

Organization Character Award Nomination

Company Name: MATRIX Resources

INTEGRITY

1. We remain committed to our core company values (Integrity, Excellence, Respect, Innovation, Fun, Results-Driven) and in always doing the right thing, even if it might cost the company a short-term gain.
2. MATRIX will walk away from a client or candidate that even hints of lack of integrity. We refuse to do business with hiring companies that have less than ethical or legal hiring practices. We do not represent job-seeking candidates with exaggerated employment claims. We're never afraid to make a difficult short-term decision for the right reason.

RESPECT

1. MATRIX is showing empathy to the plight of the thousands of out-of-work IT professionals through the development of an innovative new program to provide them with essential job hunting skills – at no cost to them and with no expectations of revenues for our company. (For more detail, see response under Organization Character)
2. The MATRIX culture has such respect for our internal employees that most every change or improvement is not implemented until the leadership team has obtained feedback from the soon to be impacted employees and sincerely make every effort to add their feedback to the final outcome.
3. Although MATRIX is very much a sales centric organization, non-sales support staff are made to feel equal to sales and recruiting account managers. Other than senior executives, all sales and support staff have their desks in a work cube environment.
4. MATRIX promotes work life balance among all employees; overtime work is the exception.

RESPONSIBILITY

1. Founded in 1983 on principles of integrity, fairness, genuine care for people, and a commitment to excellence, MATRIX and our employees formalized in 2002 our identity, foundational values, and vision into a charter statement entitled The MATRIX Charter. We hold ourselves accountable to the Charter both internally and externally. First, we implemented the CharterCheckpoint to measure how we “stack up” on each of the six values. This internal survey is conducted semi-annually with the results communicated company-wide. In addition, the CharterCheckpoint is displayed in the visitor lobby of each of our offices, for all to see. Also, The Charter is publicly displayed as a large (3’ x 4’) plaque in the lobby in our offices, on our Web site (<http://www.matrixresources.com/matrix/website.nsf/framesets/AboutMATRIXCharterFrames?OpenDocument>), and our employees proudly present The Charter to clients, candidates, consultants and other external business partners as part of our business card.

2. We have an ongoing CSSR program (Corporate Services Support Request) to obtain immediate feedback on how the internal Corporate Services organization is doing in responding to everyday requests. That information is shared company-wide through the yearly Corporate Services Satisfaction Survey.

3. MATRIX measures responsibility to our clients by requesting feedback through a quarterly Report Card which measures such things as timeliness of response, quality of resumes and professionalism.

Story Related as an Illustration of This Organization's Leadership Character

In 2002, MATRIX created an innovative new program that we feel strongly personifies our company values and character. During this time, our industry – IT staffing – was in the midst of a complete reversal in market conditions as a result of the dot-com bust and the recession. A job seekers' environment of multiple job offers enhanced with a variety of perks was dramatically replaced with one where thousands of IT professionals were being laid off and with too few open jobs available for which to compete. At MATRIX, we found this situation especially difficult. Founded in 1983 on principles of integrity, fairness, genuine care for people, and a commitment to excellence, we had forged strong, long-term relationships not only with large numbers of employers, but also with thousands of candidates. However, in a new, dramatically changed job market, not only were we forced to deal with a physical flood of resumes – as many as 2,000 a day – but we were forced to resolve the moral question of how we could positively respond to these candidates at a time when so few jobs were available. Having recently formalized the company's values into The MATRIX Charter, we struggled with the implications of our Value of "Respect," which reads, "To show care and compassion for all individuals because of our inherent trust and belief in people." However, we knew that there was no way we could realistically interview thousands of job candidates without impacting our ability to make placements. But somehow we had to do something; at the very least we should offer hope. At the same time, a dramatic decrease in job orders from hiring companies forced staffing firms like MATRIX to eliminate expenses and examine return on every investment in order to protect their future. In spite of this, we made a landmark decision in company history to invest valuable dollars in an outreach program to help IT professionals with their job searches, even if it is not directly related to a client job order. Knowing that the vast majority of job seekers obtain jobs without the aid of staffing agencies—as high as 85 percent in some studies – we made the commitment to provide IT professionals, at no cost to them, the knowledge and tools they need to find jobs with or without assistance from MATRIX. To deliver on this, we contracted with two outside industry consultants to develop and facilitate an ongoing series of three workshops on essential job seeking skills. Since we began the workshop series in September 2002, we have served more than 1,500 job seekers through more than 50 separate sessions in Atlanta; Dallas; Research Triangle Park, N.C.; and Birmingham. The attendees have ranged from new college graduates seeking their first opportunity to senior IT managers out of work for the first time in many years. Frustrated by the difficulty of finding work in a tough market, they have come to listen, learn, and question. Although we expected the feedback from workshop attendees to be positive, we have been both overwhelmed and humbled by the response. We have received heartfelt thank you notes and success stories from each market in which we offer the workshops. At the end of one networking workshop in Dallas, one attendee said she had paid another agency \$4,000 to help

her find work, but got vastly more practical advice from our free session. Another went directly from a session on networking to a professional association meeting where he used the networking techniques he had just learned. He went home that night with three qualified job leads. Others have walked out of the workshops on their cell phones, making contact with people they had neglected. In Atlanta, one attendee simply said, "I don't know what's in it for you, but thank you!" To be sure, there are both direct and indirect costs in offering the candidate workshops. But if we had any questions about their value, they were completely removed the day one senior IT manager who had been out of work for many months said, "You have given me hope. I will NEVE!R forget what you did for me today." With that level of feedback, we know that helping candidates help themselves is the right thing to do. Although some in our industry may say that this candidate outreach program will cost MATRIX revenue because the candidates will find their next position without the use of a staffing firm, we think of it as our contribution to a group of people to whom we care very deeply. We feel it's our response to the IT community to which we serve – that we are so committed to. And we're very proud of the program's success. Rather than throw up our hands to a challenge brought on by difficult market conditions, we found the solution through answering what MATRIX stands for as a company.