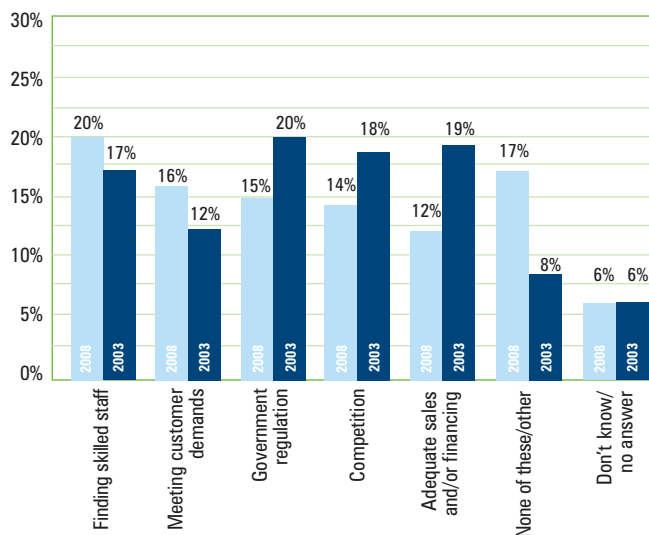


RAISING THE BAR

The Quest for Talent

Recruiting experienced professionals remains a concern for many organizations, according to a recent survey developed by Robert Half Management Resources. The survey asked chief financial officers, "Which one of the following is the biggest challenge facing your company in the next 12 months?" Their responses, from this year and five years prior:



Corporate Connections



American LegalNet and **Open Text Corporation** announced a partnership agreement that will expand the product portfolios of both organizations.

LexisNexis and **Two Step Software Inc.** have entered into an agreement whereby Two Step Software will embed HotDocs® directly into its Corporate Focus™ corporate governance database application.

RainMaker Software Inc. announced an integration partnership with payment processing company **Global Exchange Group.**



“Overheard”

“It would be a **mistake to assume** that women managers who are **not seeking** higher-level positions **don’t care** about what their work days are like. They **want** to be **challenged**, but the **end goal is mastery, not promotion.**”

- Robert Morgan, Co-President, Recruitment & Talent Management, Hudson

Proper Training

Making Time for Skills Assessments

While most law firms recognize the need for implementing more rigorous, measurable skills assessment programs for their existing and prospective employees, few find the time and focus to actually implement them. With training budgets being squeezed, a law firm must protect against a widening gap between the skills available versus the skills required to deliver the best work product. This is especially important given the fact that, in order to increase profitability, law firms are asking secretaries to support more lawyers.

To address these issues, as well as to improve employee retention, law firms are increasingly planning, creating, and implementing skills assessment programs. Skills assessment programs are focused on the advanced Microsoft Word skills that are a fundamental part of document production within law firms. These skills include:

- cleaning up Word documents (tables, footnotes, etc.);
- working with fields (e.g., hyperlinks; page numbering);
- applying outline numbering;
- formatting documents; and styling documents.

If a law firm chooses not to implement a skills assessment program for prospective new hires in the secretarial, word processing, or help desk areas, it runs an increased risk of making a bad hire which can cost \$100,000.

In working with law firm customers to implement dozens of skills assessment programs, Microsystems has identified the best practices for implementing an advanced Microsoft Word skills assessment program and discussed them in a recent white paper, “available at www.microsystems.com/frms/wpSkillsAssessment.php.”