



So you want to be a Recruiter?

By Lance Dean

To most people, recruiting may seem simple. All we do is talk on the phone all day, right? If you've been in the industry for more than a minute you're sure to hear that stereotypical remark. A common recruiter response is, "If it's that easy, try it." This challenge often results in the other person backing down. So what is it that makes some people shy away from recruiting? It is fear of the phone.

To be a successful recruiter, you must learn to work the phone effectively. Few people understand the power of a well-placed phone call. In a world dominated by web-based job boards and email, a live voice on the phone is refreshing to candidates.

Opportunity doesn't knock, it calls. Great companies are built and economies are moved because the right people are recruited for the right jobs. When you place that call, you are opportunity. You are a recruiter. Your countless hours spent relentlessly dialing number after number have conditioned you to anticipate questions, counter objections and generate interest. So, get on the phone and learn to love dialing. Learn to love listening and talking to people. Feel the thrill of making things happen for candidates and the companies you represent. Think of yourself as the catalyst for launching a tremendously successful career for the person you are calling. Who knows? Someday they may even send you a bottle of champagne or a bouquet of flowers to thank you for that initial phone call.

So what does it take to become a great recruiter? Like any new activity, you have to practice, practice, and practice. The phone is no different. Seasoned recruiters, can you remember your first day? Suddenly, an object you have used since childhood looks different somehow. There's a slight hesitation in dialing the numbers. The receiver feels cold against your ear. You can feel your heartbeat in your chest. The first ring, maybe they won't answer; second ring, voice mail (c'mon voice mail); third ring, Hello! It's show time. You stumble



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through your first call like Dan Quayle at a spelling bee. It's now 8:05 am and that's when it hits you — this is what recruiting is all about.

Every call you make is a new situation and a different approach — query, parry, slash and thrust. You listen and learn how other recruiters in your office work through different situations. With practice, patience and persistence you learn the art of good communication and the importance of voice inflection by quickly wading through ums and ahs, hang ups and outbursts, all to find “the right guy or gal.”

Then one morning, you find yourself anxious to start calling. You begin to measure time spent off the phone by calls lost instead of minutes passed. You think to yourself, ‘This meeting is taking forever. I could have made 10 calls by now.’ You answer questions with, “I know someone who can do that,” and you do.

On March 10, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell made the first telephone call. “Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you.” Like most new technologies, the telephone changed the world. For recruiters, it is the core of our industry. It's the tool with which we ply our trade. Recruiters change lives and influence markets by using the phone.

Do you want to be a recruiter? Get on the phone. Otherwise, find a nice, comfy cube and plug in your iPod®.