

Tough economy? Local firm keeps on growing

Local Spotlight

By Stephanie Angelyn Casola
STAFF WRITER

While the news of employee layoffs or company cutbacks continues, one Livonia recruiting firm has seen nothing but growth.

Stephen A. Lowisz founded Qualigence in 1999 not realizing just how fast his company might expand.

In the past 18 months, the locally based business has more than doubled its staff, going from 13 employees to 40. There are no signs that growth is slowing. Lowisz said he anticipated the space issues will arise again soon in their location at 35200 Schoolcraft.

“We’ve moved five times in six years,” said Lowisz. Each time the business outgrew its offices. Lowisz said even after 9/11, when most companies were losing business, Qualigence kept right on growing. “It’s almost as recession-proof as you can get,” he said. Qualigence is a recruitment research and professional search business. The firm not only staffs local companies and national corporations with qualified candidates they are seeking, but also augments the services offered by the human resources departments within other businesses.

Lowisz, a Canton resident, has been in the business of recruitment for 16 years. He has since developed a way of doing business that he said sets Qualigence apart from other recruitment firms. Qualigence – a combination of the words “quality” and “intelligence” – divides its efforts into research and recruitment. Recruiters work directly with corporations in need of hiring new employees. Rather than seeking out people who are actively looking for a new or different job, Qualigence targets those “passive candidates” who fit the job description.

“We don’t use electronic media,” said Lowisz, noting services like Monster or Hot Jobs web sites. Instead, researchers search for people who have demonstrated the necessary skills and seem to meet the culture of the business which is looking to hire. Qualigence developed its own “methodology” to meet these criteria. “It’s truly ‘What’s the best fit?’” Lowisz said.

Another difference at Qualigence is the way the company is compensated. Rather than being a headhunter that charges a commission when a new employee is placed, Qualigence charges an hourly fee for all the services they offer. Lowisz says that ensures that the candidates Qualigence finds will be best-suited and have the proper experience for the job. Developing successful client partnerships is priority at Qualigence. This unique way of operating is proof that Qualigence puts the clients’ needs and goals first, rather than try to push the highest compensated candidate to receive the highest commission. “We’re pioneers in what we do and how we do it,” he said.

Lowisz is looking for the same qualifications and that “best fit” as he continues to hire within Qualigence. The company has actually had to turn down projects recently because there is more work than there are employees to complete it.

Kim Schachinger, Vice President of Marketing, said there is enough work to warrant hiring many people at once. But Qualigence is looking at its growth carefully and only hiring people who can be effectively trained at one time, before beginning their work.



Lowisz founded the Livonia-based recruiting firm, Qualigence, in 1999.



Stephen A. Lowisz, President of Qualigence, and Kim Schachinger, Vice President of Marketing, discuss how the Livonia company has managed to stay recession-proof.

“Our reputation is precious to us,” said Lowisz. The company, which also has offices in both Cincinnati, OH. and Naples, FL., boasts 97 percent client retention. Its clients include Daimler Chrysler, Bank of America and Limited Brands. “Although the company is our client, the end result is that we provide new opportunities for candidates”, states Schachinger, a Farmington Hills resident.

Schachinger is spreading the word about Qualigence, participating in national trade shows, as well as in local organizations. The company has also taken on volunteer efforts with the Motor City Blight Busters. “Giving back to the community is one of our initiatives,” said Lowisz.