

You might expect the most successful recruiters to aspire to work with the very best clients, but are you aware that in the same way your company might operate a Preferred Supplier List; many recruitment professionals have a 'Preferred Client List'? It is these clients that enjoy first option on the most sought after candidates and receive the very best service. So, how do you become a Preferred Client of the UK's top recruiters?

We asked three of our most experienced staff, with over 50 years engineering and technology recruitment experience between them, what factors they consider most when prioritising vacancies and clients. You'll be pleased to read it's not all about fees!

9 ways to get the most from your Recruiter

- 1. Have budget approval prior to engaging recruiters.** Professional recruiters working on a 'success only' basis are likely to shy away from roles not formally authorised, since there is a real risk of the recruitment process aborted early. If you are awaiting sign off, or maybe working on CV's for inclusion in a tender, make your recruiters aware so they know what they're dealing with.
- 2. Exhaust internal candidates and 3rd party referrals before looking externally.** Recruiters sent on a wild goose chase are unlikely to drop everything to work on your vacancies the next time you give them a role. If there are internal candidates, let your recruiters know so they can assess how best to help and what they need to better the internal competition. It could be that you need external candidates to benchmark your internal individuals against, which is fine, as long as you let your chosen recruitment consultants know.
- 3. Considering engaging a Recruiter exclusively.** When a single vacancy is issued simultaneously to a dozen agencies, each Recruiter can see only a 1:12 chance of making a fee, so you should expect one twelfth of the effort from each agency! But unfortunately it's even worse than that, since client's choosing this option unwittingly encourage a *quick & dirty* service from agencies, each rushing to be first past the post with any CV's that might be a rough match, often (illegally) without even getting the candidates permission.

To ensure a professional and thorough selection process, Employers should instead consider issuing vacancy/s either to one agency, or perhaps a small number of specialists for that particular role, for a short, predetermined period. If you chose the right Recruiter the difference in quality, professionalism and accuracy will speak for itself and you will not look back.
- 4. Provide a full job description and encourage discussions with line managers.** Whilst job descriptions (excluding generic / template job spec's) are a good starting point, an effective recruiter will get so much more from a 20 mins conversation with the Hiring Manager, during which they will learn about opportunities for career
- progression, the dynamic of the existing team, technical screening questions to minimise unnecessary interviews, major projects that are in the pipeline etc. [Please note: This can easily be managed to ensure the manager is not then unnecessarily pestered by the Recruiter and the benefits heavily outweigh the investment of an initial conversation]
- 5. Ongoing Communication** by both parties is essential. Your Recruiter should keep you updated with their progress along with other valuable information and advice about the market. Equally, communication regarding changes to the job description, organisational structure and regular updates on candidates in the selection process are absolutely vital.
- 6. Give meaningful feedback on CV's as quickly as possible.** Not only does this quickly enable recruiters to refine their search criteria and selection questions but once again reiterates to them that you're serious about securing the very best person for your business.
- 7. Clearly define your selection process and maintain momentum.** Given that your diary time is precious, you should consider pencilling dates in for 1st and possibly 2nd interviews, even when you first engage a Recruiter. This targets the recruiters to deliver the right candidates in the timeframe but also sends a very positive message to potential candidates.
- 8. Listen to the advice of the recruiters** that you've selected to help support your business. Just as you are experts in your business they should be experts in recruitment. Assuming you trust them and value their opinion, learn from their comments on market conditions, how your company is perceived in the industry, what your competitors are doing etc.
- 9. Agree equitable fees in advance.** It may seem harsh but please bear in mind that the best recruiters will walk away from low margin business or at best, treat it as low priority business, which means that the best candidates might be on their way to your major competitor. By all means negotiate, but ensure you don't squeeze so hard that it affects the quality of service and candidates you receive.

By following these points you can engage the most effective and well connected recruiters in your market who can identify the hidden talent that could really make a substantial difference to your business. Furthermore, they will do so professionally, promote your company as employer of choice, save you time and feedback valuable market intelligence and benchmarking data.

For further information please call +44 (0)1483 302211 to get introduced to one of our industry specific, trusted Recruitment Experts.

