

Title: **Faculty Recruiting Practices in Christian Business Higher Education**

Gundars Kaupins
Boise State University
313 Department of Management
Boise, Idaho 83725
gkaupins@boisestate.edu

Malcolm Coco
Abilene Christian University
College of Business Administration
Abilene Texas 79699
Malcolm.coco@coba.acu.edu

Full Abstract

Recruiting literature has analyzed numerous recruiting activities of colleges and universities that may affect the outcome of the process. Public universities and community colleges have been the main higher education institutions investigated. Recruiting behaviors benchmarked include the number of people interviewed, major benefits promised to the candidates, length of time the candidate appears on campus, candidate activities on campus, participants invited, and the decision-making process.

Numerous articles involve university efforts to increase diversity of faculty. Incorporating more women, blacks, Hispanics, and Asians has been documented through surveys and case studies.

There is a dearth of research on Christian business college and university recruiting practices. Limited studies focus on the religious background or training required of faculty, diversity efforts that include female, black, Hispanic, and other protected groups, and the types of faculty that would prefer to go to Christian colleges.

Purpose

Due to limited research on Christian business higher education recruiting practices, the present research investigates typical recruiting practices at such schools. Leading research issues include the importance of Christian background in business school faculty recruits, the importance of teaching relative to research, and the need for a diverse workforce. Other major recruiting questions include:

1. Primary advertising methods
2. Primary interviewing methods
3. Time with each individual in the interviewing process
4. Importance of each person in the interviewing process
5. Technology used in candidate presentations
6. Importance of sources of information in the review process
7. Importance of personal background characteristics considered
8. Benefits/perks offered
9. Institutional factors important in accepting current position
10. Reasons for recruiting new candidates

Methodology

Sample

To collect information about Christian business faculty recruiting practices, we sent a questionnaire to 400 business faculty who were members of the Christian Business Faculty Association (CBFA). The CBFA represents about 1000 schools associated with Christian higher education in the United States. One hundred and forty six surveys were received for a return rate of about thirty percent.

About 43 percent of respondents were full professors, 31 percent associate, and 23 percent assistants. About 44 percent of respondents had administrative responsibilities while the rest were faculty. About 64 percent had ten or more credit hours of teaching on a semester basis. This represents a dominance of teaching-based schools rather than research-based schools. Almost all of the respondents have completed faculty recruiting in the past year.

Questionnaire

Each respondent received a four-page questionnaire covering major recruiting practices such as advertising and interviewing methods. Demographic questions were included. The questionnaire took about five to ten minutes to complete.

Results

Leading results from the survey include the following:

1. Primary advertising methods: 48 percent use direct referrals from friends or colleagues
2. Primary interviewing methods: 64 percent use on-site, one-on-one discussions
3. Time with each individual in the interviewing process: the chairperson spends the plurality of time with the candidate followed closely by the dean
4. Importance of each person in the interviewing process: the chairperson has the most importance in the interviewing process followed closely by the dean
5. Technology used in candidate presentations: overhead projectors are the most popular; PowerPoint presentations were second
6. Importance of sources of information in the review process: the resume was rated as the most important
7. Importance of personal background characteristics considered: potential to connect with students was rated the most essential followed by church membership and involvement
8. Benefits/perks offered: medical benefits or on-site medical services were rated most important
9. Institutional factors important in accepting current position: organizational culture was rated most important
10. Reasons for recruiting new candidates: improving teaching and organization effectiveness was rated most important

Conclusions

Teaching quality of faculty and church membership/involvement were the leading considerations in hiring Christian business faculty. Teaching quality appeared to be more important in the smaller schools within this study based on correlation and regression analyses. The teaching quality results coincided with numerous recruiting studies in private and public sector schools.

Providing a diverse faculty appeared to be a low-rated objective in the Christian business faculty sample. Though no direct comparisons were made in this study with other private and public sector schools, the ratings appear, on the surface, to be lower than what is reported in literature of public sector schools.

A wide variety of people typically met with the faculty candidates. The most common and important was the department chairperson followed closely by the business school dean. Inputs from local business representatives, students, faculty, provost, and staff were frequently cited.

Organizational culture appeared to be the most important consideration among respondents in attracting faculty from other schools. Numerous incentives are provided candidates including dependent student discount, fast-track promotion and tenure, and reduced teaching loads.

Future Research

The present study provided benchmark information concerning the behavior and attitudes of Christian business faculty and administrators. This benchmarking can help administrators compare recruiting practices between Christian business schools but cannot compare practices of other public and private schools. Direct comparative studies between Christian, public and private business programs need to be made. Such studies would help control for many demographic factors such as the size of school and nature of the teaching and research mission of the school.

Within the Christian business schools, different disciplines may require considerably different recruiting practices. In general, accounting and business network applications professors are harder to obtain so schools might have to do more to obtain and keep these professors. Future research should check the recruiting practices within the different business school disciplines. Future research can also compare the practices between schools that search for business generalists versus those searching for specialists within the business disciplines.