



Q&A

Is it common practice to pay for air travel and lodging of potential employees? It seems that if they want the job that they would be partly responsible. Maybe they should pay and I reimburse if they get the job. Should they have a responsibility to fit in? Seems like everybody thinks that they want to move to (warm weather state) but six months later, it's all different. I have previously regretted my decision to hire from out of state. But the talent pool has grown small and we know everyone locally. Any suggestions would be appreciated.

BOOT CAMP grad

Dear BC Grad,

I cannot say that a standard exists in our industry. In general, I think it is fair to say that most businesses pay interview expenses but that is a function of market demand in the industry. In an industry where employees are knocking down the door to get hired anywhere they can, I doubt if a business would bother to pay interview travel expenses. That is not our industry.

Here's how Kids First handles this situation. If there is a candidate we want to meet face to face, someone who after doing our due diligence we believe that we want as part of our company, then we certainly would offer travel and lodging reimbursement. If we were

unknowing or ambivalent about this person, then we would not offer this. I do not see why anyone would waste their money on a wishy-washy candidate. The point is, we do a LOT of investigation before making the decision to fly someone in.

For instance, in a few hours I'm phoning the West Coast to make an offer to 'Sam.' Sam interviewed with us last weekend. Before Sam visited, I had spent two hours on phone interviews with him; plus I had phoned all of his seven references, grilling these nice people about Sam as much as my skills would allow. I also contacted three club owners/friends who I thought might know of Sam or be able to supply a tidbit of information. My point is, that before Sam visited, there had been probably five plus hours of detective work (me) and it all pointed to the same direction—great person, great employee. So, the decision to spend money on travel for this candidate was easy because by decision time, we knew within a 90% probability that Sam would fit into our company.

The Visit

Sam arrived on Friday at 1 p.m.; I gave him a 30+ minute tour; then, three of my staff spent the next 1.5 hours in an interview with Sam. I later joined them for 30 minutes. Saturday night Sam attended a DL (Department Leader) get-together at my house for four hours, most of that in 'interview mode.' At the end of the

evening I told Sam I would call on Thursday to make an offer. We spent 15+ hours of dedicated time learning about this individual before making him a job offer!

Full disclosure: almost all of the above is true. In reality, Sam spent his own money to get to Cincinnati because he had already planned the trip to visit his fiancé (Sam intends to move to this area). However, had it not been for this unique situation we would have offered travel expenses. Today, when I make my offer to Sam I intend to explain that we typically pay interview travel and I will include that amount as a signing bonus (full disclosure).

Bottom Line

I suggest paying interview expenses but only after you are 90% sure you want this candidate as a member of your company. In general, no gymnastics school I know of goes to the extent we do to learn about people and it pays off for us and it will for you.

Best of luck, Jeff ✖

Jeff Metzger

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Hosted in Cincinnati, BOOT CAMP is a life-changing, 4^{1/2} day total immersion leadership, marketing and organizational workshop for GymClub Owners.

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