

Demand for quality staff still high

by Caroline Braggins

In the past two to three months there has been a noticeable increase in economic confidence and we have seen an increase in the demand for quality staff.

There is still a high demand for quality engineers, designers and drafters in consultancy and design sectors. New projects and projects that were put on hold are going ahead again.

A number of companies have expressed the importance of maintaining their graduate recruitment program for this year.

There has been an increase in the demand for candidates with business development experience. With more importance being placed on successfully tendering for projects, demand for staff

with experience in developing this business increases.

There has been a decrease in the number of 457 company sponsored visas as companies have rationalised their costs. Also, an increase in numbers of job-seekers has meant that there are more local candidates available, and hence, less need to sponsor overseas candidates.

There has been an increase in numbers of applications in the public sector

still finding it difficult to recruit staff with the necessary qualifications and experience.

A number of consultancies have suggested that they acted too hastily by making redundancies earlier on in the year.

As they successfully tender for projects, they are needing to build their employee base again.

On the other hand, a number of companies have mentioned that when the economy was at its highest and they were desperate for staff they employed people who were not a good fit for their company. The economic downturn has allowed them to take their time, streamline their processes and focus on building employee numbers with the quality staff they could not obtain before.

The demand for structural engineers and drafters with building experience declined considerably at the end of 2008 and is still very low. Affected by a number of large development projects being put on hold or cancelled, there were many redundancies in this sector. There has, however, been a slight increase over the



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past three months.

The demand for design and drafting candidates with heavy industry mining experience decreased considerably at the end of 2008 and has not yet picked up.

Candidates are widening their location search when it comes to seeking a role. Many will now consider living and working outside of the capital cities, whereas before it was more difficult for the smaller towns and more rural or remote areas to attract staff.

There is still a high demand for civil engineers, designers and drafters with subdivision and land development experience.

Candidates who have both technical hands-on and mentoring experience are in high demand.

The environmental sector has a demand for staff, especially those with contaminated land experience.

Geotechnical engineers are in demand with companies looking for mid-level to senior level engineers. Candidates with a geology background were previously being trained up in these positions but now companies are seeking geotechnical engineers with direct civil experience.

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