

Big Biller Secrets

Presenter: Dan Charney – Managing Partner, Direct Recruiters

Dan Charney is the Managing Partner of Direct Recruiters, an executive search firm with over three decades of experience in recruitment. Dan brings a unique blend of executive search perspectives and recruitment techniques to his clients in the industries of Packaging, Capital Equipment, Material Handling Systems, Supply Chain Automation, Data Collections, and RFID.

Dan is a co-founder of the Ohio Association of Executive Search Professionals, Cleveland Chapter. In addition, he is a member of NAPS, RFID Tribe, and IOPP. He is often interviewed and quoted in well-known trade publications including Food & Beverage Packaging Magazine, Material Handling Management Magazine, and the MHIA e-Mhove Newsletter.

About This Presentation

In Dan's presentation, he discusses how he built his practice, his metrics for success, and the must-haves for a successful search practice.

Meeting: “Big Biller Secrets” by Dan Charney

If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire Episode and use the following exercise to identify the gaps between knowledge and application.

REFERRALS: Before you ask for information, consider giving some first – in the spirit of making the other party feel as though this is a casual exchange of information. Dan suggests throwing out a name from networking or research; as an example, *“did you ever compete with Rich from ABC...what about Joe from XYZ...”* Continue the conversation, make mutual connections, and then at the end of the conversation ask for referrals in a strategic manner. Additional name gathering questions that can be utilized:

- *“What’s the name of the person who hires for your department?”*
- *If you were to leave tomorrow, who would they use to backfill your position?*
- *“The last few recruiting calls you received – what companies were those recruiters calling about?”*
- *“The last person who left your firm – where did he or she go?”*
- *“I know (name) left recently – do you know where he/she went?”*

OWNERSHIP: Be proactive in the next step in your career. Don't wait for someone to hand it to you, but be willing to put in the legwork to build a strong foundation. For Dan, it took time to gather 1,000 names of hiring managers in his new niche. But he was patient, methodical, and deliberate in pursuing the next phase of his career once he had spent his first year learning “blocking and tackling”.

INVESTMENT: Invest your time, and your financial resources, in your professional training and development. Doing \$250,000 a year is not bad, but Dan was capable of more – it just required him being open to looking to others for answers. Make a personal commitment to yourself of how many hours a month, or quarter, you will dedicate to growth. What have you not yet read, done, or attended that you know will positively impact your ability to experience even more success in this business?

INCOME ACCOUNTABILITY: Whether at work or at home, we all need someone trustworthy in our lives who isn't afraid to hold us accountable. For some, the word "accountability" can generate a strong sense of fear – being forced to do something you don't want to do, or forced to do something that will be difficult, or forced to meet goals that someone else is setting for you. Remember, no one can demand or give accountability to someone. Having someone hold you accountable means that you trust them to help you take behavioral, intellectual, and emotional ownership for your outcomes. The fear of failure, and of someone being aware of that failure, is exactly what will continue to hold you back whether you have an accountability partner or not.

For Dan, he shared his personal income goals with his spouse and his family. This requires a strong relationship, trust, and respect. If you are going to find an accountability partner for your desired earnings, pick someone who has those traits and who can be direct and honest with you, and who you care enough about that you do not want to disappoint.

OUTWORK OTHERS: Actor Will Smith shared recently this response to the question of why he felt he was so successful:

"I'm not afraid to die on a treadmill. I will not be outworked. You may be more talented than me. You might be smarter than me. And you may be better looking than me. But if we get on a treadmill together you are going to get off first or I'm going to die. It's really that simple. I'm not going to be outworked."

Remember, in many situations, especially in your first few years in search – your greatest strength is your work ethic. "Working hard" is measurable by your time in the market, and the number of forward-motion conversations you have with candidates and clients. Prioritize this above all else, but manage your time and your responsibilities so other things don't impede your growth and success.

RECRUITING PROCESS: Dan makes a great point as to how essential it is to not only be able to articulate your actual recruiting process, but to be able to do so in a way that helps them understand how that process adds value to our clients and helps them grow. The process has worked long before most of us started in the industry and will be here after we are gone; follow it, but also make sure your clients understand how it will serve them well in the long run.

VOICEMAIL SUCCESS: On average, your hiring managers receive 30 voicemails a day – perhaps more the higher you go in an organization. There are a few quite common ways that salespeople start off in voicemail, and the person listening may find the phrases to be repetitive unbeknownst to you and in turn, fails to "listen" to any future distinguishing and value added sound bites of information. Phrases to avoid when leaving a voicemail in market development calls:

- I'm just following up...
- I'm just touching base...
- I'm calling to check in...
- I sent you an email...
- I'm reaching out to you...
- Just calling to catch up...
- Wanted to give you a quick call...
- I know you're busy, so I'll make this quick...
- I was referred to you... (but fail to provide the referring name)
- When you have a second, give me a quick call back...

Dan's Voicemail Script:

"Good morning Jon, My name is Dan Charney and I am the Managing Partner of DR Incorporated. We are an executive search and consulting firm with a focus in the industrial automation space. I am currently working on several executive searches with in this space. I am also actively confidentially working with several high level candidates within the industry that I believe to have fairly unique skill sets. I was hoping to chat with you for a few minutes to not only see if I can add value to your career on a personal level but also determine if there may be synergy between our organizations. Please return my call at your convenience. I can be reached at 440-996-0585. I look forward to your returned call."

