

At the organization level, applicants are most drawn to prestigious organizations that have a reputation for treating their employees well.<sup>14</sup> The social environment of the organization also matters, with most applicants being attracted to companies where they believe they will work with good coworkers in a positive social environment. Although some research suggests that most potential applicants prefer a supportive organizational culture to a competitive culture, a large proportion of workers clearly prefer an organization that emphasizes individual work and ambition.<sup>15</sup> Most experts advise that organizations should accurately portray their culture in recruiting so they attract employees who will fit well within the organization.

## Reactions to Recruiters

Considerable research has been conducted and carefully reviewed on the reactions of job applicants to the behavior and characteristics of recruiters.<sup>16</sup> The data collected have been somewhat limited by the fact that they focus primarily on reactions to college recruiters rather than noncollege recruiters. Despite this limitation, several key themes emerge in the literature.

First, though the recruiter does indeed influence job applicant reactions, he or she does not have as much influence on them as do actual job characteristics. This indicates that the recruiter cannot be viewed as a substitute for a well-defined and well-communicated recruitment message showing the actual characteristics of the job.

Second, the influence of the recruiter is more likely to be felt in the attitude rather than in the behavior of the job applicant. That is, an applicant who has been exposed to a talented recruiter is more likely to walk away with a favorable impression of the recruiter than to accept a job on the basis of the interaction with a recruiter. This attitudinal effect is important, however, as it may lead to good publicity for the organization. In turn, good publicity may lead to a larger applicant pool to draw from in the future.

Third, two behaviors of the recruiter seem to have the largest influence on applicant reactions. The first is the level of warmth that the recruiter shows toward the job applicant. Warmth can be expressed by being enthusiastic, personable, empathetic, and helpful in dealings with the candidate. The second behavior is communicating knowledge about the job. This can be conveyed by being well versed with the job requirements matrix and the job rewards matrix. Additionally, recruiters who show interest in the applicant are viewed more positively.

Organizations can use this information to their advantage by selecting and training recruiters well. Recruiters should be knowledgeable regarding forms and reports, organization and job characteristics, recruitment targets, policies and procedures, and the legal environment around recruiting.<sup>17</sup> Recruiters also need to receive training in marketing and interpersonal aspects of recruiting. Recruiters can be trained on how to do market research, how to find job candidates in the