



Effective Strategies to Build Your Talent Pipeline –

Time to Change it Up

2024 ACWA Fall Conference – Solution Spotlight

December 4, 2024

Jennifer Persike

ACWA Foundation Vice Chair; President JP & Co

Kari Shively, PE

ACWA Foundation Treasurer; Senior Vice President, Stantec

Wendi Brown

President, Wendi Brown Creative Partners



Vision and Mission

Vision

The ACWA Foundation envisions a California water industry that embraces, reflects, and respects the people it serves.

Mission

To serve all Californians by advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within the water industry through education, research, and workforce development.



The Water Industry is experiencing a **30% Job Vacancy Rate**





The water industry is older and lacks gender and racial diversity compared to the pool of potential workers

- **Women represent 47%** of workers across all occupations nationally – but only **15%** percent in water. *Gender gap most prominent in skilled trades.*
- **Black and Asians represent 18%** of workers across all occupations nationally – but only **11.2%** in water. *People of color are underrepresented in higher-level, higher-paying occupations like engineering & management.*

85%

Male

37%

>50 years

2/3

White

The Water Industry Needs:

New strategies, programs and practices to attract and retain today's diverse candidates



Out of 428 water employers surveyed by the OEC, 57% said they didn't have, or didn't know if they had, a program related to diversity, equity and inclusion

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Challenges for Recruitment in Water

- Aging workforce and continued retirements
- Competition for workers
- Minimal external awareness of opportunities in the water industry
- Perceived lack of commitment to workforce engagement, including ensuring an inclusive workplace culture:
 - The industry does not reflect its diverse customers and communities
 - Generational differences in employment expectations

Organizations that do not have a diverse workforce will lag in innovation, creativity and will be less competitive.

- McKinsey 2020 Report



Build Your Talent Pipeline - Time to Change it Up

The Water Industry must adopt innovative approaches to:

Expand the talent pipeline



**Attract potential candidates
from all communities**



**Build talent from within their
organization**





Wendi Brown
President,
Wendi Brown
Creative Partners



**RECRUITING STRATEGIES TO CREATE
AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE BRAND &
A TALENT PIPELINE**



INTRODUCTION

Who is Wendi Brown?

Who is WBCP, Inc?

WBCP MISSION:

***To Serve People Who Serve
People***



RECRUITING IS AN ESSENTIAL SKILL FOR EVERY LEADER

Public Sector Serves People—you don't make widgets. Therefore, like us, PEOPLE are your greatest asset.

WE NEED LEADERSHIP TO HIRE, DEVELOP and RETAIN TALENT...

At its most simplistic form, Leadership is two things:

- **HIRING and RETAINING TOP TALENT**
- **DEVELOPING HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS**

But who really teaches you how to do that?



RECRUITING & RETENTION

- **RECRUITING =**

- A Positive Candidate Experience
- Compelling Reasons to Apply that get to the below areas.....

- **RETENTION =**

- **Development and Growth Opportunities**
- **Strong Organizational Culture & Positive Workplace Environment**
- Effective Leadership and Management
- Employee Engagement and Inclusion
- Robust Onboarding Program
- Recognition and Rewards
- Compensation and Benefits
- Job Security and Stability
- Opportunities for Innovation and Autonomy – play to their strengths.
- Work-life Balance
- And more...



RECRUITING

Employers must work hard to "sell" their employer value proposition:- WHAT IS YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION?

- **BRAND -**

- Employers should evaluate recruiting from a candidate's perspective

- **ASK YOURSELF A QUESTION:**

- What does it *feel like* to be recruited by your organization? Is it an inspiring and memorable candidate experience?
- A great process can create brand advocates -- even if the process doesn't end in employment.

- **RECRUITERS – ARE YOUR BRAND AMBASSADORS**

- No talent acquisition strategy can succeed without excellent recruiters. The best recruiters know to:
 - Market a Position (no posting and praying); Streamline a Process (Project Management), Communicate Regularly and Well, Recruit and Measure for Competencies, AND
 - PRESENT AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE BRAND - choose a thoughtful design for every interaction along their candidate journey

Recruiters Build an Emotional Connection in These Ways:



Communicate /
Customer Service

Communicate with your current
and future employees.