DO HOMEWORK: Just because you are no longer in elementary school doesn't mean you should stop doing your homework. Dan shares that he targets specific companies he wants to market to, never just starting with A in his database and working to Z. Research those 50 companies, and put in place a targeted multi-tiered marketing approach. Dan suggests making a phone call in week one along with an email. Week two is an emailed industry-related article. Week three is a list of superstar candidates in the industry along with a phone call. Week four is to set up a meeting at a trade show or other industry event, or perhaps try to set up a face to face meeting in the office. Be methodical – clients are impressed and comforted by persistence and tenacity.

ADD VALUE: Visit your clients, but offer to add some value while you are there. Perhaps conduct a seminar on behavior based interviewing, or help gatekeepers understand how to screen calls from other recruiters. Ask your hiring manager what Human Capital related issues they are having, and then ask if you could speak to a group of managers about how to overcome this problem based on your experience.

THE INFORMATION ERA: Dan shares his response for clients who think they "know everyone in the industry" or "have access to the same candidate pool we have access to". If you'd like additional responses, below are several rebuttals from the NLE Library:

"I'm sure you probably can fill just about any position yourself, given enough time and effort. However, how much more profitable would your time be if you used that time to look into technology, mentor one of your junior managers, growing your business or pursue new clients and business ventures? My point is, your core business is (type of work) and our core business is recruiting. The cost of YOU taking the time to fill this position is much greater than if WE were to perform the task. Think about it – if you don't like the candidates we put in front of you, you don't hire them. But if you do – the value this superstar brings to your firm coupled with the man-hours we've just saved you are FAR greater than the fee you've paid. Are you open to comparing my candidates to yours, if it costs you nothing to compare?"

"I completely understand that if you can hire the best candidate without having to pay a fee, it makes sense to not pay a fee. However, we've built relationships with clients like (insert client names) and they continue to partner with us not because they like me, but because I give them the candidates that they are not able to find through their other means. I'm simply giving you the opportunity to make sure you are hiring the best candidates. Give me one week to work on your hardest to fill position - if I'm not introducing you to the right people at the end of that week, you lose absolutely nothing. Fair?"

“Let me ask you something – the main product that you guys sell is (product). If your firm relied on ads on the internet to sell (product), what do you think your total sales would be? Anywhere near what it is with an outbound sales department on staff? We are your outbound sales department. It’s perfectly acceptable to gather up the gravy of those extra sales that are incoming – but you and I both know that the large accounts, the whales, the difference makers – they aren’t going to be landed with an inbound phone call. If outbound is how you sustain your business, why wouldn’t you use the same approach to sustain your talent?”

“That’s fine with me – in fact, I would do the same thing if I were you. There’s no reason to limit yourself by utilizing only one resource. In fact, most all of my clients keep active postings on job boards, just to benchmark my candidates against theirs. I’d simply ask you this - let me do what I do best. Tell me one specific company, or couple of companies, that are your direct competition. If I recruit a top performer from one of those firms, someone who is not actively looking and therefore not responding to your original method of recruitment, will you speak to him/her? (If yes), what does his/her background look like?”

WHAT’S YOUR FEE: Dan shares his response to this question, and it is expanded upon in the following script:

“It’s difficult for me to give you an exact answer to this, because it’s similar to you asking a contractor ‘how much will it cost me to build an office building’, yet you haven’t told that contractor anything about how many stories you want the building to be, what material you want it built with, and your deadline to getting the building completed. Now, on a retained basis, our service charge is 35% of the total first year’s identifiable compensation. That being said, we have never won a search because we were the cheapest firm, nor have we ever lost business because we were the most expensive. Let’s talk about what you need, what’s required of me, your expectations of this search, and the challenges we will face – and I am sure we can come to an agreement as to what works best for both of us.”

BE A PERSON: If you fail to build rapport, it will make candidates feel as though they are simply a part of your process. This doesn’t equate to chatting about meaningless subjects like the weather; bring up family, kids, hobbies, golf, outside interests. Build rapport around things that factor into a decision like changing jobs, because you need to be able not to not only paint a picture of a better job but you must paint a picture of a better life. In order to do this effectively, you need to know the person who exists behind the candidate – not just the candidate.

LEARN FROM THE BEST: Did you pick up on how many times Dan referenced things like *“She/ was the master at this”*? Successful people have mentors, and they learn all they can from those mentors. If you have them within your office, or have them through connections you’ve made while watching other Big Billers or Recruiting Trainers, make sure you have several mentors in your life who you aspire to learn and grow from.

SHOW YOUR WORK: Be able to show your client where you have gone on their behalf; share with them business intelligence, your weekly retained search report, or anything else that will help them understand the work you are doing on their behalf. Don’t assume that they know the volume of time and expertise you are dedicating to them!

CONGRATULATIONS: This is a great suggestion that others have not made; make the candidate feel like they have won at the end of the search. Compliment them and share with them the interviewing process; Dan’s example was *“Our firm interviewed 80 people for this search. We presented 6 candidates. Our client interviewed 4 of those and you are the last standing. You conducted yourself like a professional and they made you a very fair offer.”* This can help reinforce that they made the right decision!