



## Helping Push the 'Easy' Button on Hiring, Training and Retaining Your Workforce

By Laura Byrnes, APR, CPRC



You know that Office Depot commercial with the big red "that was easy" button? I feel there should also be a "that was fast" button, too.

I mean, where did the summer go? It's already September, the kids have been back in the classroom for nearly a month and in a few weeks it will officially be fall – and you know what that means, gauging by all the holiday décor already for sale – it's time for many employers to ramp up their seasonal hiring.

Summer, we hardly knew ye. For that matter, where has the year gone?

It hardly seems possible that this month, we celebrate one year since the grand opening and ribbon cutting for our affiliate Talent Center, which we operate in partnership with the College of Central Florida.

Talent Center's "next level" fee-free services are open to any employer in the three-county region looking for professional-

level career seekers and highly-skilled technical talent, postsecondary students or recent graduates. The services are also available to any postsecondary student and recent graduate in the three-county area, regardless of which school they attend or where they live in the region.

So yes, the Talent Center is housed at CF's campus in Ocala, but if you are looking for someone with a two- or four-year college degree, for example, or a candidate with management experience, Talent Center was designed with you in mind.

But what if you need to increase your sales associate staff, or find scaffolding or insulation workers, or hire Home Health Aides or have any of the myriad workforce needs that don't necessarily fall in Talent Center's orbit?

Glad you asked.

*Continued on page 14*

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*"When I was a child my family would go for a fun day at the beach. I still remember the seagulls calling, the gentle splashing of the ocean as it sprayed up onto the beach, and the laughter of the children nearby as they squealed with delight. Every time I hear one of those sounds I remember the wonderful times with my family!"*

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**What we do for Employers** – CareerSource CLM offers an integrated talent support solution to help businesses find, develop and keep talented employees. Our team provides the expertise, resources and, depending on eligibility, financial support businesses need to succeed and grow.

While our general services are available to all businesses, certain opportunities are offered in key targeted industries identified as critical to the economic well-being of our three-county area. Specifically, those are Healthcare, Technology, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics. That's probably broader than you think. For example, you don't have to be a software developer to have needs in technology – perhaps you are a bank that needs to beef up its IT department.

Here's a look at some of our fee-free Employer Services:

**Recruiting** – We typically hold large Career Fairs for multiple employers interested in meeting the widest possible array of career seekers possible, all on one day in one place. These usually take place in the spring and fall in Citrus and Marion counties, and have partnered with a neighborhood workforce development area to hold tri-county job fairs in Levy County. The venues are large enough to accommodate 30 or more employers and hundreds of potential candidates; we typically hold our Citrus County events at CF's Learning and Conference Center in Lecanto.

You can also take advantage of Hiring Events customized to meet your unique recruiting needs. These can be held at our Career Centers, at your workplace or at an alternate site, such as CF. Recent Hiring Events held at our career center in Lecanto include those for Health Matters and Sunbelt Industrial Company.

Hiring events are normally smaller than our career fairs, though not always. It depends on the company and its needs. A year ago, we held a two-day event for FedEx in Ocala and 1,800 career seekers turned out. More recently, we held a three-day hiring event for Earth Fare and a four-day event for Rural King.

What's important, however, is not how many employees you want to hire or how large your company, because we can *and do* tailor exclusive hiring event for any sized business.

As always, whether it's a Career Fair or Hiring Event, we handle logistics, cover any venue costs, provide staff support and help get candidates there.

And while on the subject of recruiting, sometimes it's advantageous to "try before you buy." Our Paid Adult Internship and Work Experience Trainee programs can help you do that. Both programs offer eligible employers the option of trying out potential employees on *our* dime. Our paid internship/work experience program identifies individuals who are coming out of training, or individuals who may lack experience in certain areas.

The programs pay participants to work 20 to 40 hours a week for up to 12 weeks or 360 hours at your place of business. Wages, worker's compensation, and other related payroll costs are paid by CareerSource CLM.

- *Internships are for area postsecondary students or recent graduates with technical training, but little or no experience.*
- *Work Experience focuses on job seekers who have work experience but whose job-specific skills need updating.*

Selecting and training an intern/work experience trainee allows employers to train, observe and develop the trainee. By the end of the program, employers can gain a valuable new asset for their organization by offering interns/trainees full-time employment.

**Training New Workers** - There are also times when you find a job candidate and you just like the cut of their jib. You find they have a proven track record and believe they'd be a good fit for your company. The only problem is they may not have the skills you need for the job, or perhaps no one does yet because you've developed something new.

That's where On-the-Job Training (OJT) can help. The OJT program provides a safety net for eligible employers by absorbing much of the financial risk, such as wages and training costs, that you normally invest in taking a chance on a promising candidate.

OJT funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and are limited to private, for-profit businesses in the targeted industries mentioned earlier. Reimbursement is between 50- to 75- percent based on the individual selected and length of training. OJT grants may also cover other costs associated with hiring new employees, such as equipment, uniforms and background checks.

**Training Existing Workers** – Perhaps you're not in the market to add to your staff, but you'd like to invest in more training for your employees. That's where the Custom Business Training program can help.

