

Can a Recruiter Help You? (Odds are, Probably Not!)

by

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The Rules of the Hiring Game Have Changed . . . Forever!

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In the second article of this seven-article series, "[Why Job Boards Often HURT More Than They Help.](#)" we examined the SIX "Channels to Market." To review, these are the six channels:

- Job Boards
- Recruiters
- Career Fairs



The 3 LEAST effective methods for getting your resume in front of a hiring

- Networking
- Direct Mail
- Phone Calls



The 3 MOST effective methods for getting your resume in front of a hiring

As you know by now from previous articles in this series, job boards, which are usually the "first" (and often, "last") stop in a job search by the majority of people looking for a new job, are the *least* effective method for finding a new position. Remember, only **one-half of ALL job opportunities** are ever posted on the job boards!

Career fairs aren't much better. The following example should amply illustrate this point. Recently a job fair was held in suburban Atlanta, GA. Fifty employers set up booths for the fair. It was advertised locally and held at one of the larger churches in the area. It was anticipated that about 500 people would attend. In fact, over 2,000 people showed up! This unfortunate scenario is played out week after week, month after month across the nation these days.

SO WHAT ABOUT RECRUITERS?

Nothing would please me more that to be able to report in this article that recruiters, "headhunters," can in fact provide the answer, the solution, to a job seeker's current dilemma, but I can't. Most of us work a very well-defined "niche" market and we can—and do!—therefore provide assistance to well-qualified applicants in our area of market specialty. The "niche" for my firm, The HTW Group, is the chemical industry. That means, of course, if you are an accountant or a programmer, etc., then we will not be able to represent you. Moreover, just because a recruiting firm is located in your geographical area doesn't mean that the firm necessarily considers the geographical area its "territory." For example, my firm is located in Metropolitan Atlanta, GA, but my "territory" is international. (Nonetheless, I continually get calls from candidates who are either located in the Atlanta Metro Area or from those who want to relocate to the area. Very rarely can I help them.)

Just so you will have an even better understanding of what's actually involved in working with a recruiter, let me put it in even further perspective for you.

Recall from a previous article ([“Is Anybody Getting Hired Today?”](#)) that about 4.1 million people are still being hired each month. Typically, about 5% to 6% of ALL available jobs are filled by recruiters. So, about 225,000 jobs are filled by recruiters each month.

HOW RECRUITERS WORK WITH CANDIDATES, HIRING COMPANIES

When a company hires a person through the services of a recruiter, it pays that recruiting firm anywhere from 25% - 33% of the successful candidate's first year base salary. As an example, if we place an engineer at a base salary of \$80,000, then we earn a fee between \$20,000 - \$25,000.

So here is an **important point**—recruiters work for the *company*, not the job seeker. Weekly I receive phone calls and emails from job seekers along these lines: “I have done some research and I have identified your firm as a firm that I would like to work with in finding my next job.” What these professionals actually are asking for are the services of an outplacement firm and that is NOT what recruiters do.

Here is **another important point**—In today's economic environment, companies will seldom hire an unemployed person from a recruiter. Understandably perhaps, this often tends to upset job seekers when they learn this truth. That does NOT mean, however, that you can't find a position. Rather, what it DOES mean is that you must find it on your own. Why? Let me elaborate a bit.

Companies today *only* pay recruiters \$20,000 to \$30,000 to bring them “currently employed people with a proven track record of success in the field of interest.” This comes straight from Human Resource professionals. They feel that if you are unemployed, you should have reached out to them yourself, not through a recruiter. Also, in the current market, they want someone who can “hit the ground running.” So, if you have to be trained to be brought “up to speed,” they will hire you and train you but they aren't going to hire you, train you *and* also pay a recruiter \$25,000! So, no, if you are a great salesperson for clothing, I can't place you into the chemical industry. I don't care how good your transferable skills are, I simply can't place you, and neither, incidentally, can any other recruiter. You, yourself, will have to sell the company on your “transferable” skills.

One more very important consideration—most companies are NOT going to pay a recruiter to bring them someone they consider a “job hopper,” either. (Generally defined as a person who has had a different job every two to three years.) Again, that does NOT mean you won't get hired. It simply means that, if you do get hired, it most likely will not be through a recruiter.

None of what I have said here, however, is meant to upset you. Rather, I am providing you this information about what's really involved in working with a recruiter, so you don't waste valuable job-hunting time using methods that won't be effective!

Bottom line, then, is that relying upon a recruiter to help the majority of today's job seekers is actually not a very realistic approach at all. And that, of course, is why “recruiters” are shown as one of the *least* effective methods for finding a new job from most among the six channels to market.

FACT: FINDING A NEW JOB TODAY IS LARGELY UP TO YOU!

As pointed out in Chapter Two of *“Headhunter” Hiring Secrets: The Rules of the Hiring Game Have Changed . . . Forever!*, there really are only TWO reasons companies will hire you—you can **make ‘em money or save ‘em money**, or ideally, do both! That means that, among other things, you have to craft approaches, e.g., telephone calls, emails, etc., that *clearly* present a “value proposition” to prospective employers. That means you have to forget telling a company what *you* want from a job and instead tell them, *specifically* and in unmitigated terms, what you can do for *them*, not the other way ‘round! That means you are going to have to do things *differently* from the vast majority of the other job seekers who are your competitors.

Remember, the **THREE MOST EFFECTIVE** methods for finding your next job opportunity are these:

- **Networking**
- **Direct Mail**
- **Phone Calls**



The 3 MOST effective methods for getting your resume in front of a hiring

That means you have got to put a laser-like focus on these THREE MOST EFFECTIVE Channels to Market if you want to be the successful candidate for a position! By all means employ certain elements of the other three channels to market, including recruiters, of course, but do so sparingly and within reason. In other words, stop relying upon the LEAST EFFECTIVE channels exclusively, or even very heavily. That’s the ONLY way you are going to be among the job WINNERS for the foreseeable future.

Skip Freeman, author of *“Headhunter” Hiring Secrets: The Rules of the Hiring Game Have Changed . . . Forever!*, has successfully completed more than 300 executive search assignments in just seven years. Specializing in the placement of sales, engineering, manufacturing and R&D professionals in industry, he has developed powerful techniques that help companies hire the best and help the best get hired.

A distinguished graduate of the United States Military Academy, West Point, he is a lifelong student of leadership, people and the principles of success. While serving in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Chemical Corps, he also earned a Master of Science degree in Organic Chemistry from The Georgia Institute of Technology and a Master of Business Administration degree in Marketing from Long Island University.