

Members Quarterly

Summer 2015 Edition

Ask the Expert

Improve the Third-Party Experience

Look at both the candidate's and client's perspectives



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Q: As third-party recruiters, can you tell us about recent trends you are seeing with a focus on the candidate side?

A: We notice some very interesting trends forming particularly in Western Canada.

1. The candidate experience with recruiters is generally very bland and often even negative. As a trainer in our organization, I set high standards of tracking and follow-up with our recruitment team. This includes closing the loop with candidates both successful and unsuccessful in each search.

It's imperative to engage candidates not only with the current search, but also explore what else they are doing to find a position. Are they interviewing elsewhere? Have they ever used a recruiter in the past? The more you know at the start, the better the chances of establishing a good relationship later on.

2. Candidates have high expectations of agents to "work" for them. I find myself educating candidates on the 'world' of recruiting explaining how we generate revenue. I know when I was first a candidate with a third-party recruiter, I had no idea how they made money — it certainly wasn't coming from me.

Whether or not you like the metaphor, we work in a brokering business where our 'product' can choose to be sold or not. Everyone needs to be on the same page about who is paying, when they pay and what this entails.

3. Most employers are looking to fill positions immediately. In a rush to find "Mr. or Ms. Right", clients sometimes settle for "Mr. or Ms. Right-Now." My recruiting mentor and boss always claims "The best available candidate wins". As the agent, we have a responsibility to not only perform a thorough search vetting as many possible alternates as needed, but from the very start, the most important issue is to KNOW YOUR CLIENT. The value-proposition of using a third-party recruiter begins to erode once you have a candidate fall-off and then you have to relaunch the search.

Here are some suggestions to third-party recruiters:

Candidate Experience — This is often an emotional and tumultuous time in their lives. We need to shepherd them through the process quickly, but we should not forget that we are handling a fragile person!

Candidate Expectations — Prepare up-front contracts and fully explain the proposed process. Nearly everyone will have a bad experience with a recruiter at some point along the way. Don't let theirs be with you!

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Candidate Fall-off — Clients hire the “best available candidate”. No matter how many you present, the candidate who is hired may not work out. Spend as much time as you possibly can to get to know your client in order to avoid costly repeat searches.

It is absolutely imperative to make the time to get to know both your candidates and your clients. We see a lot of people trying to cut corners in a rush to get positions filled and your candidates placed. The last thing your organization needs is negative feedback in your own backyard. Make sure your recruiters are doing their best to build solid relationships. The good relationships you establish now will only help you down the road.

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