

Big Biller Secrets

Presenter: Karen Russo, CEO of K. Russo Consulting and IPE International Executive Research

Karen Russo is the CEO and Chief Talent Officer of K. Russo Consulting and Mexico-based IPE International Executive Research, a global name generation and customized research service. Founded in 1996, K. Russo Consulting is a leading boutique executive search and human resources firm with global search capabilities and recognized for being a best employer by the Working Women's Entrepreneurial Excellence Awards. A recognized authority in her field, Karen is frequently quoted in the media, including the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and Business Week. She is an AIRS Certified Diversity Recruiter and is a member of the Society for Human Resources Management, IACPR, NAPS and The Pinnacle Society.

In this presentation, Karen shares her best practices in candidate career coaching and client business development. She also includes a bonus topic of how to leverage advanced research teams and techniques in your business.

Meeting: "Big Biller Secrets" by Karen Russo

If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire Episode. Use the notes below to implement the best practices provided.

ONE MORE STEP: Karen very quickly mentioned that she makes a habit of making one more call before she closes the computer for the day. Did you pick up on that? Think about what your "one more" could look like. Is it one more call, even when you have done enough for the day? Is it working an extra 10 minutes, even though you feel like packing up? Is it getting just one more person on the phone before you allow yourself to leave? Even if you reach an additional candidate each day, 5 each week, 20 each month? You are basically adding another 250 prospective candidates to your arsenal each year – and let's face it – you could do quite a bit with 250 additional candidates!

What is the "one more" you will push to achieve each day? _____

SCRIPTS THAT WORK: If Karen's callback ratio is higher than yours, consider trying out a modified version of her script. Remember that tone is just as important as content!

"My name is Karen Russo, I am an executive recruiter conducting a search for one of the fastest growing global biotech firms. I am looking for a strong leader with a background in global marketing who can strategically enhance their global marketing campaigns and lead virtual teams in development of MarCom and sales communications at the local level. In exploring this role, your name was mentioned to me as a high potential manager in this arena. As a recruiter in this space, I am always looking to meet high caliber talent and I think it would be mutually beneficial for us to spend a few minutes talking about your career goals to see if this could be an ideal next move for you. If you are not looking for a change, it would still be great to know more about you for the future and see if there is anyone you know who could be ready for an exciting career in a high visibility and influential role with a company looking to make a difference in the lives of other people. I hope you can take a few minutes to talk with me. I can be reached at 203-653-2211 or please look for an email from me and perhaps we can communicate in that way. Again my name is Karen Russo and I hope to speak with you soon."

ACTIVE LISTENING: In today's digital, fast-paced, high-stress world, communication is more important than ever before, yet we seem to devote less and less time to really listening to one another. Genuine listening is a mandatory skill for all recruiters as it helps us build relationships, solve problems, ensure understanding, and make accurate matches.

Listen first, resist interrupting, and resist imposing solutions before you've asked plenty of questions. Without this, your prospect may feel that this isn't a conversation – it's a contest – and you are here to win. We all think and speak at different rates, so as a quick-thinking and natural talker, the burden is on you to relax your pace and listen.

Karen highlights the importance of asking questions only to ensure understanding. She gives a specific example:

Initial Question:

- What are your career goals?

Ensuring Understanding:

- Can the structure in your organization accommodate this next growth move for you?
- Are you on course with internal development to be ready for this next level?
- Is your company making the investment in you for your continued growth?

Make a list of the common questions you ask to a hiring manager or candidate, and list 3-5 additional questions that you can ask as follow-through to ensure understanding and engage in active listening.

ACTIVE LISTENING PART 2: Pre-closing is a commonly discussed subject, but Karen helps take it one step further and reminds us of the need for empathy in the pre-closing process. The better job you can do of truly feeling what the candidate or hiring manager is feeling, the better. Empathy is the heart and soul of good listening, but it is not easy. It takes energy, deliberate concentration, and a concerted effort. Besides the questions Karen asks, what else can you add to the list to begin to feel what the prospect is feeling?

- How do you feel this aligns with your career agenda? What are the areas the client still needs to cover with you for you to know if this is the right position and company?
- Would you accept a position based on what you know at this time? What is missing?
- If the offer meets your requirements, are there any obstacles you anticipate in accepting the offer?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

RELO: Karen recommends providing a cost of living calculator early on in the process for those candidates relocating. You should also make the candidate aware of any differences in state or country taxes as well as school system/education information. What else would be calculated in the overall cost of living that should be covered?

INTERVIEW PREP: Karen takes the interview prep to the next level! She has a manufacturing plant system that results in the candidate knowing this is a well-structured and serious process. Additionally, she provides interview tips beyond the obvious. What else can you add to the list below?

- Poor body language or slouching
- Tapping their pen, knee jiggling, finger drumming, or other nervous habits
- Making negative comments about their team or organization
- Being rude to the security guard or receptionist
- Being distracted in the reception area
- Avoiding eye contact
- Not smiling enough (or smiling too much)
- Chewing gum
- Nervous laughter
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

INFLUENCERS: Karen makes the great recommendation to act as a mentor to your best candidates and a handful of the influencers (people who are not top candidates but have a great network) on their search process. Let them feel they can call for advice, and be focused on their agenda, not yours! Not everyone deserves to be in the influencer category, however.

