

PART 1 Building Your People Pipeline:

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Managing the candidate experience...what you say or don't say can come back to help or haunt you.

As a manager, leader, or business owner, we have all been caught with conflicting priorities when it comes to managing our recruiting process. From start to finish, hiring a new employee doesn't have to consume all of our attention, but it definitely takes time. While balancing all of our projects, we need to keep in mind the time it takes to manage the initial recruiting process, to interview candidates, and to make offers. Don't forget it takes even more time to close out all of those candidates you have decided not to move forward with. We all know our number one priority is managing our number one candidate's experience; after all, we want them to accept our offer but we must also keep in mind all of the candidates we are declining.

While we make that candidate the number one priority, the remaining candidates often get overlooked and fall to the bottom of our priority list. These unfortunate oversights can come back in a month, a year, or even five years down the road to either help or haunt your recruiting process. Don't let this happen to you! Below, you will find four easy steps to maximize your time and ensure a great candidate experience with your company, whether they are your star candidate or not!

Set expectations

Job searching can be an emotional time, whether a candidate is looking actively or passively. Let's face it: It requires you to sell yourself, which means putting yourself in a space that most of us are not comfortable being in. To add to this, the majority of job seekers apply to jobs that they not only think they are qualified for, but they accept that as fact. Whether we agree or not on their qualifications, they are expecting forward movement on their resume or application. To avoid frustration for either party, take a minute to set expectations for your recruiting process. This small investment of time can have a huge payoff in creating a positive candidate experience.

To ensure a consistent message of expectations, make sure your Website has clear application instructions next to each job posting. Simple steps you can take include adding a date to which applications will no longer be accepted, creating an automatic reply for all incoming resumes or applications that states the process outlined on the Website and reflects the same time restrictions, and/or creating a script or process that your team can follow when getting telephone or email inquiries about a candidate's application.

Remember, the small things make the difference for a candidate, and it can be as easy as acknowledging that their resume has been received.

First interview

Ahh, the first date! Finally, you have a pool of candidates narrowed down and it is time to set up first interviews! To make sure both parties' expectations are met, I would

like to emphasize how important it is for even the smallest details to be mentioned; otherwise, someone will probably end up disappointed.

Remember, interviewing is like dating; no one is an expert at it, and everyone wants the process to be over with. Take a moment to inform the person of the following: Who they will be meeting with and what that person's role is; where they can find a copy of the job posting or job description; how much time they should allow for the first interview; the address and phone number of the office where they will be interviewing; and in some cases, it is important to mention dress code.

Now hear me out on this one! Seattle is now referred to as metro-casual. Although a company may allow jeans and tennis shoes on a regular basis, this does not mean that a candidate won't be judged negatively if they over or under dress. Chances are you have an expectation, so share it! This can be especially difficult for a candidate that hasn't been interviewing or is coming straight from work. Eliminate the ambiguity.

So now you are sitting down face-to-face and the interview begins. Again, sharing with the candidate what to expect can be easy—and will make all the difference. Don't take for granted that a candidate understands the protocol. Some interviewers are looking for initiative and confidence and others want to remain in control and answer questions at the end. Ways to frame expectations can be as simple as offering the following: "Here's what I am going to cover, feel free to jump in and ask questions at anytime or wait until the end."

One of the most critical elements to cover in the first interview is the compensation requirement. It is important to know a candidate is in your salary range and vice versa, otherwise you are just wasting everyone's time. Lastly, set the final expectation for a follow-up timeline. I don't want to add anything else to your plate, so put the follow up responsibility on the candidate. Ask them to follow up via email or another preferred contact method by a certain date. This will give you a great opportunity to close out candidates you aren't moving forward with (we'll get to that later) and see the follow-up skills of a candidate that you want to move forward with.

Part 2 - Second and/or Final Interviews - Next Issue March 2007.



Marcie Glenn is the CEO for Another Source, Inc., the Puget Sound's only Employment Referral Service (ERS). For more information, please call 206.241.8906 or visit www.anothersource.com

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