

Recruiting Edges

Presenter: Doug Beabout, President and Founder – Doug Beabout Group

Doug Beabout brings over thirty years of expertise in top billings, placement firm ownership and industry training. His reputation for training excellence has placed him repeatedly as a guest speaker and author for non-profit, private, national, regional and state recruiting associations. Doug works a top-producing desk every day and is uniquely qualified as a professional personnel services trainer. Having successfully thrived and survived the last three recessions, Doug knows the trenches. Doug Beabout is owner and president of Doug Beabout Group in Miramar Beach, FL. Prior, Doug was owner and president of his own personnel services firms, The Douglas Howard Group, a personnel services firm in Kent, Ohio for seven years and Douglas William Associates, for ten years in Dayton, Ohio. Doug has held the title of CPC; certified personnel consultant since 1981.

In This Presentation

Candidates sought by our clients are in a unique pool of people; this challenges the “tried and true” practices of recruiting. This program clearly paints the proven and innovative process of visioning an opportunity. This visioning process is incredibly powerful and its techniques win the most qualified candidates sought after today.

Week 1 Meeting: “Recruiting Edges” by Doug Beabout

If you are reviewing this episode with a team, break this episode into two different segments. Watch the entire first half, and pause the segment at intermission. Week 1’s suggested viewing schedule and exercises are below.

Facilitator: Doug opens with the concept of “Power Gathering”. We need to be able to create a compelling vision of opportunity to the people we call, and go far beyond the basic information to become essentially an extension of that opportunity. He breaks this down into six areas of information that needs to be gathered, including what questions need to be answered and who will provide the answers, comprehensively defining the opportunity and appeal of the employer, and fully understanding the hiring manager and background on the opportunity. Now, each of those areas sounds good in theory – but how do you begin to craft specific questions and scripts to gather this power information? Use Doug’s examples to get started:

Share with me why would the most qualified individual – the person you want in this job and that I might happen to be on the phone with tomorrow – why would that individual see this position as an opportunity?

What is it about being in this role that presents an opportunity to achieve success within your organization?

Why is your organization one that can, and will, attract and retain people of this caliber?

Why would the most qualified individual, someone who is capable of handling all these challenges we’ve discussed, want to come to work for you? What can this person learn about you during the interviewing process that will compel them to want to come to work with you?

What's the history behind this position? How have candidates performed in it in the past?

Has it been redefined in any way, and why? What kind of support mechanisms are in place to support this individual in this job?

You, as a manager, are incentivized to achieve certain objectives or solve certain problems. How are you rewarded for that achievement? What financial, promotional, or other types of incentives are in place that will measure success for you in your role?

Another area that Doug stresses is the importance of describing the totality of the search process to the client, but in ways that highlight how this process is designed to ensure accountability and the successful completion of having this position filled by the timeframe that they themselves have stated. Do not assume that a hiring manager knows your process; you are missing out on a tremendous opportunity to increase the value proposition as to the benefits of partnering with a recruiter. You will give your client a higher level of comfort in working with you as well as lessening the chances that you will experience issues throughout the process. Doug's key points are as follows:

I'd like to share with you some essential points in order to ensure this is a fluid process. As I go into the market sharing your story, I don't want to create any misperceptions or images of your company that aren't completely accurate. If I am on the phone with a qualified candidate, and I'm explaining the definition of the role for which I'm recruiting them, and then go back later and share that the company has changed directions – my experience is that this doesn't bode well for my hiring organization. I will share with you updates as to the progress I'm making, and I'd request that you keep me equally aware as to how this position is defined as time goes by.

I also need to know that if I contact you, you will be available. I'll never call you for the sake of chatter; I'll never call you just to see how the weather is. If I call you, it will be for one of two reasons. One, I need further definition as to the opportunity or I need some access to what we can do and need your approval, or I have a fully qualified candidate and we need to discuss that individual. I know you will be busy, in meetings, tied up, and in the middle of projects, but I need to know that you will get back to me as soon as possible because I can make no further progress until I know the answers to my questions. I would be remiss as your consultant if I continued to search for a solution for a problem that you no longer have or want.

The next step in the process is that I am going to help your organization fully recruit who I have started recruiting; the recruiting process doesn't start with me and end with me. The recruiting process needs to continue throughout the interviews with other hiring managers and key contacts within the company. I will understand the value system of my candidate, career interests, and points of attraction; I'm going to show you what they are ready to buy. I am going to position you to be the most competitive hiring entity as far as this candidate is concerned. My objective is to not only fill this job, but to position you to be powerfully competitive in attracting this individual because there is going to be a war for this kind of talent. I will work with you so you have the ability to sell every candidate you meet. At the end of the process, when you are ready to decide which candidate you want to hire, you will have convinced most (if not all) of the candidates you have met to take this job. You will then be in a position to pick from all those you met, and select the candidate you perceive to be the best qualified fit for the job rather than the candidate you felt was most likely to accept the job. Which position would you like to be in when it's time to consider extending an offer?

