

It's currently a Candidate's Market!

By Melissa Martin, Director, The Clarity Group.

The current recruitment environment is very different to what we have all experienced in the past. With unemployment being at an all time low, conditions have changed and we now have a “buyers market”, or for those seeking their next opportunity, a “candidates market”! Employers and recruiters alike, now have to spend considerable time ‘selling’ their opportunity as employer brand no longer does this alone.

Businesses are traditionally comfortable with understanding where their products are placed in the market, the external perception of the quality and how to best market them. These same skills now need to be applied to the people side of business.

In addition to considering the businesses ‘employer value proposition’ (EVP) is the need to consider the following as part of the recruitment process:

- An up to date understanding of the role responsibilities and competencies required
- Communication between the employer and candidates
- The candidate’s recruitment experience with you

Candidates are now more savvy and not only do the ‘stars’ have multiple irons in the fire, they often receive multiple offers. In many instances the process also moves extremely quickly. In a candidate short market, the good candidates are in the driving seat. We have also recently come across candidates who have been unable to meet with recruiters in a short time frame, so the recruiter has gone to them on their lunchbreak for the first round interview! Whilst there are obviously some logistical and privacy issues that need to be taken into consideration, at the end of the day the old motto “you snooze, you lose” speaks volumes.

Understanding the requirements of the role you are seeking to fill and the competencies that are important to the role is an essential part of the process. How often do we fall into the trap of replacing Sally Jones, when Sally Jones resigns?

In these instances, it is more beneficial in the long run to spend some time in the short term to look at exactly what needs to be replaced. This would be done by conducting a job analysis or role update if you like. Doing this before the recruitment campaign begins ensures consistency across the process and assists with not only advertising the position but screening applicants and preparing your interview questions. It also plays an important role in ensuring the process moves quickly as you will be able to make more informed decisions in a shorter period of time.

The current market also requires strong communication between the organisation and candidate. It is also imperative that strong communication exists between those involved in the recruitment process. We have found that where communication is clear, quick and frequent there is more

success. In line with this is the need to reduce seemingly over complicated, unnecessary or drawn out processes. These can lead to losing the current savvy candidate.

Candidates are currently focusing strongly on the experience they have as part of the recruitment process. We consistently receive feedback from candidates about how they 'felt' through the interview. It is interesting how much of an impact this can have on a candidate's decision about their suitability for the role and more importantly, the organisation. Feedback we often receive from candidates relates to the way they were treated by those involved in the interview itself, the types of questions asked at interview, how much emphasis is placed on asking questions of the candidate and the role itself as well as the way they were first greeted, the interview room environment and so on.

With all of these points in mind, it is therefore extremely important that organisations have a considered and planned approach to recruitment. No longer is it sufficient to think that because you have met with a candidate they will want to pursue with your opportunity. You will have to do more to ensure you are 'selling' the opportunity effectively and moving as quickly as possible if you are to attract the right candidates for your organisation.

Melissa Martin is the Director of The Clarity Group, an organisation which provides HR Consulting and Recruitment services to businesses and Career Coaching services to individuals.

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