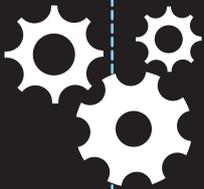


WORKING WITH A RECRUITMENT CONSULTANCY



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There are thousands of so-called recruitment consultancies in the UK but the market has become inundated with one and two-man bands purporting to be a recruitment consultant when in fact they are merely CV factories.

The benefits of working with a recruitment "consultant"

Working with a true recruitment consultancy should be a rewarding, mutually beneficial and successful experience. It should be a partnership of equals where your consultant understands your business, the market in which you operate, the technical and cultural aspects of a role and how to get the best asset for your company, namely talent.

It should be a trusting and mutually supportive partnership that leaves you with the time and space to get on with other aspects of your role.

Getting off to the right start

It's a simple and maybe obvious place to start but before considering inviting a recruitment consultant to see you or making that all-important call, write down your requirements. This will allow you to assess what each position requires, enable you to better understand what you are looking for, position the role in your mind (both for now and the future) and your company, and give you a basis on which to better brief the recruitment consultant.

A GOOD BRIEF WILL INCLUDE:

- **Technical specification:** what technical skills and experience are required to get the job done?
- **Person profile:** what type of person would succeed in the role and what type of temperament they would need? e.g. do they need people management skills, budgetary skills?
- **Background:** do they need experience within a particular sector or within a type of organisation?

Finding the right recruitment consultancy

There are many recruitment consultancies to choose from. We believe that finding the one that will suit your organisation means you need to consider the following:

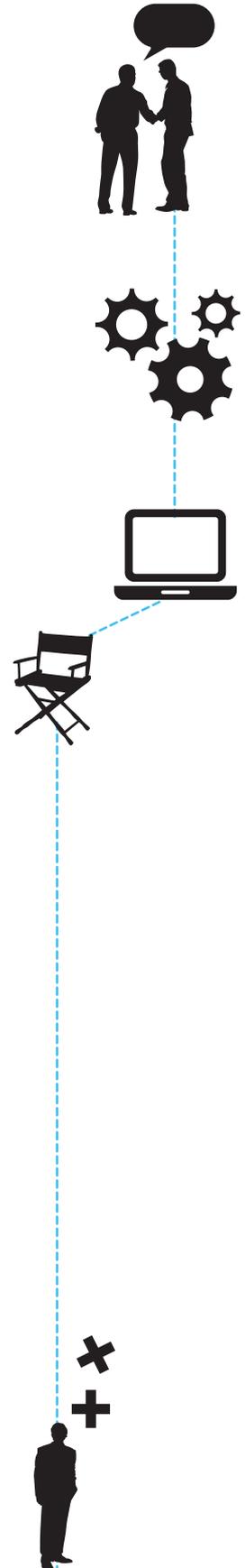
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANCIES

- Do they specialise in your market?
- Do they recruit for your discipline?
- How long have they been operating for?
- Have they recruited for your competitors or similar organisations?
- Do they have a consultative approach?
- Can they help you in other ways? What value can they add?
- What proof/evidence can they provide to demonstrate their previous experience?
- Can they commit to working to an agreed deadline?
- Are they willing to come to meet you if you want them to?
- What comfort do you have in their ability to be confidential with the information you give them?

The job specification

The more detail you provide in your job specification, the more accurate the consultancy will be able to make its search, and the better it will be able to brief the candidates about the role. Poor job specifications seriously hamper effective recruitment search and tend to be too brief, full of irrelevant information, or say nothing about the 'real' vacancy that needs to be filled.

You can use your briefing document as a basis to start your job specification but it will require a little extra time and focus to make it a useful recruitment tool.



SEVEN MAIN AREAS A JOB SPECIFICATION NEEDS TO COVER:

- The organisation
- The team
- The role itself
- How the role will develop
- Personal qualities required
- The remuneration
- Process and timescales

The organisation

The size, history and key markets of the organisation are what candidates will expect to see. The corporate aims will also need to be detailed here. Strong candidates will want to know what the organisation is aiming for so they can assess whether it is a goal that excites them, and one they can help strive towards.