Time to Hire

Design and implement
recruitment processes.



Marketing

Write a recruitment
announcements and implement
an advertising plan..



Engage

Engage applicants/candidates
throughout the process.



Value

Demonstrate that they value
diversity, equity an inclusion

WHAT IS BRANDING?



NORDSTROM



**WHAT DO YOU FEEL WHEN
YOU SEE THESE BRANDS?**



Is this Branding?





SO... WHAT IS BRANDING ?

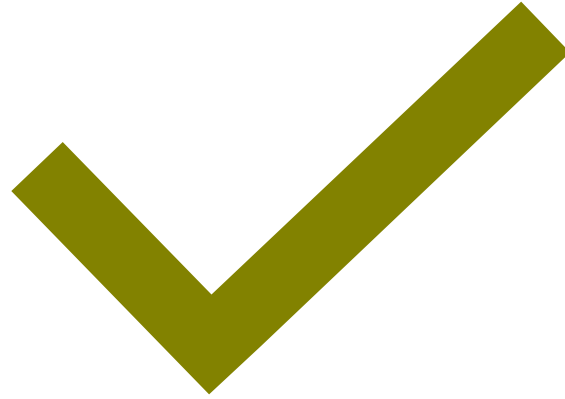
BRAND = MEANING

- **AN EMOTIONAL TRIGGER**
- **REINFORCED BY REPEATED EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BRAND**
- **YOU CAN BUILD A POSITIVE BRAND OR A NEGATIVE BRAND**



RECRUITERS REINFORCE YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Via repeated
experience with
your brand



REAL LIFE EXAMPLE



OPPORTUNITY

RETAIL MARKETING MANAGER / SENIOR BRAND MANAGER

U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC)
FOLSOM, CALIFORNIA

SALARY: \$110,000–\$130,000 DOE/DOQ *REMOTE WORK OPPORTUNITY*

USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE IN CONSUMER MARKETING TO HELP SHAPE THE BLUEBERRY INDUSTRY! The U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) seeks a Retail Marketing Manager/Senior Brand Manager (Brand Manager) to oversee impactful campaigns aimed at promoting blueberries across all channels. The Brand Manager will review, edit, and approve marketing campaigns while offering valuable feedback to creatives on branding consistency. This role involves analyzing market trends, consumer behavior and competitive landscapes to identify opportunities for brand positioning and differentiation within the agricultural market. The Brand Manager role requires an in-depth understanding of marketing metrics and analytics, such as page views and conversion rates. They will think critically about the role marketing plays in building the long-term value proposition of a product.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate versatility in multiple areas, including consumer, eCommerce, and digital and social media marketing. Strong analytical skills, coupled with excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal abilities are essential. The Brand Manager will demonstrate strategic thinking, creativity and a passion for driving brand growth! The successful candidate will be able to immediately and seamlessly handle this position's responsibilities. Grow your career as you contribute to the growth of exciting marketing initiatives—*apply today!*



