

Big Biller Secrets

Presenter: Brian Binke, President of The Birmingham Group

Brian Binke is the President/CEO and Co-Founder of the Birmingham Group – and a top producing manager in the construction recruiting industry. Brian opened the firm with his wife, Ellen in 1995. Two years later, he merged with the oldest office in a global recruiting network, bringing 30 years of success to the new organization. Brian has won numerous awards for his production. As a recruiter, Brian is the #1 billing manager in revenue worldwide within recruiting network of over 800 billing managers and is ranked as one of the top Executive Recruiters in the nation. In this session, Brian shares how to control the recruiting process for a win-win-win.

Meeting: “Big Biller Secrets” by Brian Binke

If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire Episode and ask your group for their key takeaways and insights. Review the following below to fill in the gaps.

PRE-CLOSE: If you’ve ever been frustrated with clients who drag their feet when making hiring decisions or can be wishy-washy when moving forward throughout the process, take this tip to heart. *“What I need to know is this – what are you looking for in a candidate, that when we find it, not only will we want to see this person yesterday but you know that’s the person you want to bring on board?”* Can clients still have a tendency to drag their feet or be wishy-washy? Sure, but by getting an answer to this question you are already pre-closing that there is, in fact, a candidate that they can envision bringing on board.

THE WOW FACTOR: Brian is covering pieces of the search assignment process that we have all been through, but he is approaching the information in a different way. Instead of asking the standard question of “why you” – instead make it personal. *“Envision the person you want to hire. There are a number of firms that this person could come from, but let’s assume he/she is coming from a large competitor like A Company, B Company, or C Company. They are happy where they are, doing great work, not actively looking, and been there five years. What can I share with them that will make them want to put their hat in the ring?”* You can ask this question several times with the same client and replace large company with smaller company, startup firm, established firm, relocation, etc. The point is to get the hiring manager really embracing the challenge ahead – and then giving you enough ammunition to face that challenge.

KISS: Keep it simple; Brian shared his line that has worked for 20 years when responding to a candidate who immediately response with “NOT LOOKING.” If you feel your approach could use a breath of fresh air, consider incorporating what Brian suggested: *“I understand you’re not looking. That said, if the position we’re working on happened to be better for you personally, professionally and financially would you be least be open-minded to learn more about it?”*

PROCESS: All recruiters have a way of describing their search process and mutual expectations, but have you positioned it in a way that makes sure the client knows what’s in it for them to follow said process? If you have clients delaying in getting back to you, pushing off making decisions, putting candidates on hold, or going MIA at times throughout the search, consider revising your script of how you set up the search process in the beginning. An example could be as follows:

“I know the companies you want someone from, and will create an extensive plan customized for your search and make sure we have a solid strategy to identify, evaluate, attract, and secure the very best talent available in a timely manner. You and I are already working to make sure once I get someone on the phone, I will have the info I need to get their attention and keep it.”

One thing needs to be understood – we are not going after people who are looking for a job. These guys have been with their companies for, in most cases, years and sometimes decades. Because they are doing a great job, their company is probably taking good care of them. These are the guys you want. And the best candidates are like pulling teeth to get them to talk with us – the first thing they will tell us is that they aren't looking. But I can get past that – that's why you're working with me.

But here's the situation – once we get them on the hook, it's what we do from there that will make or break our ability to land them. These candidates are working and are happy, and in some cases they could walk into five companies and walk out with five offers. If I present this type of candidate to you and it takes a week for you to get back to us, they forget our name and completely lose interest. I am awesome at what I do, but your actions are going to speak much louder than anything I can do. So I need to have you returning my calls as soon as humanly possible, or text me if you can't talk. I need to talk with you before interviews, and then after interviews in order for you to make the next step decision within 24-48 hours. You will know after the interview if you want to move forward, and if you have to think about it for more than two days, let's talk about where we missed and we will search for the person you ARE excited about.

Does that sound like a process that will work for you and the team?"