Be selective with your time: what does an influencer look like in your market? _____

FOLLOW THROUGH: After a match has been made and the candidate starts employment, have a specific follow-through plan designed to ensure the right match has been made and you can leverage the success of the placement. On the final pages of this Facilitation Guide is an exercise you can complete as you think through both sides of the placement and alignment.

SCRIPTS THAT WORK: Even if skepticism is high, numbers don't lie. Part of Karen's success comes from the fact that she uses metrics in conversations, emails and messages. Although she has provided a script as an example, it's imperative that you know your own most important ratios. If you were a hiring manager, what are the most important things you would want to know if you were evaluating a search firm?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

“Here is why I think you may want to talk with me. A recent placement of ours was hired as a turnaround CFO to fix the financial dilemma of the company. Using our proprietary research process for identifying top talent and our targeted interviewing and selection methodology, we found their ideal candidate in 6 weeks. Within 7 months, our placement strategically negotiated the financial backing necessary to regain ground in the market and initiate a growth process within our client’s organization.”

SCRIPTS THAT WORK:

“Do you expect your search partner to source the talent pool for that particular profile and uncover the people not outwardly visible on social media or not actively looking? I would hope you want this and therefore want to find the best fit and not settle. That is how I approach my searches.

KRC is dedicated to finding the talent others can’t find and this is why we have decided to enhance our process by collaborating with a candidate name generation firm called IIPE. IIPE uses state of the art tools and technology to uncover the people our competition cannot. As you know, every day a job is not filled it is lost productivity for your organization.

We have found that partnering with them accelerates our time to fill, often cutting our time in half. This ultimately allows you to increase your business potential. 85% of IIPE clients have positive results—in other words they find the perfect match for their clients. With this model KRC can spend time qualifying and negotiating with candidates and assuring they are the right fit instead of spending hours on the internet sourcing and validating contact information. This is done for us, saving you time and money in the bigger picture.

We would like to invest or retain them on your search and pass through to you the dollars spent; of course this will be deducted from the total fee. In our agreement with you, we would ask for a non-refundable engagement fee of \$10K to initiate our process with IIPE so we can move faster to closing your search, knowing we have covered the candidate market for this talent, not just our own network and database. Additionally, the research uncovered also provides both of us with valuable data points for discussion with internal clients about the talent market for this position, salary and skills availability for the target in the desired geographical region. These data points will make your decision making on this hire informative and confident. In other words, this research will allow you to clearly articulate the situation analysis of this target or profile.”

SCRIPTS THAT WORK: Compelling conversations start with great questions and offer information that is relevant to the other party - be a source of valuable information between searches with clients! Be able to reference a current event, movement of key players from one firm to another, or relevant industry information. Show mastery in your niche or show interest in their knowledge of the industry. Be authentic and transparent, and create real dialogue and conversation! What are some questions you can ask that demonstrate your knowledge of events/movement/industry information?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

AFTER ONE WEEK - CANDIDATE

Think through, and list out, some of the possible thought processes the candidate is having at this phase in their onboarding experience. What are the hesitations? What are the fears? What are the positives?

- Did I make the right decision?
- Are these people who they said they were?
- Am I going to get along with this team?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Pick up the phone and call the candidate at the end of week one. What are questions you can ask to get a better understanding of what is working, what isn't, and how to continue to help facilitate the onboarding process with your client?

- What tools or training do you not yet have, that you feel you need?
- What has the team done to help welcome you and get you acclimated?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What creative suggestions can you offer to the candidate to help them be proactive in their onboarding process at this stage?

- In the next week, reach out to someone on the team you haven't yet spent time with (but think you should) and ask to meet them for coffee.
- Make a checklist of critical accomplishments you want to have made by the time you hit 90 days.
- List the primary responsibilities that are different than the role you previously held, and reach out to your boss for assistance with how to tackle each one.
- Don't try to change your boss; adapt to their style initially – there is enough to learn without trying to change embedded habits in someone else.
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are ideas as to a unique, inexpensive, and/or valuable item you could send to the candidate?

- Impactful book: _____
- Logo item: _____
- What else? _____

AFTER 90 DAYS - CANDIDATE

Think through, and list out, some of the possible thought processes the candidate is having at this phase in their onboarding experience. What are the hesitations? What are the fears? What are the positives?

- Did I make the right decision?
- Am I doing what they think I should be doing? Nobody's really given me feedback in a while so hopefully that means everyone is happy.
- I haven't really hit the ground running as fast as I thought I would...hope nobody notices and I'm sure I'll turn it around soon.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Pick up the phone and call the candidate at the end of 90 days. What are questions you can ask to get a better understanding of what is working, what isn't, and how to continue to help facilitate the onboarding process with your client?

- Are you where you thought you would be at this point? Why or why not?
- What tools or training do you not yet have, that you feel you need?
- How is your professional relationship with your team? Do you feel you connect with any of them personally as well?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What creative suggestions can you offer to the candidate to help them be proactive in their onboarding process at this stage?