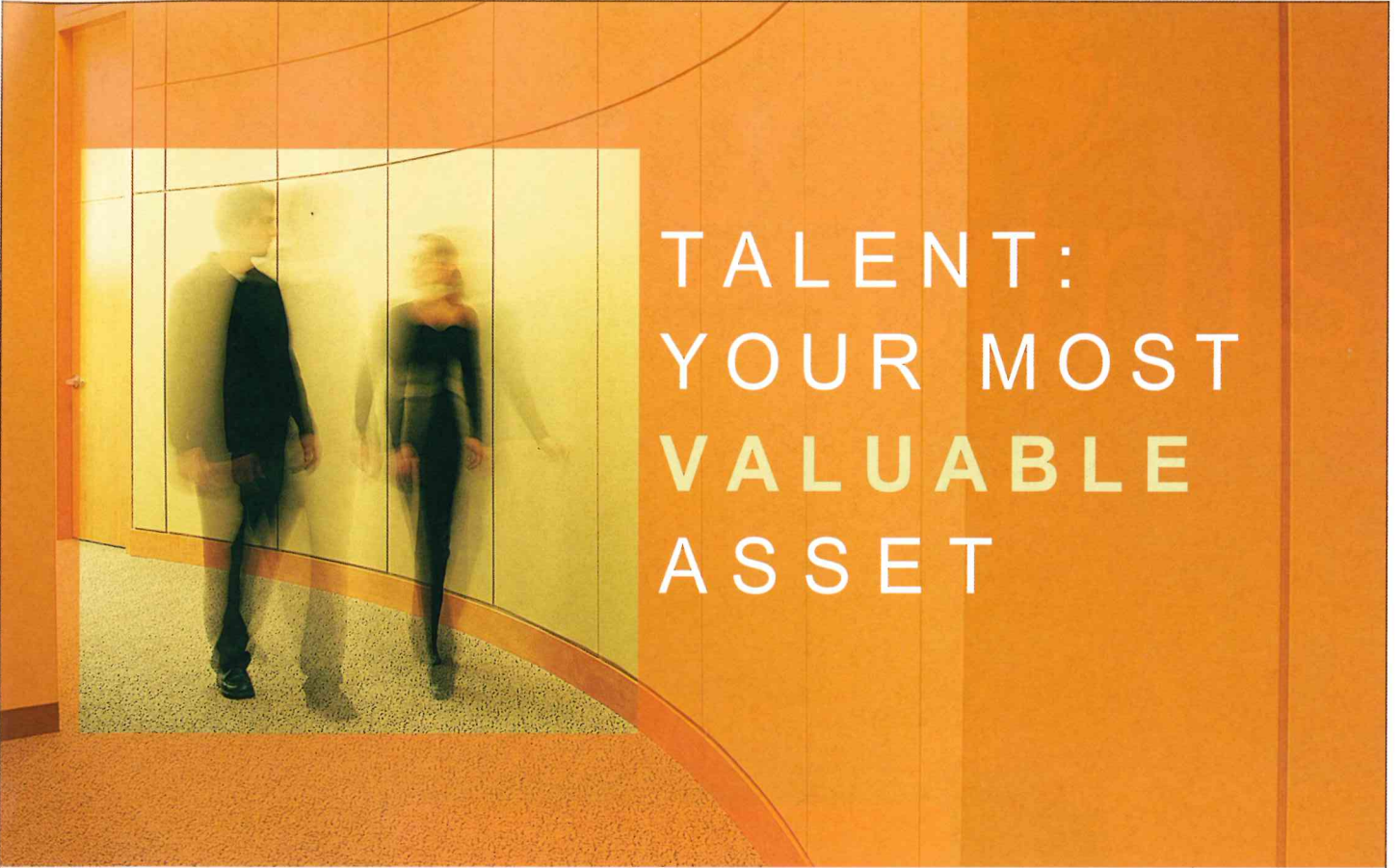
For eligible employers, the program can provide your current employees with new skills important to the success of your business and cover up to 50 percent of your out-of-pocket costs. Significantly, you have the flexibility to choose your own trainer and curriculum or training course as long as it results in a qualifying certification.

There are income and tenure requirements, but basically it can cover any employee that makes less than \$52,000 a year (or \$25 and hour) and those who have been on your payroll for at least six months.

If any of these programs seem right for you, visit the Employers section of our website at [www.careersourceclm.com](http://www.careersourceclm.com), or call one of our business development managers in Citrus County (Jordan Steelfox at 352-249-3278, ext. 3206 or Frank Calascione at 352-249-32878, ext. 4206) or contact our Business Development Team at 800-746-9950.

To learn more about the Talent Center, please call 352-840-5762.

*If you would like to learn more about the initiative, please give a call at 352-873-7955 or 800-746-9950.*



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## COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS CONNECTING BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONALS

The Talent Center at the College of Central Florida is celebrating one year of delivering personalized “next-level” services that meet the needs and expectations of professionals and highly-skilled technical career seekers and the businesses that need their talent. This joint venture between CF and CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion also provides career development and placement services to postsecondary students and graduates throughout Citrus, Levy and Marion counties. All services are offered at no charge. Call us today!

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*Talent Center at the College of Central Florida is an affiliate of CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion in partnership with CF.*

Talent Center is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities. Disponible in Espanol. The voice telephone numbers may be reached using TTY/TDD equipment via Florida Relay at 711. For accommodation, call 844-364-9859, ext. 7879. A proud partner of the American Job Center network and CareerSource Florida.