



ALL BUSINESS ♦ ALL NEW JERSEY

PRINT | CLOSE
WINDOW

Matchmaker for scientific, engineering talent comes to N.J.

By Shankar P.

9/16/2009

Though the recession and resulting job crunch have devastated companies, a business concept has arrived in New Jersey that brings work for those with useful skills and entrepreneurs looking for short-term assistance. With two major employers signing on, **YourEncore Inc.**, an Indianapolis-based firm that pools talent in select industries for its corporate clients, has officially launched operations in New Jersey.

Johnson & Johnson, in New Brunswick, and **Kraft Foods**, in East Hanover, are among those that have signed up for YourEncore.com, the portal that allows them to tap expertise, according to **Michael Ferrante**, the firm's Cranbury-based client services director overseeing the Northeast markets. YourEncore has about 300 experts in New Jersey out of 5,500 nationwide, he said.

YourEncore specializes in providing expertise in the life sciences, consumer products, foods, specialty materials, aerospace and defense industries, Ferrante said; most of the people it signs on are retired scientists and engineers. Its corporate partners pay a one-time membership fee, along with a monthly fee that varies by the company's size, Ferrante said, while the experts in its pool pay nothing.

Client companies get to search, partner and pose questions to YourEncore's experts through secure channels on the latter's Web site, and also pay for the best answer, he said. Experts they hire for specific projects are paid either project-based fees, retainers or hourly consulting fees.

The firm expects to sign on more experts and member clients at its next networking meeting "for retired and recently separated scientific and technology professionals," scheduled for Sept. 29 at Rutgers University's Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, in New Brunswick.

YourEncore's team of experts in New Jersey is hired for assignments in areas including quality assurance audits, due diligence requests, research, licensing, external product reviews and supply-chain improvement projects, Ferrante said.

"Some of them are constantly working, others have between three and eight projects a year, while some others may be in the network for six months before they are identified for a project," he said.

The idea for the firm came about six years ago, when pharmaceutical company **Eli Lilly**, in Indianapolis, and consumer products company **Procter & Gamble**, of Cincinnati, "found that there is a demographic time bomb coming with retirees, and were very keen on retaining key scientific and technical knowledge."

The two companies went on to become founding members of YourEncore to continue to access the talent that would otherwise have gone with retiring employees, Ferrante said. “They could not have asked their retiring engineers and scientists to come back and work for them, but wanted a solution, as well as expertise from other companies,” he added.

E-mail Shankar P. at shankar_p@njbiz.com

NJBIZ, Copyright © 2009, All Rights Reserved.