



Rockwood Energy Search LLC

P.O.Box 637 Spring Lake, NJ 07762 | 732 681.2811 TEL | 732 782.0203 FAX | info@rockwoodsearch.com

The Annual Job Cycle in Energy Firms

This seasonality is typical of not just trading firms, but most other types of firms as well—with one exception, consulting firms. These are a bit different, since their bonus and promotion year tends to go from June to May, as opposed to the calendar year approach.

Financial budget and personnel budgets are formed in September through December, with the final numbers being stamped out in early December.

So, management looks at staff expansions or changes, and begins the process of internal promotions and transfers in January.

This is going on as bonuses are being paid. Wall Street-oriented energy firms like Morgan Stanley, Goldman and Sempra pay bonuses late in December or in January. Other non-regulated trading entities pay bonuses in March or April. The same is true in retail energy marketing, particularly among incentive-paid sales people.

After bonuses are paid, people leave for other jobs, heightening the urgency of filling key positions. By late March, most departures are visible and the true size of the recruiting problem is known.

By June, most jobs are filled. If the job isn't that key, firms may just defer filling the position until next year.

For firms that trade power, the summer months are very busy and all hands are at work, and don't have time to interview. This is largely true of all firms, since execs start taking vacation if they're in trading.

Conclusion: if you don't have a new job by July 31, the chances are fairly slim that you'll get one before the Fall. *Corollary:* you must be active in networking and interviewing, starting in October and ending in June.

In fact, we recommend networking all year, since it's difficult to reach the right exec, the best recruiters, and get a true feel for the market precisely when you need a job. Start early, keep it up.

The main exception is when new firms enter the market, or firms have new initiatives such as enter a new market, launch a new product. Then hiring can go on all year.

This seasonality is accentuated or diminished during strong economic times, weak economic times, or in periods of regulatory change. For example, after the power industry was deregulated in 1992, there was a 2-3 year flurry of recruiting year-round as electric utilities started up trading firms.

In 2009, the commercial and industrial (retail) power market in Pennsylvania is opening up, and firms are hiring to capture this market. Recruiting is going into the summer season.

Learning More

To talk to a Rockwood staff member or to get an answer to a specific question, send an email to resumes@rockwoodsearch.com .

Rockwood Energy Search LLC

www.rockwoodsearch.com