PRE-CLOSE TAKE 2: Just as Brian did on the client side, he's also provided an example on how to pre-close on the candidate side. Get a commitment on what they need to see in order to go to their boss, resign, and start in two weeks? If you sense you will get answers that are oriented to much around compensation, or will get surface answers, consider asking in a few different ways to dig beneath the surface:

- *Other than money, what are you looking for in your next opportunity that you don't have now?*
- *How much longer do you see yourself being content in this role? Has your company outlined exactly what needs to be done and by when, in order for you to advance?*
- *In a new situation, what would you love to improve or change about your department? Your boss? Your team? Your company? Your commute?*
- *Have you voiced any of those concerns? If not, why not? If so, what changed?*
- *When you go on an interview, how will you know the role and the company is right for you?*
- *At what point in your career were you most challenged? What circumstances were at play at that time?*
- *What would you replicate from previous companies or departments in which you've worked?*
- *What is the biggest obstacle that is keeping you from being more effective or from meeting your objectives?*
- *When is your next review? When was your last review? How satisfied were you with the feedback and promotions last time?*
- *If you became CEO tomorrow, what is the first thing you would change? Why?*

- *When you lose business or clients, what key factors caused that to happen? Why does a client choose to go with a competitor, over your firm?*
- *On a scale of 1 – 10, how motivated are you to make a change at this time? What makes you (number)?*

THE PREP: Brian talks with every candidate before they go in for a first interview, as do most recruiters! But how do you prep the candidate for your prep? Break walls down and get the candidate to understand why it is in their best interest to listen to your insights and to follow your process – not because it's what you are asking they do, but because it will put them in control! An example script:

“Before you speak with (hiring manager), I want to share with you some insights as to who specifically you will be meeting with, what they are looking for, and what to expect during that conversation. I’ll make one thing abundantly clear – my purpose in preparing you for this meeting is to help you determine if this is a right fit. One thing I’ve learned early on in this business, and I’ve been doing it for X years, is you can be the best (industry) guy or girl in the world but if you don’t interview well you’ll never get the job. And actually those who are normally the really good interviewers are the ones who aren’t that great at their jobs because they are constantly interviewing and change jobs every year so they get a lot of practice!

But for you, if during the interview, a light bulb switches on and you have the revelation that YES, this is where I want to be – my purpose is to prepare you with enough information that you are offered a follow up meeting or perhaps even an offer. That’s my purpose; my intent is for (client) to want to bring you back or hire you after this initial conversation. Now, it is 100% your right to decline moving forward with (client) – but I want that decision to rest with you, not with them. I want to make sure that I give you insights that the general public is not privy to – this will give you just that added edge and make you that much more prepared than others they may be speaking with. I know you’ve interviewed before, and you’ve obviously done so successfully because of the great work history you’ve created for yourself, so I know you’ll probably know most of this.

Second, I’m not sure if you have used a firm like us before. If so, we all are a little bit different. I want to let you know what we’re going to do for you and also how we work and what we expect from you to make sure we are on the same page. Does this sound ok to you?”

THE MONEY: Ahhhh, the dreaded money question! Of course, we all advise candidates and clients to stay away from this subject, but it’s still smart to provide your candidate with several helpful scripts that they can use to handle this question without sounding evasive. If it does come up, make sure the candidate is ready!

Option 1: “I am currently receiving (\$) annual salary with several other compensation components on top of that amount. I’m unable to determine what the offer should at this stage until I understand more about the position. When it comes to making the offer, I’m sure it will be a fair salary based on my experience and the requirements of the role.”

Option 2: “It’s a good question, and I can certainly understand why you ask. However, I can assure you that I won’t be going to an organization simply based on money. I want this to be the right fit from all aspects, and I have no doubt, from what I know of your organization, that you will offer a competitive package.”



Option 3: "I trust that if we are both interested in moving forward, (recruiter) will help us come to a decision that makes sense for both of us. I am really here to get a feel for the opportunity and department and to determine if this is the best next step for me, and I'm sure you are doing the same. I'm confident that if you find me the best candidate for this position, you will extend me your best and most fair offer." (Close with redirected question)

