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Portfolio

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[hed] **Four great places to recruit tech talent**

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In today’s job market, hiring for innovation positions has become increasingly competitive and critical to our growing digital transformation needs. Fortunately, community banks have an opportunity to snatch up tech experts—as long as you know where to look. With that in mind, the following four approaches offer a way to upgrade your innovation recruitment efforts.

1. **Explore local university relationships.** Local universities can be feeders into bank technology needs. As we discussed in episode 3 of the *Independent Banker* podcast, $2 billion-asset Queensborough National Bank and Trust Co. in Louisville, Ga., developed a relationship with the Georgia Fintech Academy, a talent development initiative affiliated with the University System of Georgia. In addition to working directly with students on a predictive analysis project, Queensborough hired a student from Augusta University as an information security analyst.
2. **Seek out big tech and fintech talent.** As technology companies preempt a potential recession and recalibrate the past few years’ overhiring trends, they are laying off highly qualified individuals. Monitor LinkedIn and technology job boards for these high-tech candidates and reach out with opportunities. Entrepreneurs may also offer a gateway to strong candidates. Case in point: Colony Bank, a nearly $3 billion-asset institution in Fitzgerald, Ga., hired fintech founder Christian Ruppe as chief innovation officer. The bank’s thought was that it could enable someone who had built a fintech from the ground up to apply that wisdom in the bank environment.
3. **Pick up on merger potential.** As mergers and consolidations continue in banking, look for opportunities to onboard team members with targeted expertise. As shared in episode 1 of the *Independent Banker* podcast, $2.68 billion-asset Coastal Community Bank in Everett, Wash., with its Banking-as-a-Service (BaaS) efforts, continually pursues top talent with regulatory and compliance expertise. You, too, can leverage M&A shifts to draw in candidates who meet distinct needs at your bank.
4. **Canvass your bank.** Your team may provide a source of strong potential. By offering training opportunities and wider exposure, you may solve your tech talent problem within the four walls of your bank. Consider courses with ICBA Community Banker University and attendance at the ThinkTECH Accelerator to help cultivate deeper skillsets.

As you grow, evolve and innovate, you also must continue to tell your stories to demonstrate to high school and college students, coding experts, technology leaders and others that a community bank is a great place to work. Emphasize that they will not only have a fulfilling technology-based career; they will also strengthen their community in the process. And be sure to demonstrate the value of a community bank technology role in shaping the future of banking. As we all know, there’s so much potential that awaits. You just need the right team to make it happen.

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