

Recruiting Senior Hires

While most of us are familiar with the care and feeding of senior executives during the recruiting and acquisition process, it's helpful to step back and review internal and external processes—especially as the job market rebounds. Our goal isn't to distinguish between internal and external processes and the associated resources, but rather we need to examine the top-level, strategic best practices in recruiting and acquisition.

"There is no try—there is only do." One of my mentors often repeats this memorable Yoda quote from Star Wars. And it's very apropos to the executive recruiting process. Successful recruitment of quality people—particularly senior executives—requires your organization to know the process cold and execute it crisply. It also demands that you focus on the candidates during the process; be "in the moment" with and for them. This last component will enhance your results regardless of the process you have in place.

In addition to these high-level philosophies, there are five key areas on which you should focus when implementing best practices throughout your recruiting and acquisition process:

-  Job Specifications
-  Selection
-  Relocation and other concerns
-  On-boarding
-  Golden Rule

Job Specifications

While you assume that you've made a clear description of your job requirements for a particular position, you may learn of additional critical criteria during the interview process as you identify qualifications that are absent in some candidates. The more thorough you are in defining your initial specifications, the better job the recruiter will do when looking for your ideal candidate. Of course, there are trade-offs that can be made, such as industry-specific experience for a particular degree—and you need to detail this in your initial specification. But it's your ability to completely understand and articulate your needs as early in the process as possible that will enhance your chances of acquiring the best person for position.

Defining the behavioural components of the ideal candidate (such as a direct, personal communication style; high degree of empathy; or openness to change) often helps you better describe the position. However, it's important to understand the sensitivity surrounding these issues and make sure that you uphold equal employment opportunity (EEO) and other legal employment consideration when speaking to candidates and your team. It's also important to ascertain that the entire interview team understands the specifications. More than one executive has rejected an offer because each interviewer communicated a different view of the job. This signals to the applicant that your organisation doesn't have a clear strategy, and therefore, is unable to articulate roles and responsibilities.

Finally, if a trusted recruiter informs you that a particular skill set can't be found in one person, pay attention. Talk to your team about opening up the specification or geography as well as other suggestions from the recruiter. Experienced recruiters do their homework, know where and how to find people, and do whatever is legal, moral, and ethical to fill your opening.

Selection

The best selection processes are consistent and without holes—and the steps are transparent to the candidates and independent, third-party observers. A good analogy is democratic elections. Can all citizens observe the process and understand it? This is key. Take the time to ensure that each candidate understands every step of the process. It's worth the added effort. Especially when recruiting senior executives, as the process can be lengthy. You want to avoid losing exceptional candidates because they lost sight of the process. Executives often tell me that this is the reason they've accepted some jobs and turned others down.

In the Silicon Valley, many executive selections are done by consensus. However, it's best to have a position owner, one person in your organisation responsible for moving the selection process along and resolving impasses. It's also critical that the owner have the organizational effectiveness to push toward consensus and completion. Again, you don't want your top candidate to get away because your team couldn't agree.

Onboarding

Effective handling of the details related to bringing someone on-board dramatically impacts their integration and effectiveness. In the most successful organisations, the transition from candidate to employee is smooth, seamless, well planned, and skilfully executed. Executives often report that the crisp handling of pre-induction and induction details sets the tone for their tenure with the company. Ask them how they'd like to receive the on-boarding information—in person, by mail, or email before they start; on day one; or day five.

Golden Rule

It's crucial that your team remembers to treat candidates with mutual respect and consideration during the recruiting process. They can do everything right and then destroy this good impression by demonstrating a lack of respect for the candidate or new hire. This is especially true in the areas of relocation and on-boarding.

- “ Do your early interactions with the new executive demonstrate respect or do you treat them like a college new hire?
- “ If you're not providing a full-service move, do they have all the necessary relocation information?
- “ Are all the arrangements for their office, phone, business cards, cars, etc., complete?
- “ Have you removed all possible and potential obstacles to their early success on the job?
- “ Have you introduced them to the people in your organisation in a way that makes them feel like they're a part of the team?

Summary

Anyone who's been involved in the hiring of a senior executive may think that they understand the procedure. However, a regular, thoughtful review of your organisation's recruiting processes will accelerate and improve the results. And, as the employment market continues to pick up, you'll have a jump on the competition who's seeking the same top talent as you are.



NHB Recruitment Solutions Ltd
Unit 7,
Carlton Yard,
Victoria Road Farnham,
Surrey,
GU9 7RD



01252 597012



info@nhbrecruitmentsolutions.co.uk

Company Registration - 8604644