Facilitator: Let's expand on another area Doug covered in this session, which was a three-step technique to handling recruiting resistance. As recruiters, we have a tremendous ability to be limited by our own perspective; we hear resistance as objections and become laser-focused on overcoming that objection. Doug's first step is one that is frequently overlooked, which is to "Agree and Relate". Why is this critically important? If you want to influence a candidate, you must start to see through the lens of that individual. Get out of your shoes and into theirs!

One of the best ways to develop an alternative paradigm is through role play. Take a moment to go through each of the following statements that are most commonly encountered, or create additional ones based on your industry.

In this role play, one individual should play the candidate and the other the recruiter. Truly engage in an accurate dialogue starting with the raising of the objection, through agreeing and relating, to expanding the logic, and offering a different perspective. If you have enough participants, one or two individuals can act as the observers/coaches and share insights of what was done well and what suggestions they have after the role play has concluded.

The real power in this exercise? Play the role of the candidate. Take note of how you feel throughout the conversation. Did you feel heard? Did you feel "overcome"? What words resonated with you, and what words caused an adverse reaction?

Remember: How you *practice* is how you will *play*, so don't wait for a critical conversation or objection to have your first run be a live one. Some recruiters make the mistake of thinking "*well, it's not really real when we role play, and I'm just much better on the phone than I am in a staged setting*". The reality is that no, they aren't!

Possible scenarios:

- A candidate will not give specific compensation information and wants to know first what the salary package is for the opportunity
- A candidate is hesitant or will not provide reference information unless an interview is scheduled
- A candidate is open to a new opportunity but cannot clearly define what the opportunity is specifically
- A candidate is not currently open to relocation but is limited by potential opportunities if they do not relocate
- A candidate is being "groomed" for a future position or promotion and does not want to make a move until that next step occurs within their current company

Break at this point if desiring two separate meetings for this Episode.

Week 2's Meeting: "Recruiting Edges" by Doug Beabout

Resume the video where you left off last week (the beginning of the second half of the video), and use the Facilitation Guide to expand on the material shared. Watch through the end of the video.

Facilitator: Doug portrays an incredibly consultative approach when it comes to building relationships and rapport with his candidates. As discussed last week, recruiters have a tendency to position statements in terms of why we want to speak with a candidate or why our *client* really needs this person; take a moment to list out the reasons that a candidate would want to network with *you*. Assume that they are completely content, have no intentions of making a move in the immediate future. We'll give you a few examples to get started:

- I can tell you what you should be making within your current role
- I can share with you what your competitors are doing to land their top accounts
- I can give you advice and coaching when it's time for your annual review and possible promotion
- I can give you suggestions as to how to provide additional value within your role or how to stay viable within your firm
- I can help you understand the gap that exists between where you are now and what your next step is, and deliberate proactive steps you can take in order to bridge that gap
- I can share with you when key individuals leave critical roles, and why they left and why they chose the subsequent organization

Once you have a strong list and have reversed your perspective, consider creating a script like the one Doug shared:

"I have no idea if you are qualified for this job, and I have no idea even that if you are qualified if you will be interested. I do know one thing is for certain; I'm the director over our (practice) specializing in (role(s)), specifically in (location). My team has worked for over (# of years) in the industry, and I connect with people within your profession day in and day out. From time to time, an opportunity may arise that may be a very close match to what you would be interested in. The more I know about you, your desires, your needs, your objectives, and your qualifications – the better a position I will be in to call you in the future about that position. However, even if you never leave, you can still use me as a resource and insider for situations such as (insert desired reasons from list above)."

Facilitator: Now, what happens when you continue to move the conversation forward with a candidate who is truly passive? Think through their situation; they are currently employed, they are in the middle of their day, and you have caught them off guard with an opportunity that may represent a better situation. What if, sincerely, they are not in a place to be able to immediately process the magnitude of this kind of conversation? Give the candidate the gift of time to process, discuss with family, and do some research – but keep control of the next steps and conversation:

“I understand where you are coming from. You are right; I did call you. It’s equally true that this company is very serious about filling this job, and they want to speak with people who are equally interested in the possibility of joining their team. If you want more time to think about this or if you have any further questions to ask, I’m willing to invest whatever time it takes for you to be fully informed – so why don’t I let you think about this for a while. Before I end our call, let me ask you a question – do you truly understand the nature of this opportunity and understand where this can lead? Do you understand the types of challenges and types of rewards associated? As I make my continued recruiting efforts, I want to know if I should keep you in mind or not.”