CAREER OPPORTUNITY

FINANCE DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

CITY OF SONOMA

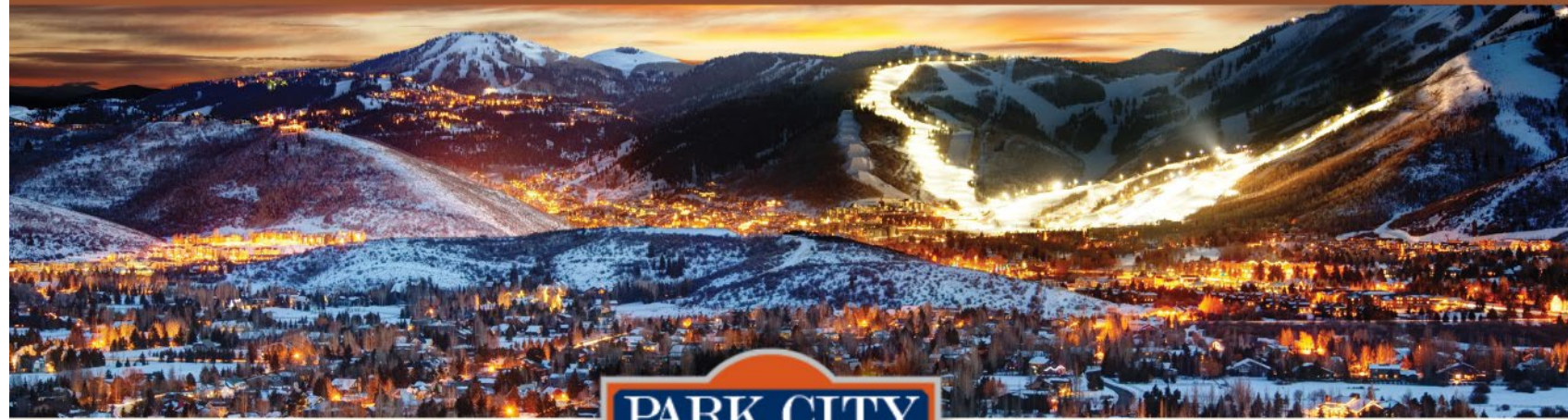
\$149,652 to \$181,908 DOE/DOQ

THE CITY OF SONOMA, CALIFORNIA, IS SEEKING A FINANCE DIRECTOR with experience in both accounting and budget preparation to oversee the Department of Finance. This is a hands-on and public-facing leadership position with substantial economic influence on the community. The ideal candidate is a confident communicator with excellent interpersonal skills and a proven track record of public sector fiscal management and leadership. The Director will prepare and manage the City of Sonoma's budget of approximately \$43 million and oversee three accounting staff members while closely collaborating with the City Manager, City Council, department heads, and consultants. The primary responsibility of the Director is the preparation, presentation, and oversight of the City's annual budget and Capital Improvement Projects fund. The ideal candidate for this exciting role will be a working leader, who is eager to use their public sector experience and financial expertise to serve as a key member of the City's Executive Team. *If you are seeking longevity in a creative finance role, apply today!*





CAREER OPPORTUNITY: TWO OPENINGS!



PARK CITY

1884

Assistant Planning Director

Annual Salary: \$103,200–\$129,000 DOE/DOQ

&

Senior Planner

Annual Salary: \$92,000–\$115,000 DOE/DOQ

PLANNING DEPARTMENT CITY OF PARK CITY, UTAH

THE CITY OF PARK CITY, UTAH IS SEEKING TWO PLANNING PROFESSIONALS to join its visionary and dedicated Planning Department—**Assistant Planning Director and a Senior Planner!** Both positions will report to the Planning Director and will be immersed in exciting high-level current and long-range planning projects, including the preservation of over 400 historic sites; the reimagining of City land into a vibrant mixed-use site; the establishment of beautiful new recreation areas; and the development of affordable housing. While working in the gorgeous mountain resort town of Park City, these hardworking professionals will have the opportunity to ski, golf, and bike in a scenic environment while championing projects that have a serious impact on the quality of life for residents. The ideal candidates for these roles will be flexible and unbiased leaders who thrive in a team environment. They will also be organized problem solvers with exceptional attention to detail and the ability to effectively manage multiple projects at once. They will both have oversight of staff – the Assistant Planning Director will oversee and mentor senior-level planners, while the Senior Planner will oversee and mentor junior planners and planning technicians. As technical experts, they will bring a depth of experience in permitting, land use planning, public planning, and related policies and procedures, including best practices and state-specific codes. *If you are a passionate planner with an eye toward the future—apply today!*



The City

PARK CITY LIES ONLY 30 MILES from Salt Lake City, is framed by the Wasatch Range, and is home to 8,500 full-time residents. Park City is within Summit County, which is home to 45,000 residents. With two world-class ski resorts, Deer Valley and Park City Mountain Resort, Park City draws over 5 million visitors from across the globe each year. Park City also hosts a wide range of cultural and sporting events, is a playground for outdoor enthusiasts, and offers live music and local restaurants.

