How To Build An
Exceptional Recruitment Team

Does the responsibility for building an exceptional recruitment team lie with you? If so, this guide outlines 4 key considerations that will contribute to building a team of exceptional performing recruiters.

Introduction

Managing a team of highly successful recruiters is one of the most challenging and rewarding team environments there is. The constant juggling to improve performance and the customer experience, controlling margin erosion, operational delivery, team motivation dips and contrasting personalities is what makes the job of a recruitment manager so critical to the success of any agency.

What you're striving for is to create a team culture that breeds success and exceeds employee expectation. Whatever your recruiters' personality and working style, they should feel confident that they have the support and infrastructure they need to succeed for themselves and your agency.

Due to the influx of new agencies and the rise of new technologies, recruitment is perhaps the most competitive it has ever been. This guide outlines 4 key considerations that will contribute to building a team of exceptional performing recruiters who can keep your agency ahead of the chasing pack.

The guide will be useful for:

Recruitment Managers
Recruitment Team Leaders
Recruitment Agency Owners

Section 1
Hire Exceptional

It goes without saying that the bedrock of every great agency lies in the competency of your recruiters. With only average recruiters, you can only expect average results, right?

Therefore as a manager, it is one of your primary responsibilities to recognise the exceptional from the good. Because it is the exceptional that will drive your agency forward. Now, it would be an injustice to say that there is a GPS for identifying exceptional but neither is it impossible.

You will be aware that there are fundamental traits that every recruiter, of any generation, needs to succeed, including:

- **Resilience and persistence**
- **Communication and listening skills**
- **Relationship building**
- **Time management**
- **Financial/target driven**

But for the 2019 recruiter, there are some emerging competencies that are growing in importance and are widening the gap between good and exceptional recruiters.

Data Fluency

Recruiters who can confidently understand and analyse performance data and make calculated decisions about where their activity is most effective will have a significant advantage. By regularly reviewing the right metrics, exceptional recruiters can focus their time on the most profitable tactics.

Ask your prospective recruiters:

- *In what ways do you review your individual performance?*
- *Have you ever changed your approach based on reviewing data?*

Marketing Mindset

As we are now in a social media and job board saturated market, the importance of a recruiter's personal brand and the type of online content they produce is paramount.

Exceptional recruiters are taking a more strategic, marketing-led approach to building their personal brand with the goal of attracting more, high-quality candidates. By taking a step back and really getting to know their target audience (what platforms and social channels candidates are most active on, what tone of voice they find engaging) exceptional recruiters are producing job ads and social media posts that stand out from the crowd.

Ask your prospective recruiters:

- *How would you best describe your online personal brand?*
- *What type of content do you post online?*

Tech Innovator

New technological tools emerge every year. Some revolutionise the way recruiting is executed - think LinkedIn, recruitment software, business intelligence - and some fade away without making an impact.

A exceptional recruiter will not only be able to use new technology effectively, but they will also be able to identify how it can shortcut administrative tasks or enhance their effectiveness on a daily basis. They embrace using new tools and the change it may bring because they understand the gravity of its value to do more, with less.

Ask your prospective recruiters:

- *What tools do you use on a daily basis and why?*
- *What new tools would you be excited to try if budget wasn't an issue?*

Create A Trusted Process

How well do your recruiters fully trust your current processes to deliver exceptional service?

Your process is a roadmap for your recruiters, as is the framework from which your recruiters operate. An effective process provides your recruiters with the direction they need to do their jobs effectively. Unlike a roadmap, however, a trusted process is something that should not escape scrutiny and evolution. As your agency grows and external factors change, so should your process. Unfortunately, so often the task of constant evolution is left until it is well overdue (or it doesn't exist at all).

For exceptional recruiters to thrive, here are 5 simple steps for creating a trusted process:

STEP 1

Review

Begin by breaking down each individual process so you can review the value that each one adds. Ask yourself two critical questions:

1. What percentage of your processes really adds value to your customer?

2. What activities can be made more efficient?

You should be able to visualise what activities or processes are the most time consuming and the most revenue generating as well as the most prone to errors.

STEP 2

Identify Bottlenecks

Once you have reviewed your recruiting activities or processes, you can hone in on each to try and identify the areas that cause the most friction and where efficiency is lost.

Consult with your recruiters on what frustrates them the most about your processes and where they think the bottlenecks are. Don't forget, a bottleneck can be a person or a process.

STEP 3

Buy-in

With your list of bottlenecks and processes to rectify, you will need to make the business case to your fellow senior managers to achieve buy-in.

You may have the solutions to improve your process, but this needs to be aligned with the overarching business goals and plans. To make effective change, you will also need to communicate effectively with your recruiters.

STEP 4

Empowerment

Train your recruiters on your revised processes and allow them to deal with issues autonomously (have an escalation process where needed) whilst having a feedback process for continuous improvement.

Your recruiters should feel determined and empowered to analyse and improve your processes and roadmap with you.

STEP 5

Continuous Improvement

Every successful and trusted process needs to be reviewed and tweaked along the way.

By analysing your recruitment data and listening to your recruiters and customers, you can refine your processes and implement a more streamlined and efficient strategy that is bespoke to your recruitment team's requirements.

