

A War For Talent?

I just finished watching part 1 of an interview with Microsoft CIO, Tony Scott. The interview is very interesting and Mr. Scott has some great ideas about the future of IT in general.

The interviewer asked Mr. Scott, where the IT industry is headed, because we're moving from an operational paradigm to a business process oriented world. Mr. Scott replies, "One of the biggest [challenges] that I see is there is going to be a war for talent in IT."

Mr. Scott says that in the past, the Big 6 Consulting firms would hire someone, give them lots of experience and training, and then those people would come out of those firms and join the industry as well-trained talented leaders. However because the Big 6 model isn't as popular as it used to be, he is saying that there will be a shortage of talented managers to choose from in the future.

I appreciate the view that because the Big 6 isn't churning out managers en masse any longer, that there may be a shortage in talent. However, it is hard for me to conceive that at this time, in this current world economy, that there isn't a glut of available talent in the IT profession.

I understand that hiring experienced managers is the desire of most IT shops. There is value in hiring well experienced people to fill those roles. However, I think that the current economy presents an opportunity for firms to hire low and train up the next generation of management.

Having been a consultant for the last 11 plus years, I am more than happy to join a firm as a full time employee. As I've written before, it gives me the opportunity to become a part of something and to grow my skills and talent.

I think that if given the opportunity there are thousands of IT workers, either former consultants, or those that are unemployed for other reasons, who would jump at the opportunity to join a firm who is looking to hire talented individuals who can grow with the company.

I think that the reality of the economy and the business environment should give companies the opportunity to look at a new kind of IT worker. Maybe there will be a shortage in the near future of well trained and highly experienced talent, but I am certain that there is a big pool of highly talented, eager to learn, skilled IT professionals who would gladly accept the opportunity to be trained up to become a leader in IT.