Long before Park City became a world-class mountain resort town and venue for the 2002 Olympic Games, it was famous for silver mining. The area boasts a lively and colorful past, founded by prospectors in the late 1860s. Silver was mined until the early 1970s, and the mining company, Park City Consolidated Mines, entered into the ski business in 1963, when they built the first lifts on Treasure Mountain. Visit the Park City Historical Society and Museum's [website](#) to learn more about the community's vibrant past. Park City is also home to the famous **Sundance Film Festival**, which hosts over 86,000 attendees every year, including up-and-coming film directors, actors, musicians, and other A-list celebrities. Additionally, a second Olympics is on the horizon for 2034.

CLICK
LINKS



RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES FOR AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE BRAND



Remove barriers to allow for equity to expand the number, quality and diversity of applicant pools

RECRUITING STRATEGIES

Recruit for competencies – not minimum qualifications

Example:

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS – example 1

Any combination of experience and training that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities would be qualifying, however a typical way of obtaining these are:

EMPLOYMENT STARDARDS – example 2

The City will consider an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job as described herein, and should also have....

Recruiters are the Window to Your Brand

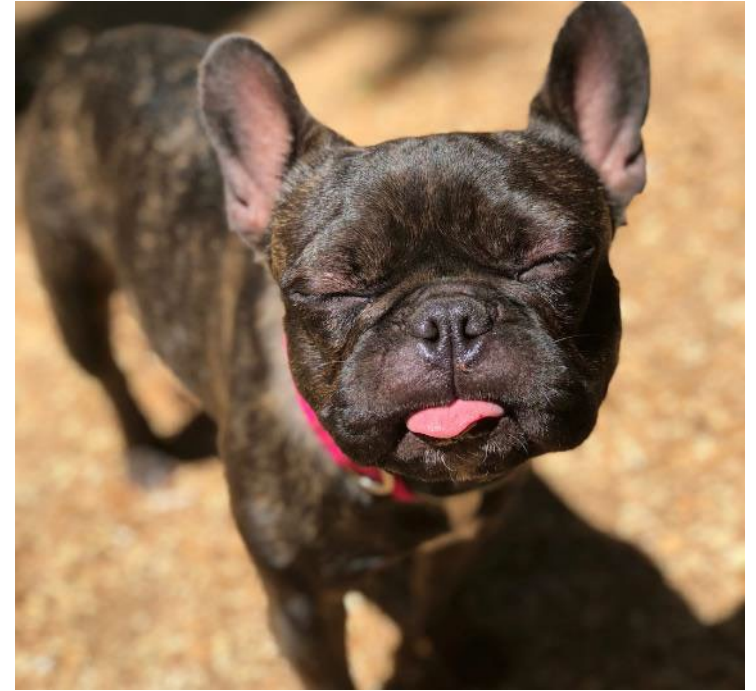




OUT OF THE BOX APPROACHES THAT HAVE ENHANCED OUR REPUTATION AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE



**SUBSIDIZED, ON-PREMISE, COMPANY
CHILDCARE**



DOG FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT



WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE



KITCHEN / FOOD



Questions



Past Solution Spotlight Topics

➤ Where is My Workforce?

*Tackling Post Pandemic Hiring and Culture Shifts –
2023 ACWA Fall Conference*

➤ Building Community Trust Through Transparency & Inclusion

*Joint Effort by ACWA Foundation & California Urban
Water Agencies – “A Reliable Workforce for Reliable
Water Infrastructure”*





Thank You!



Jennifer Persike

ACWA Foundation Vice Chair; President JP & Co

Kari Shively, PE

ACWA Foundation Treasurer; Senior Vice President, Stantec