

# Toy Industry Newsletter

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## I. Career Opportunities

### **SR. VP of Sales ~ \$175,000 - \$225,000 plus up to 50% BONUS**

Those close to this opportunity have called it the "job of the year" and I am inclined to agree with them. The client is an All Star and everybody knows their name. Their leader is a rock star and everybody knows her name. This is one horse people would like to hitch their wagon. Have I offered enough flowery prose to entice you yet? If not, then the salary of \$175,000 ++ should. This company feels you should be rewarded for your successes and a bonus of up to 50% should be proof of that as well. This company is positioned for greatness and they want to hire the best to help achieve their goals.

As for the job requirements; first you will need the right *attitude*. This company is aggressive and entrepreneurial and you should be as well. You should have a polished edge to your personality. You should also have verifiable success at Wal-Mart and TRU and experience managing reps. This position is located in the best part of the Southeast so prepare to relocate. No work from home, no telecommuting, no consulting – don't ask.

### **Director of Sourcing/COSTING ~ 6 figures (based on experience) + BONUS**

NEW POSITION! Well-established and profitable company is looking for someone with experience sourcing, costing and negotiating with Chinese factories. This new position is based on company growth and you will be able to mold the position to suit your background and not be forced to fit into some silly job spec. **Located near Los Angeles** you should expect to spend time in China as well so a grasp of the language would be ideal. You should be able to look at a product and determine what the material cost is and be prepared to go to war with the factory who is making it. Read Sun Tzu for help on how to win those battles; it could help. **This company treats their employees like gold and the long tenures of the employees prove that out. Their incredible benefit package includes 100% paid medical for the employee as well as a matching 401K and more days off than I can list (including your birthday) as well as a jeans and sneakers dress code (I mean, it is the toy industry right?).**

### **Manager of Sourcing/Costing ~ \$65,000**

Located in sunny, beautiful **Dallas, Texas** (the land of no state income tax) exists a small yet very progressive toy company that is in need of an individual who can travel to China as necessary and has 5+ years of experience sourcing factories and costing plastic toys. Well-established and rabidly creative you will be working on all the cool licenses (not the boring lame ones) in a fast-paced environment. As always, no work from home, no telecommuting, no **consulting** – don't ask.

### **Sr. Product Designer – SW Connecticut**

As well as having skills as a 3D designer is your ability to sing Karaoke. If you can't sing but you can rock out in Solidworks then you are still a possible for this position. Industry leading company is looking for someone with approximately 10 years of experience in toy design with an emphasis on plastics. [There is a great future in plastics, think about it.](#) A casual work environment, lots of hockey fans, a karaoke machine and great pay await you. No relo's – must be able to commute to Connecticut.

### IN THIS ISSUE!

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## **Creative Engineer ~ Salary based on experience + BONUS**

A new position for a creative yet technically skilled Mechanical Engineer – this position will require you to flesh out the advanced R&D ideas from the *Blue Sky* team. You will work independent of the main company in an environment conducive to the creation of killer new product. Think of Apple when Steve Jobs separated the Mac team from the rest of the company and you'll get the picture. **Located near Los Angeles** this company is amazing and treats their employees like gold. **Just read the text above in this same font color to learn just how cool this company treats their employees!**

Email [David](#) if you or anyone you know is appropriate for our Current Jobs.

## **II. How is the job market these days? By David E. Fitzgibbons, CPC**

The most common question I am asked is “*How is the job market these days?*” The answer is that the job market in the toy industry is robust. ToyRecruiter.com has been as busy filling job opportunities over the past 12-18 months as at any point in the past 20 years. A caveat however is that I believe a lot of the hiring is a rebound due in part to the extreme lack of hiring a few years back during the recent “Great Recession”. In a unique market dynamic, companies that were profitable and had verifiable needs, critical to their success, refused to fill open positions due in part to a paralysis of fear that the economy would worsen. In many ways, the economy has worsened; unemployment is comparable to what it was during the recession in the 1980’s and there has been no wage growth in the US.

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The lack of wage growth in the US however has made hiring more attractive to companies and is ever so slowly making the US employee more competitive. To offset that good news, Chinese wages are up over 800% which is a huge negative for us in the toy industry due to the correlation between wages and manufacturing costs.

While the economy continues to limp along the job market will forever be overshadowed by the US debt burden. US debt is now 101% of GDP and with Mr. Obama retaining office non-partisan prognosticators foresee a worsening of the US debt crisis and fear a “...*lack of action*” as we move closer to the Fiscal Cliff. The continued fallout from the housing bubble (yes, it continues to linger and live on) as well as an increase in oil prices will likely be a drag on the economy for several years to come. While the job market is robust today, tomorrow the bottom can fall out. Instability is the new normal and one needs to learn and accept that and remember when times are bad, everyone thinks they’ll be bad forever...but they won’t. When times are good, people think they’ll be good forever...but they won’t. Personally I feel the market has been “bad” for a while so personally, I am betting they’ll be “good” for some time to come. I just know it won’t last.



