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## Article: Expanding Your Pool – The Key to Being Selective

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The underlying assumption of most selection assessment programs is usually you have more applicants than jobs - and some applicants are more likely to succeed than others. Assessments are a tool to scientifically choose the few most likely to succeed from the many less likely!

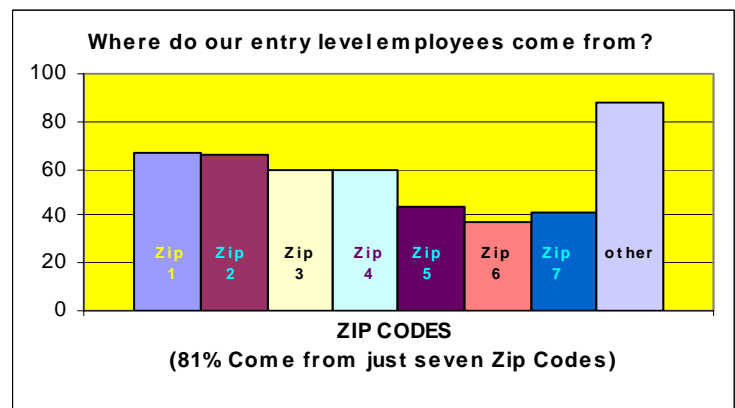
As the economy continues to improve and the population ages and birth rates decline, that underlying assumption begins to break down. What if you have fewer applicants than you have openings? Even more likely, what if you have fewer qualified applicants than openings?

As recently as a year ago, this just wasn't much of a problem. Many hiring managers either were not around during the employee shortages of the late 1990's or have forgotten what it was like & how they dealt with it! The old adage, "good times build bad habits; tough times build good habits" may apply here. When it's easy to recruit enough candidates for your jobs, complacency and habits rule the process.

- When did you last make a substantial change in the publications where you advertise openings or in the content of those advertisements?
- When did you last look for an untapped reserve of fresh talent?
- Have you looked at where your new hires live, hang out, or hear about your company?

In a recent session with a client company, we requested a simple zip code list of their employees in an entry-level position where they had an applicant shortage. We were surprised and they were chagrined by the results. With a million people living within a 45 minute radius of their plant, 81 percent of their employees were from just seven zip codes, representing less than 100,000 people.

### Where do our entry level employees come from?



They were recruiting from less than 10 percent of their possible targets! Aside from the obvious geographic opportunities, where else can you look to increase your applicant pool?

For many companies like Home Depot, Borders Books and Johns Hopkins Medicine, the answer has been in their partnership with AARP to recruit older workers.

Other companies are working with the V.A. and Armed Forces Transition Programs to find good candidates in the ranks of those leaving the military. Community Colleges across the country are working with employers to provide specific career preparation.

Wherever you find them, the payoffs may be huge. Many of these special candidate pools possess a better work ethic and lower turnover rates than the general population. Some come with subsidized on-the-job training. All of these groups help expand your pool so you can be as selective as possible. You deserve the best employees you can possibly find and there's opportunity in expanded numbers!