

How to get the best from your recruitment agent

When I joined the world of recruitment from many years in IT, it came as something of a revelation to find that, in some quarters, recruitment consultants have acquired an undeserved reputation for self-interest and complacency.

As in all professions, I'm sure that recruitment harbours some consultants who are indifferent or incompetent, but I'm optimistic enough to believe these are in the minority, and that the majority of us genuinely care about providing a good service - finding the best possible candidates, responding quickly and efficiently, and handling all the routine logistics around your selection procedures. We try hard to be professional, efficient and responsive and we really do appreciate it when you work closely with us to optimise the effectiveness of the recruitment process.

To help us provide the best possible service to you, I'd like to offer the following thoughts:

1. We don't want to waste your time by submitting candidates who don't have the relevant skills, experience or attitude to do the job and fit in with your culture, so the more information you can provide on the type of person you are seeking; the more likely we are to match your requirements.
2. When you reject candidates we put forward, it is also a tremendous help to understand the reasons for the rejection – not chapter and verse – just a brief “over-qualified” or “not enough operations experience”. We appreciate (because we do it, too) that sometimes you look at a CV and just feel that someone isn't right for the job, without being able to pinpoint specifics, but wherever possible your feedback is appreciated because it helps us narrow down our search criteria. It also helps the candidates, if they are given some understanding of why they have been unsuccessful. It must be disheartening to be serially rejected without feedback on why you are not a suitable candidate, and any one of us could be in their situation, tomorrow.
3. If you find you are not getting through candidates of the right calibre, we may be able to offer an insight into the particular challenges of recruiting for a given position. We tend to know the 'going rate' for jobs and locations and we know what (other than salary) attracts the best candidates. We may have suggestions or advice to help you find the right people at the right price.

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The three points can be summarised in one word – communication. The more you communicate your requirements, preferences and feedback, the better service we can provide to you. It also enables us to leave candidates with a more favourable impression of your company, helping to re-enforce the positive messages fostered by your branding and PR initiatives.