



"Quick Tips- Helpful Hints: Things Every Search 'User' Should Know"

by Wayne Luke

- **Approach executive search as a partnership between you and the consultant.** Human nature suggests that treating him/her like the hired help or an extra set of hands will simply not inspire them to do their very best on your behalf.
- **Expect the search professional to deliver positive and timely results, just as they have every right to expect the same from you.** Responsiveness, availability, engagement and a focus on results must be present on both sides of the client/consultant equation.
- **Consider all prospects from all sources are "ours."** It's not about those prospects you've identified being "yours" and describing those prospects the search consultant surfaces as "theirs". The end game is to hire the best possible and available candidate, regardless of how they found their way into consideration.
- **Expect the candidates to exhibit their natural behavior during the search process, just as they expect to observe yours.** For example, if a CFO candidate seems adamant about every detail and focused on crossing every "t" and dotting every "i", you are hiring a CFO, and such behavior is exactly what you should expect. Take strength, once you've successfully hired them that they are on your side exhibiting the very same behaviors on your behalf, which evolve into assets for your business.
- **Expect, and request, "fresh" ideas.** Search consultants should be willing and able to help make the process productive and seamless. Expect them to make suggestions on interviewing techniques, market-driven aspects to structuring offers, and how to best on-board or welcome the successful candidate.
- **Let the search consultant 'take the arrows' during the process.** They know how to deliver bad news to candidates, so they should be the layer of insulation in the middle of heated negotiations. Let them buffer you from the inevitable "I have a son-in-law who might be just right for this job" referrals.
- **As the client, continually focus on the outcome, not the process.** The search consultant knows how and when to drive the process. If you find yourself having to provide the impetus for communications or deliverables, have a frank conversation with the consultant and let him/her know in no uncertain terms, they need to step it up now.
- **There is no substitute during a search for complete transparency and honesty.** If

the client's business is 'homely' and it does not play well in the talent marketplace, this reality must be immediately surfaced by the consultant. If a candidate is totally wrong, the client has to articulate the why's and wherefore's of the candidate's shortcomings to the consultant. Diplomacy rarely results in getting things right--only candor can sharpen the efforts of all parties in driving a successful search.

September 2007