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Build An Exceptional Culture

There is a somewhat sceptical view of what the buzzword "culture" encompasses and why it is essential to your success of your agency. It is not all to do with millennials, bean bags, standing desks and "take your dog to work day" (although these may be a product of your culture).

Building a culture is about establishing your business personality and a mission that supports, motivates and encourages your recruiters to live by your company values. Your culture should influence who you hire, how you work and how you deliver your recruitment services. Studies have proven that by doing this, recruiters will be more invested in your agency and, therefore, more likely to stay.

These 4 essentials will help you begin to build a successful recruitment culture.

1. Mission, Vision and Values

By documenting and communicating your mission, vision and values, you're demonstrating to both your customers and recruiters that you are dedicated and passionate about more than just "getting the sale". It also provides clarity and direction to your recruiters. But don't just create it for the sake of it. Every business has a core raison d'être and this may take time to define.

Mission - This is a succinct statement that summarises what your agency was founded to achieve.

For example, Google's mission statement is, *" To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful."*

Vision - Your vision is what you aspire to be. It encapsulates what your agency wants to achieve in the long term.

For example, Instagram's vision is to *" Capture and share the world's moments."*

Values - Your values are the 4 or 5 pillars by which your employees operate on a daily basis.

For example, Microsoft's values are:
- **Integrity & Honesty**
- **Open & Respectful**
- **Accountable**
- **Big Challenges**
- **Passion**
- **Strive for Excellence**

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2. Encourage Flexibility

Having a flexible work environment is key to creating a thriving and modern culture. Fundamentally this means putting trust in your recruiters by giving them the independence to do the best job they can in the way they see as most productive for them.

Studies have shown that by doing this, your recruiters will not only be more productive, but will also have a higher level of happiness and your agency will have a more reliable retention rate. This may include:

- Remote working or working from home
- Compressed working week
- School-run friendly schedule

3. Invest in Learning and Development

Recruiters want to see that you care about their future development but that doesn't mean just sending them on sales training course once in a blue moon. Give your recruiters the freedom and support to research what areas they want to develop skills in and encourage them to make the business case for any courses they wish to attend.

By establishing learning and development as a key tenet of your culture, it makes it clear that you value their personal development as a consultant and will help to attract and nurture exceptional recruiters.

4. Reward & Recognition

There is no denying that you must have a competitive salary and commission scheme to attract and retain exceptional recruiters, however a survey carried out by BambooHR stated that "82% of employees do not think they are recognised for their work as often as they deserve."

Along with a competitive salary and commission scheme, consider introducing a rewards program as an alternative method for keeping your recruiters motivated and fulfilled. Below are three creative reward and incentive ideas to cover all budgets and individual tastes.

Dinners For A Month

Give your recruiters (and their partners) their evenings back, with having delicious prepared dinners delivered straight to their home for a month.

Netflix Subscription

Allow your recruiters to disconnect from the office for some healthy binging of their favourite movies or box sets with a yearly Netflix subscription.

A Car Wash For A Year

Cover the cost of a local car wash service for their car to be washed and polished for a year means it is one less chore they need to think about on the weekends.

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Become Data Driven

Making your recruitment agency data driven means making data an integral part of any strategic, operational and performance decision-making process. For the individual recruiter, data driven means getting a true picture of their performance. The benefits of this are ever increasing as technology advances and it becomes commercially feasible to measure more and more activities.

These benefits for your agency include:

- Improved recruitment productivity through real-time data analysis
- A future view of market trends and fluctuations
- A reliable contributor for identifying where processes can be improved

However, what is not so often spoken about is the level of trust it takes to become data driven. The first step of any recruitment agency wanting to become data driven is to make sure that the data on which decisions are being made is wholly accurate.

A simple step by step to achieve this is as follows:

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6
What are your reporting, searching & analytical requirements	**Review your data & assess your processes**	**Retrain your recruiters**	**Review & feedback**	**Trust the data to make decisions**	**Invest in BI to visualise & interpret big data**
Spend time with your software users and senior management team to understand their requirements as this will provide a roadmap on how your data needs to be entered and maintained in your recruitment CRM	Review your data and, by investigating any errors, duplications or inaccurate data, you should be able to assess whether your processes are aligned with what data you want to search for and review. Remember the golden rule; garbage in garbage out (GIGO)	If you are adjusting your processes to address how data is entered and maintained in your recruitment CRM, it is important to provide refresher training to your recruiters and demonstrate how important clean data is for making business decisions.	Once you have trained your recruiters, make sure that you are constantly reviewing and auditing their knowledge and understanding of how they enter and maintain data. Use this as a valuable opportunity to not only evaluate individual recruiters but also to gather valuable feedback from the team as a whole.	Now you have data you can trust, you can make data-driven decisions. But this doesn't happen automatically. Organise weekly, monthly and quarterly meetings to analyse key metrics and discuss potential tactics to improve.	There is no doubt that your recruitment agency and recruiters can benefit from Business Intelligence (BI) integrated with your recruitment CRM. Specifically, BI can help you by providing access and reviewing big data, creating recruitment-specific analytics, setting performance and KPI tracking, and gamification to support you and your recruiters

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