**JUST ADDED & AVAILABLE FOR HIRE!**

**#451 is a Toy Designer** and is available for **FULL TIME** or **FREELANCE** Work. See our design website for more artists like this.

[ToyIndustryDesigners.com](http://ToyIndustryDesigners.com)

### III. Management Theory: Managing Millennial By David E. Fitzgibbons, CPC



Your company's future, and to a large degree yours as well, rests in the hands of a Millennial. A what? A Millennial? Millennial is the term associated with the generation beginning in the year 1980 and it encompasses those 18 -32 years of age.

The Millennial generation is the antithesis of the Baby Boomer generation. They are as different from Boomer as day is to night; in particular they eschew the greed-ocracy established by the Boomer's as they aren't money motivated. They aren't interested in building wealth. They have seen their parent's home, savings and 401K demolished in value. Buying a house doesn't make a lot of sense to them and they will rent for a long time - maybe forever. Bob Lutz, the venerable **General Motors** executive, doesn't even believe they will buy cars. Lutz feels they will "rent" cars (think [ZipCar](#)) and that car sales will plummet in their generation.

Unlike the idyllic lives of those generations who came before the Millennial, many have known war for their entire life and all have been shaped by it. In their formative years they experienced domestic terrorism and school massacres as well as mall and movie theater shootings. Life is short and fragile to a Millennial which is even more reason not to buy a home or a car. Since life is short, Millennial won't stay in jobs they dislike. The Millennial will work micro-jobs; 1-3 year positions in their chosen field. Millennial isn't worried about vesting for their 401k because they won't live that long and the money won't be there anyway...experience has shown them that much.

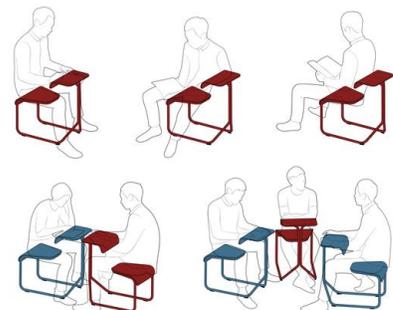
Millennial will work to live and not live to work. Millennial will want and get unlimited vacation (as is currently offered at **Best Buy** corporate, **Netflix** and **Zynga**, etc). Millennial will need unlimited vacation in order to have time to climb Mt. Everest and work disaster relief in Haiti. Charity is, and will continue to be, a major part of their DNA. While Millennial's father and grandfather look to pillage society for their own personal economic gain, Millennial will work to save the wounds and give back to their fellow man and righting the ship that capsized on their parent's watch.

Managing Millennial in the workplace will require changes on your part, not theirs. Millennials need to know they are making a difference to society, not just increasing profit margins and growing company coffers. Millennials need large groups of friends as there is safety in numbers so use an open office design and lower the cubicle walls. They prefer coffee to cola so pick an office location close to Starbucks. They prefer texting over talking so be prepared for brevity in all correspondence as well as Byzantine abbreviation and nomenclature as well as non-personal communication like texting and email. 25% of Millennials have a body part pierced that isn't their ear (that is 6 times more than any other generation) and 40% have a tattoo; and for most who do, one is not enough: about half of those with tattoos have two to five and almost 20% have six or more so be prepared to change your company policy and personal philosophy on that matter.

Millennial is here to stay whether we like it or not so it behooves us to understand them and manage them to the best of their potential.



The KNOLL TOBOGGAN CHAIR is an example of how the workplace is changing. This chair has a backrest that doubles as a small desk and is ideal for impromptu meetings and work collaboration. Not just for Millennial, this is a design worthy of any office and is ideal for a creative work environment like the toy industry.



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#### IV. Snooze and DON'T Lose – By David E. Fitzgibbons, CPC

George Costanza did it on Seinfeld – he took a nap during the work day. He even hired a carpenter to make him a shelf for an alarm clock and a drawer for a quilt...er blanket, under his desk. While the show was farcical perhaps George was onto something; it appears that sleeping at work - taking a nap - can have serious benefits for both the employee and the employer.



Sleeping at work is so common in Japan they have a word for it, **Inemuri**. The Japanese work culture celebrates hard work and what could be better proof of endless hard work than to fall asleep at work. To be asleep at your desk is a triumph that makes other coworkers jealous of your hard work. At the end of a day, in lieu of hearing a coworker say "Goodnight" or "have a nice weekend", the ultimate compliment is to hear "You look tired Sir".

