

PetrisNEWS - Interview with Bob Frank about Petris Recruiting November 2006

PetrisNEWS took a few minutes to speak with recruiter Bob Frank about his views on the energy business market conditions for hiring as well as his views on what makes Petris unique.

PetrisNEWS (PN): Tell us a little about yourself and your work at Petris.

Bob Frank (BF): I've been a recruiter in Houston focused on technology and the energy business for more than 30 years. Clients have included a range of energy and technology companies, from large global companies including Tenneco, Compaq and PDVSA to smaller, growing companies like Petris. My job is to get the best people into Petris by carefully selecting and screening those who would have the optimal fit for the needs of the organization.

PN: Petris recruits people with energy domain knowledge and IT expertise. How unique is this in your experience?

BF: The quantity of data dealt with by energy IT people, along with the specialization and complexity of the applications are what make this business unique. Because some of these applications take years to learn, specific knowledge is highly desirable as it lessens the 'learning curve' for new recruits. It also plays up the value of mid-career hires, which are far more likely to have worked with multiple applications and within different aspects of upstream O&G. Some industries, aerospace and automotive among them, have built their own systems for handling data, but the energy industry has selected to focus on their core competencies – finding and producing hydrocarbons – and prefers to turn to specialists to help handle their data. Petris helps companies deal with the manipulation and management of these huge, complex data bases. The 'lion taming' challenge Petris takes on is helping companies deal with this data on their own terms. This is why knowledge of both energy and IT is essential for Petris people.

PN: What's the current climate for recruiting people in the energy business?

BF: The market has become incredibly active and more competitive in the past two years. Salaries, which were essentially flat two years ago, are rising. Because of the overall growth of the energy business, there are a greater number of positions open, and candidates today usually have multiple offers to consider. All in all, this makes for a very competitive market for recruiting. But even within this environment, companies which can offer something that's 'extra' and unique are more successful at getting the best people than those who simply put the positions out there to see who responds.

PN: What do you find unique about Petris that's attractive to job seekers?

BF: Petris is in the 'middle ground' between the huge, integrated companies such as Schlumberger and Halliburton and the new and emerging technology companies. The large companies are financially secure and good at providing a standardized solution, but have difficulty being agile and flexible enough to

overcome their internal bureaucracies and deliver solutions which address the specific needs of an individual customer. The new and emerging technology companies often have very interesting products and services, but are not as financially secure as a new hire might desire – oftentimes, they are only as good as their next round of investors will let them be. Petris is a ‘right sized’ company, small enough to be innovative, yet large enough to provide a robust, well integrated solution and the support needed to ensure it’s implemented well. Petris, which is privately owned and profitable, has been around since 1994, which makes it a great choice for long-term security and growth.

PN: What is different about Petris’ approach to hiring?

BF: Petris hires people, not job descriptions. It’s not unusual for a person with a unique skill set to be identified during the recruiting process, and a specific position created for them. The company grows by adding talented, capable people, not just filling specific job requirements. That said, Petris does look for specific skill sets, but places equal importance on development and opportunities for growth. People who will continue to learn and acquire new capabilities will help Petris grow.

PN: What’s different and unique about the Petris culture?

BF: Every company has its own culture – and I’ve seen a number of them in my years of recruiting. Petris offers relief from the traditional corporate environment. The quality of the people already in the company are responsible for a lot of this difference – they have all been there, done that with corporate environments and were ready for something different and more personal when they joined Petris. The culture is far less bureaucratic than large companies – if you have a good idea, you can make it happen. And this is coupled with the financial security you rarely see in the small new/emerging technology companies. It makes for a good mix.

PN: What advice would you give a potential job seeker if they are interested in working for Petris?

BF: First and foremost, be personal! Far too many companies stop at the resume. You need your intelligence, personality and values to shine through the words. Petris is most interested in hiring people based on who they are, their values and what they want from their career. Candidates often interview with five to ten people at Petris, many from different disciplines. Petris wants to make sure the “chemistry” is a good fit, along with the talent and experience of a new hire. It’s what you don’t explicitly say that’s more important to us. I see hundreds of resumes from technically competent and well-qualified people every day. What makes the difference is the personal side – and that’s where I work to find those that can not only technically contribute, but also ‘fit’ for Petris.

PN: Who should a person contact if they are interested in Petris?

BF: That’s easy! Just send your resume to recruiting@petris.com. We have many positions available and if your ‘personality’ is a good fit for our culture and needs, we may just craft a position especially for you.