- Sit down with your boss and make a checklist of critical accomplishments you want to have made by the time you hit your year anniversary.
- Coordinate a social event (happy hour, book club, trip to sporting event) for those you work with primarily.
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are ideas as to a unique, inexpensive, and/or valuable item you could send to the candidate?

- Impactful book: _____
- Logo item: _____
- What else? _____

AFTER 10 MONTHS - CANDIDATE

Think through, and list out, some of the possible thought processes the candidate is having at this phase in their onboarding experience. What are their expectations? What are they anticipating?

- I'd better get a good review.
- I hope I get a promotion, because they alluded to it when I interviewed and said that after a year, if I was doing well, I'd get additional responsibilities.
- I've learned most of what they needed me to learn...what next?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Pick up the phone and call the candidate after 10 months of employment with your client. What are questions you can ask to get a better understanding of what is working, what isn't, and how to continue to help facilitate the onboarding process with your client?

- Are you where you thought you would be at this point? Why or why not?
- What are you most proud of accomplishing? What do you wish you had done that you haven't yet?
- What skills or abilities do you need in order to continue to excel in this role?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What creative suggestions can you offer to the candidate to help them be proactive in their onboarding process at this stage?

- Reach out to someone in the organization you admire, who is performing in a role you eventually would aspire to perform. Ask to set up a monthly lunch for mentorship and guidance.
- Find an accountability partner within the company and select one area each month for professional development; help push each other to learn and be challenged.
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are ideas as to a unique, inexpensive, and/or valuable item you could send to the candidate?

- Impactful book: _____
- Logo item: _____
- What else? _____



AFTER ONE WEEK - CLIENT

Think through, and list out, the expectations the hiring manager has after a week of employment with the candidate. How is that hiring manager being evaluated? What makes the hiring manager look like he/she made the right decision with this hire?

- Did we make the right hiring decision?
- Is this person picking this up as quickly as I need them to?
- Is the candidate happy with their decision to join us?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Pick up the phone and call the client at the end of week one. What are questions you can ask to get a better understanding of what is working, what isn't, and how to continue to help facilitate the onboarding process with your candidate?

- What has impressed you the most so far?
- How has (candidate) done with your initial expectations and responsibilities?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What creative suggestions can you offer to the client to help them be proactive in their onboarding process at this stage?

- Make a checklist of critical accomplishments you want the candidate to have made within the first 90 days.
- Set up one lunch a week for the next month with the candidate and someone from (team/department/company).
- Think through what this candidate was doing within their prior organization; what are the primary responsibilities that are different than their previous role, and what should they do to try to develop those skills?
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are ideas as to a unique, inexpensive, and/or valuable item you could send to the client?

- Impactful book: _____
- Logo item: _____
- What else? _____

AFTER 90 DAYS - CLIENT

Think through, and list out, the expectations the hiring manager has after 90 days of employment with the candidate. How is that hiring manager being evaluated? What makes the hiring manager look like he/she made the right decision with this hire?

- Did we make the right decision?
- Can I count on them as a profitable contributing member of the team yet? If not, when will that happen?
- Is the candidate happy with their decision to join us?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Pick up the phone and call the client at the end of 90 days. What are questions you can ask to get a better understanding of what is working, what isn't, and how to continue to help facilitate the onboarding process with your candidate?

- What is the most significant accomplishment (candidate) has made to the team thus far?
- Are they where you thought they would be at this point? Why or why not?
- In what areas do you think they need more support?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What creative suggestions can you offer to the candidate to help them be proactive in their onboarding process at this stage?

- Conduct a 90-day review with the candidate and set clear expectations for the following three months.
- Delegate an area of learning each quarter to the candidate, allowing them to be creative in their own development but guiding them in a specific area of content.
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are ideas as to a unique, inexpensive, and/or valuable item you could send to the client?

- Impactful book: _____
- Logo item: _____
- What else? _____

AFTER 10 MONTHS - CLIENT

Think through, and list out, the expectations the hiring manager has after 10 months of employment by the candidate. How is that hiring manager being evaluated? What makes the hiring manager look like he/she made the right decision with this hire?

- How is this person making us money, saving us money, or streamlining our processes?
- Is this a promotable person? Are they capable of more than they are doing right now?
- Are they going to stay with us long-term?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Pick up the phone and call the client at the end of 10 months. What are questions you can ask to get a better understanding of what is working, what isn't, and how to continue to help facilitate the long-term career progression for your candidate?

- What is the most significant accomplishment (candidate) has made to the team thus far?
- Are they where you thought they would be at this point? Why or why not?
- How do you envision building out a team around this individual? In what areas do they need more support?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What creative suggestions can you offer to the client to help them career path this candidate?

- Conduct an annual review, measure expectations, and evaluate progress.
- Ask the candidate if there are any projects, clients or areas that they haven't yet been involved with that they would like to be. Deliberately assign three new initiatives or objectives to the candidate to conquer over the next year.
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are ideas as to a unique, inexpensive, and/or valuable item you could send to the client?

- Impactful book: _____
- Logo item: _____
- What else? _____