The team

How many people are in the team? How is it structured? How does the function fit into the organisation as a whole? Who are the key people the role holder will need to relate to? Is there a specific culture associated with the team, independent from the rest of the firm? This is where more detail around cultural fit will naturally sit.

The role itself

What is the reason for the vacancy? What are the main duties? What is the purpose of the role? What skills will be needed to do it? What training could be provided to help do it? What background would help? What previous achievements would be considered useful and which vital?

How the role will develop

How will the role look in the future? Where might it lead? What opportunities for progression are there? Again, strong candidates

will be looking for a job spec which illustrates a consideration of the future, if they are being expected to invest their own in the organisation.

Personal qualities required

What kind of person does the role require? There is always a danger here that employers specify the qualities of someone they like or is like them, rather than someone who is necessarily best for the role. Most teams benefit from a breadth of personality profile, rather than recruiting people like themselves. Be sure to shape the personal attributes to the role and not just the team or organisational culture.

The remuneration

Full benefits package needs to be detailed. Sometimes the smallest of things can tip a candidate in favour of a particular job.

Process and timescales

When will the interviews be happening? Who will be involved? How many stages are there? This list is not exhaustive but adhering to the points detailed above should make for a solid and professional job specification on which to write your job specification and from this a good consultant will be able to engage.

FOLLOW UP

- Know your budget/have sign off: In our experience one of the main reasons why the recruitment process takes longer than necessary is that there is no definite sign-off procedure in place for the role and there is no defined budget.
- Set realistic timescales: for reviewing CVs and the interview process. It can often take longer than you think.



Top Tips for managing your recruitment consultancy

Developing a successful relationship with your recruitment consultancy

Often the relationship between HR departments and recruitment consultancies can be difficult if the consultancy is not adept at building effective business relationships; establishing clear lines of communication and managing expectation.

Working with a professional recruitment consultancy will make a noticeable difference. There's no real alternative to hiring a consultancy with a long track record to ensure the process is as smooth as possible.

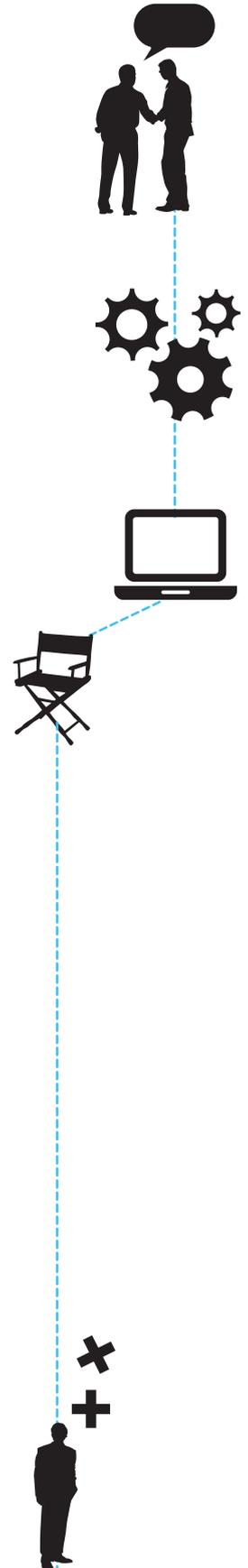
Keeping in touch with your consultancy

They need to keep the candidates interested, particularly the best ones, who may be looking at several other positions simultaneously. A good consultancy will be working with you to keep abreast of developments and feed them back in a timely manner to relevant candidates.

If they don't know what's happening at your end it becomes difficult for them to do this. They'll be working against you, not with you. Contact is everything in the recruitment process, on both sides.

Take their advice

You are not going to offer the job to someone you are not happy with. What the consultancy can do is to advise you on how they think the candidates match up against each other, their salary / contract rate expectations, how likely you are to find what you are looking for, and whether you are in any danger of losing the candidate you are after to another position. Of course you are not obliged to take any advice, after all, it is your organisation and no one understands it better, but a professional recruitment consultant is able to impart the market view of the situation and in some cases, say what might be 'unsayable' internally, which is the benefit of third party consultation.



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