

## Know Business; No Contact

HOW YOU CAN UNINTENTIONALLY THWART YOUR RECRUITER'S ABILITY TO GET YOU GREAT CANDIDATES.'

**U**nderstatement of the year: IT managers are busy. They're swamped actually. Given the scope of their routine operations, their portfolio of projects, and the constant charge from above to do more with less, they need smart, hard-working, team-players to help drive the success of their groups.

This being the case, an IT recruiter should be the IT manager's best friend! A great recruiter can be relied upon to source, screen, and deliver top IT talent so an IT manager avoids the tedium of the staffing process and focuses, instead, on hitting business objectives.

Generally speaking, however, the IT managers I consult with are not best friends with their recruiters. In fact, they are darn frustrated with them.

I know of multiple causes for this unfortunate twist of fate. But one reason I hear time and again sounds something like this:

"I need them to do a better job of understanding my business. My recruiters send me people: some of which are great technically, but some aren't even close to what I need given the projects I'm managing."

Truth be told: **If staffing recruiters don't understand your business the game is over before it's begun.** A lack of business insight severely challenges a recruiter's ability to find talent that fits with the business, and helps support, rather than burden, overall team performance.

*insTe:* What's an IT Manager to do?

To ensure you receive the absolute best recruiting service, it is essential that you ask yourself:

### "How do I enable my recruiters to understand my business?"

Too often, IT managers – busy as they are – send their staffing recruiters electronic job descriptions and funnel all recruiter communication over to HR, Procurement, or some sort of Vendor Management Office.

While it may be helpful to involve these 3rd parties for policy adherence, control of spend, or vendor performance visibility, allowing little to no contact between a recruiter and an end-using IT manager devastates your ability to recruit the right people into the right roles. And this devastation can cost you time in the long-run.

The analogy I like to use is that an IT staffing recruiter without access to the hiring IT manager is about as likely to succeed as a developer without access to user requirements. They may be able to deliver something, but both are set up to fall short of expectations.

The more layers between IT recruiter and end-using manager, the more room for error. Without understanding the business drivers behind IT

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initiatives, the group structure supporting the business, the culture, the must have skill sets, etc., it is nearly impossible for recruiters to ensure their candidates can fit productively within a role and to help drive organization goals.

I'm not recommending that other groups such as HR, Procurement, or a Vendor Management Office be excluded from the recruiting process. I am recommending that the IT manager and the IT recruiter engage in a mutually beneficial partnership providing business insight to the Recruiter and qualified personnel, in return, to the IT Manager.

The bottom line? IT Managers are busy — and therefore cannot afford to waste their time when it comes to attracting top talent. By aligning directly with a great IT recruiter, they can gain the value of a partner whose mission is not just to make commission from placements — but to help them succeed.

### Guiding Principles to Look for When Aligning with an IT Recruiter:

The Recruiter takes a sincere interest in learning your business and IT culture. If the recruiter attempts to shoehorn IT employees into your group without this knowledge, he lacks the perspective necessary to add value.

The Recruiter can articulate his process to sourcing and screening top local talent. Quality processes should be systematic, repeatable, and leverage human contact (not rely primarily on job boards / emails).

The Recruiter is a true strategic partner. By this I mean: The recruiter is willing to introduce you and your team to clients undertaking similar projects or facing similar challenges. He also assists with proactive workforce planning and can share salary and labor market trends, as well as human capital management best practices.



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