Sleep deprivation, which can cause back pain, depression and physical tics, has a profound effect on job performance. Consider the fact that 98,000 people die every year from medical errors and doctors who work "doubles", or 16 hour shifts, and thereby get less than the necessary amount of sleep on a daily basis reported 300% more preventable errors associated with fatigue; these fatigue-based errors resulted in fatalities. According to Sleep Expert, Dr. Brian Goldman, the overwhelming majority of people need 6-8 hours of sleep per night in order to function at their best. Interestingly, our individual need for sleep is a genetically-determined characteristic and cannot be changed. Being tired at work makes you less adept at making proper judgments and impairs your ability to concentrate and function on your task at hand which is why the perfectionist culture of the Japanese allows for and accepts workday sleeping.

Dr. David Dinges, who has studied sleep habits of astronauts for NASA, believes the answer to sleep deprivation is the mid day nap, or "**multitask relaxing**" in his words. His research suggests that cognitive ability depends on how much sleep is accumulated over a 24 hour period, not just overnight. Short periods of work, followed by **sleep reinforcement** (napping), allow people to enhance their cognitive efficiency. Rather than fighting to stay awake at your desk with diminishing cognitive returns, Dinges suggests you should nap and allow your brain to be productive in the unconscious. This is Inemuri!

For the Japanese however there are rules to Inemuri, the first of which is you must sleep at your desk in an upright position with a look of professionalism to your body and face as well you must look deep in thought and/or introspective (notwithstanding that you are asleep). Furthermore, you must look as if you will wake up a moment's notice and say or do something profound. No small task but the Japanese are a persnickety bunch to be sure.

Sleep reinforcement is gaining traction in Silicon Valley as companies are establishing "sleep zones" away from the hustle and bustle where employees can get as much sleep as they need to improve their stamina and cognitive abilities. Let's hope the toy industry sees the value as well and starts to implement the same policy and procedures; writing this article has made me pretty darn tired myself..



**Unique preschool toy line with worldwide placement is looking for a US distributor.** A company with never before seen baby products from Europe (designed in France) is looking to make babies smile in the US. If you are interested in distributing this brand, [Contact David](#).

## V. Ask David – Employment Questions & Advice from David E. Fitzgibbons, CPC

Dear David:



I work for a major toy manufacturer with a satellite office in Manhattan. While surfing the web this past weekend I noticed an advertisement from my company for what appears to be my job! I spoke to my boss and she said that “we [they] will not be hiring for any NEW positions in the next 6 months” citing budgetary reasons. I don’t need to be hit over the head here, they are obviously looking to replace me – what should I do?

### David’s reply:

Remain calm; there are two possible situations here. The first one being that your company is NOT replacing you nor hiring anyone new as per your discussion with your supervisor. This might be difficult to accept but many Human Resource departments continue to advertise and recruit for positions even during a hiring freeze or economic downturn. Their rationale is that when the market improves and expansion is necessary their pro-active behavior will put them ahead of the curve when the “hiring lottery” occurs. This occurs all of the time, especially during times like these when companies are not hiring but when budgets are still in place and available for recruitment advertising.

The second situation is cause for concern...you’re fired as soon as they find an applicant who they like. Start cleaning out your desk and get your resume ready to go.

Dear David

I read other recruiting newsletters and I notice yours never makes mention of success stories or all the amazing placements you make. Shall we assume from that conspicuous omission that you really don’t make any placements or you are soon to be out of business?

### David’s reply:

Thank you for your (feigned) concern about my professional well-being, I appreciate that. Allow me to answer your last question first. I have owned my own recruiting firm since 1991 and have garnered the respect and admiration of those I have worked with and they in turn have treated me very well and made my business a success. So, much to your chagrin, I expect that I will be around for a long time to come.

As to including “success stories” in this (or any) Newsletter; frankly I find it silly to waste YOUR precious time reading marketing pabulum. To be candid, I find it makes the writer/recruiter look feckless as they try any method at all to prop up their profile and trump up their abilities with their readers. I do my best to impart knowledge and insight to my readers, not ramble on in some personal diatribe and then tell you about a placement I made to fatten my wallet. This Newsletter is for you, not me, and those who read it with an unbiased view see it clearly for the purpose it is intended.

I do sincerely ask you to reach out to me with your resume; it would be my pleasure to show you the content of my character as I try to help you help yourself in this job market. Call me.

If you have a question for our resident employment expert, David Fitzgibbons, CPC of [ToyRecruiter.com](http://ToyRecruiter.com), send him a question via [email](mailto:).

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**Did You Know** The Chinese build their buildings and bridges to last 25 years – in America we build ours to last 75?