



Getting the most out of your Recruiter

The recruitment market globally is a multi-billion-dollar industry so it's no surprise that most employers and employees have had experience of working with recruiters at some point in their career. Many companies choose to put some if not all of their recruitment needs in the hands of recruiters whether it be the sourcing of permanent staff, contractors or temporary workers.

How effective the use of recruiters can be is not only governed by the recruiter's skills and available tools but also by the relationship and level of engagement between recruiter and employer. Most importantly it is about the knowledge and information that is shared between them.

At Marcus Webb Associates we believe that "Being successful in recruitment is about gathering useful information and knowing what to do with it. Hence knowledge is the key to success and if we understand then we can help and that ultimately benefits the professionals we work with and the companies who hire them!"

Below we have put together a selection of tips and ideas that we hope may help you to engage with and get the most out of your Recruiter.

Engagement:

People are probably the most important part of any business, hence getting the recruitment process right is vital to the health and prosperity of any organisation. Before appointing a recruiter, it is certainly wise to make sure those entrusted within your team to lead the hiring process are engaged, positive and have the best interest of the company at heart.

Regular and positive communication, swift and constructive feedback and an efficient recruitment process will help ensure your recruiters stay engaged and keen. Be wary of inviting too many recruiters to support your vacancies as large amounts of competition can sometimes turn recruiters off and service levels may drop.

Instead review your process and suppliers regularly, engage with them to understand how incentivised they feel and how challenged they are. Complacent performers can always be replaced or challenged.

Overall, if you invest time in your process, engage with your appointed recruiters and employ two-way feedback then you'll find you will have a willing and engaged supply base that also has the best interest of your company at heart.

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Communication:

During our recruitment careers we have experienced a very broad range of recruitment processes and tools. Probably the worst example of a recruitment tool was one that involved no verbal or written communication between Recruiter and Employer but instead an online portal with generic information that gave no feedback or clues whatsoever. Recruiters made placements using this tool but perhaps they relied purely on luck and processing large numbers of CVs. Would you place the prosperity of your company in the hands of luck?

The most effective recruitment processes we have experienced have always involved useful, timely and regular communication between Recruiter and Employer.

In order to get accurately matched candidates a recruiter needs to understand the problem (i.e. the vacancy) and the needs of the hiring manager and decision maker that will employ the candidate.

Hiring managers are busy and recruitment is a usually a small part of their job. However, allowing the recruiters an audience with the hiring manager is the best way for them to question job descriptions and person specifications, investigate any trade-offs that could be considered and to give feedback on what may be possible in the market. This audience will save everybody time in the long run.

A firm understanding of the role, the team, culture and company will enable the recruiter to speak with authority about the opportunity and help convert an unwilling individual to an accurately matched and engaged candidate.

There will be times when there is a mismatch but it's important that two-way communication helps to refine the task as the project goes on. This applies to each stage of the recruitment process, from the initial brief, through interview stage, to onboarding and beyond.

Good communication is vital for all businesses and important for a successful, healthy and effective recruitment processes. Keep the communication with your appointed recruiter flowing and the results will follow.

Incentivising:

It's no surprise that recruiters, like most of the businesses they recruit for, are working to earn money. Sometimes the first question a potentially new customer may ask a recruiter is "what fees do you charge?" This is a fair question and in many cases this question is followed by a dictated fee percentage or amount – a take it or leave it scenario. Cost management is important for all businesses but its worth thinking about Value, Level of Service and Delivery.

One fee structure may not fit all recruiters and may not work for all industry sectors, skill types or experience levels. Apart from a fair fee, volume of business and exclusivity on certain projects are good ways of engaging your recruiter and incentivising them.

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If you are lacking good service, candidate choice or have vacancies that just can't be filled then perhaps its time to review the process and your recruiters. Are they incentivised enough to go the extra-mile? A low fee structure won't usually solve recruiting problems so be wary of enforcing a blanket fee structure for all positions and all recruiters.

Sometimes it's worth investigating what is more costly, the fee or the lack of employee.

Get to know your Recruiter:

In this modern age where the internet has made the World a small place it's not as common for people to meet face-to-face to do business. However, where possible meeting your recruiter can really help to build the relationship you have, establish a more engaging relationship and help the recruiter to understand your company culture and values more. Taking time to talk regularly and perhaps hold video calls may be a good alternative to meeting face-to-face but ultimately if you choose to put your company brand and values in the hands of a recruiter then you want to make sure they understand them.

Feedback:

Probably one of the words in the recruitment process that causes the most frustration. Everybody in the process needs feedback at some point whether it be the candidate, the recruiter that represents them or even the employer who wants to know why they have no applicants or what the candidates thought of the interview.

Useful, constructive and timely feedback is vital to the success of the recruiter in any recruitment process. Without it the recruiter relies on guess work and assumptions as to why the candidates aren't hitting the mark. As an employer don't assume that a simple "rejection / decline" is useful. Take the time to explain and be prepared to answer questions. The more the recruiter understands your needs and your reasoning, the better chance they have of a more accurate candidate next time.

Time invested in providing swift and constructive feedback can be time saved.

In summary, to get the best out of your appointed recruiters it is important to keep them incentivised and engaged. They need to feel they can be honest with you and provide feedback to help improve the process. Likewise, it's important to get to know each other and build trust and a collaborative partnership that benefits not only your company, but the recruiter and of course the candidates they work with.

For more information and ideas please contact Marcus O'Donnell or Katherine Smallwood at Marcus Webb Associates.

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