate relationships. Their referrals to colleagues and friends have helped us develop an outstanding pipeline of professionals from which to draw. We love knowing that this focus on relationships is having a similar impact on our clients. We're both flattered and humbled by the faith and confidence these patterns demonstrate.

We extend a hearty "thank you" to all.

2017 National Hiring Trends

LinkedIn's Talent Blog released its annual [Global Recruiting Trends 2017](#) report in October. Based on a survey of approximately 4,000 corporate talent acquisition leaders across 35 countries; the report offers a snapshot of insight into recruiting. Here are their key findings:

- Talent acquisition has a prominent seat at the executive table
- Recruiters will be even busier in 2017
- Sought-after talent includes professionals in sales, operations, and engineering
- The top sources for quality hires are employee referrals, job boards, and professional networks
- Budgets go to traditional tactics, but branding tops investment wish list
- Diversity, screening automation, and data are key future trends

[FastCompany](#) cites these Top 3 Recruitment Factors for 2017:

1. Mobile Applications. Some 77% of job seekers now use mobile devices to look for opportunities.

2. Candidate Experience. Apple, Netflix, and Salesforce have a job application process that takes 15 minutes or less. This is the standard by which other companies will be measured.

3. Employment Brand. In today's word-of-mouth social media world, your employees are your brand.

West and Southwest Michigan: A Competitive Advantage

For many years, human resource managers in the greater Kalamazoo area lamented the challenges of getting prospective employees to consider a move to the area. Times have changed. The advent of tech — which makes working from anywhere possible — is just one factor in our new appeal. Today's young professionals, it seems, may be seeking precisely what we have to offer: an incredible quality of life. According to a study by Fidelity — published in [Fortune](#) last spring — Millennials are even willing to take a \$7,600 pay cut for a better quality of life. Our collective task now is to make sure young professionals know it's here.

The U.S. Council of Economic Advisors (2014) characterized those quality-of-life characteristics with this description: "Millennials value staying close to family and friends, having free time for recreation, and working in creative jobs. However, they also want to make a positive social impact on their children and communities, as well as on society as a whole." Sounds like West and Southwest Michigan to us! And don't forget...

- The cost of living is 7% lower here than the Michigan average and 18% lower than the national average (with a 37% advantage over the national average for housing.)
- The average short commute of 17-22 minutes is a bit misleading. You'll cover a far greater distance in that time driving here than in urban centers like Detroit or Chicago.
- At the farthest western edge of the Eastern Time zone, where else can you enjoy summer daylight that stretches — nearly — into the wee hours? That leaves lots of time after hours to pursue hobbies, spend time with friends, or give back through volunteerism.
- The Lake Michigan shoreline is a mere 45 minutes of scenic countryside from downtown Kalamazoo and as pristine a vista as any "real" Coast.

If you have a young professional that's doing great work for your organization, consider letting us brag a bit about them in [KzooConnect](#). We'd love to help you recognize their accomplishments. And what better way to attract other talent to the region?

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