To expand on this point and if you would like an additional script to help prepare a passive candidate to be proactive throughout the selling process of the interview:

“The buyer is the client, and that means the seller has to be the candidate - which is you. If you can go in there and sell yourself, following the advice that I give you, I’ll help you know what they buy and help you know what you bring to the table. If you do an effective job of selling, and you follow my advice, at some point they are going to look at you and think yes, that’s the person we want. It’s at that instant in time, at that moment, they will immediately reverse roles with you. They will become the seller, and that makes you the buyer. And when it comes time to receiving an offer, which role do you want to be in – do you want to be the buyer, or do you want to be the seller?”

For additional takeaways, read the following article written by Doug Beabout entitled *“Increasing your Odds of Getting an Offer”*. Although it is written for the candidate’s perspective, it is packed with essential points to share with your candidates throughout the interviewing process.

Increasing your Odds of Getting an Offer by Doug Beabout

In today's economy there is little debate about the competitive climate for each position. With companies receiving large numbers of resumes for each position, many report that few are qualified. The competition is fierce.

Unfortunately for candidates, they are unaware of the competition until after an interview and by then it is usually too late. By that time they are being told they are no longer being considered for the position. That can be a very helpless feeling. I know individuals that have replayed the interview over and over trying to determine what they could have done differently. Understandably they want to prevent that same result the next time.

Many times the real qualifications of the position are not known by the job seeker. The job posting often fails to define the real qualifiers and detailed descriptions of the associated issues that filling the position would resolve. In an interview the questions that are asked by the hiring manager may take the interviewee by surprise and they may not provide a well prepared answer. Unless there is something compelling to make the hiring manager feel the candidate should remain in the process, they will be released. Again, the time constraints and the nature of the need may encourage a hiring manager to move quickly if possible. The haste to address a burning problem often causes a qualified applicant to be either overlooked or disqualified.

Like many of the traditional avenues traveled by those who seek new employment, they are fraught with pitfalls. It puts each candidate in a position of many unknowns. Candidates have to surmise what they should prepare for or expect. The chances of not having the complete information are quite high. The argument can easily be made that under these conditions everyone is on the same playing field. While it is a possibility, I have not spoken to anyone who does not want to have some type of advantage. Accepting the "Lottery" syndrome as a condition of seeking a new position is not necessary when you are armed with the best practices and tools that make you a competitive candidate.

Competitive candidates execute these steps after any interview::

1. The follow up plan
2. Researching position location and needs
3. Continued action calls to contact network
4. Seizing secondary interviews
5. Follow up procedures
6. Early negotiation techniques
7. Pre-offer research steps

With the skills gained from the first three steps, the issues discussed in the first part of this article may not surface. Due to the research and various conversations a candidate is more knowledgeable than any other potential candidate. There may be only a few or even no other candidates competing for the position. The paths followed are not the typical ones most job seekers follow. Most issues are eliminated and the knowledgeable job seeker:

- Knows the company well due to research beyond what most have the know-how to do
- Talks directly to the hiring managers in many cases

- Knows the answers to the questions due to research and conversations held with the company and even the hiring manager
- Has a greater perspective on the overall possibility for not only the position but, if a relocation is possible, knowledge of the potential new location
- Is in a position to seize a secondary interview

This fits into the current hiring conditions that exist today. The hiring manager is able to learn about a potential candidate that is most likely highly qualified for the position. When the candidate exhibits knowledge in which the hiring manager is interested, he will feel he is talking to a well qualified candidate. They should also know a great deal about the company in terms detailed in earlier series articles. The hiring manager is more likely to want to interview this type of candidate and may see the opportunity to solve the existing problem(s) faster with someone highly qualified for the position.

It is possible after an interview to conclude that the opportunity is not the right one. In this scenario, it may seem like a risky decision to discontinue. In reality, many who find themselves unemployed were in positions that did not fit them well. Rather than be in a position where it is an unhappy situation it is better to continue the process and find the right opportunity. By following the common practices of a job search the right one will not "appear" but, it will be much more likely as the result of a proven process and action plan.

The decision not to continue efforts on a specific position may result from numerous influences such as:

- The position itself may not be a match
- The person to whom the candidate would report is not a cultural or personality fit.
- The company may not have laid out the future opportunities desired
- The location where the company is may fall far short of what the applicant needs and requires.

There are any numbers of reasons that may make a particular position unattractive. Unfortunately this may not be known until the candidate actually starts their new opportunity with their new company. By then it becomes a problem over the long term. It can eventually start to show in the performance of the candidate. It can give signals to the company that that person is not the right fit and they made a mistake as well. It can end in the last resort of being fired or the employee leaving the position. None of the outcomes are good for anyone.

Rather than allow this type of situation to happen it can be prevented. The proper preparation and following a proven process way through an interview and post-interview greatly minimizes a negative outcome. It often will lead to an opportunity that is a proper fit for both the job seeker and the company they join.

Pursuing a better opportunity or re-employment is more often very disappointing and frustrating. It can be a process yielding few results and the frustrations of "hurry up and wait".

There is no need whatsoever for this to be your experience.

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