

Big Biller Secrets

Presenter: Michael Bitar – Partner, Protis Executive Innovations

Michael Bitar is Senior Vice President of Sales and a principal at Protis Executive Innovations. As Senior Vice President of Sales, Michael's mission at Protis is to strengthen the leadership team at Protis to be the most strategic, forward thinking and value-added authority on human capital architecture in the world. This task is accomplished by facilitating an executive search strategy that is timely, efficient and most importantly, productive for all parties involved. This process allows both the clients and candidates to make well-informed decisions. Clients strengthen their organizations through superior human capital acquisition. Candidates enhance their careers through placement with these top-tier organizations.

At Protis, the Consumer Products team, Financial Services team and Organization Design and Diversity team fall under Michael's leadership with his appointment to Senior Vice President of Sales. Prior to Michael's promotion in June 2004, Michael held the leadership reins of the Consumer Products practice. He assumed this role in 1997. Under his leadership, the Consumer Products team accelerated to number 1 worldwide within a field of 4,500 recruiters.

Week 1 Meeting: “Big Biller Secrets” by Michael Bitar

If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire episode and then ask your group for their key takeaways and insights that they pulled from the episode. Review the takeaways below to fill in the gaps from what they picked up.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS: How do you make your candidates feel at ease, while differentiating yourself at the same time? Michael gives two tips here as it pertains to setting expectations as to the purpose of your phone call. Whether we like it or not, the moment most candidates hear 'recruiter' they are on guard for the job-of-the-week pitch that is not specific to their current situation, their individual career goals, or their personal circumstances.

First, it is necessary to give enough of an overview of who you are and your specialty that someone feels it is a worthy investment of their time to speak with you. Explain how many positions your group is working on to give them some frame of reference. Explain the geographic reach that you have. Definitely throw in some terminology that instantly clues them in to the fact that you are knowledgeable of their market.

Then, take a step back. There's a saying that “people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Michael's script:

“That being said - let me take a step back. I've done a lot of talking, but I don't know anything about you – personally, professionally, and financially. Put what I'm working on to the side, and let's talk about what's important to you first. If anything matches, we can talk further, but my primary intent is to simply build a relationship over time. I'll now know what's appropriate to call you with specifically. Do you have any questions about who we are or what we do?”

If you think this approach would work for your style and industry, take what Michael uses above and adjust accordingly.

SETTING MORE EXPECTATIONS: This is a unique approach that not many use. How often do you explain your relationships with your clients in the way that Mike has? Typically, we'll tell them that we've been retained (perhaps), that we are finding the top talent, and that this is a urgent and critical position.

Have you ever thought about how that might make your candidate feel? The pressure that they might be under to not let you down? It's no surprise, then, when they don't trust us and are apprehensive to tell us 'no' at any stage in the process. Mike's approach:

"Before I take on a new job order, there's a lot of selling that goes on with the prospective client. But once I've got the job order? The selling stops. What we help people do is make timely, well informed decisions about their career. You can tell me no at any point in time. What I would ask you to do is always base your 'no' on either personal, professional, or financial reasons."

SHOW ME THE MONEY: How do you pre-close on financials during the interviewing process? Most candidates assume that they need to shoot unrealistically high when it comes to compensation, because they won't get what they don't ask for. So how do you earn trust, set expectations, and close all at the same time? Use Mike's script, or tweak what you are currently using.

"I need to get from you two numbers – your 'want number' and your 'bottom line' number, but before I do any of that, let me explain what I will do with this information so you know why to put some thought into what you'll share with me. Your 'want number' is what I will take to and share with the client – but it has to be realistic. Your 'bottom line' means that anything below this number doesn't make sense for you, your family, etc. The 'bottom line' number is never shared with the client at any point in time – but don't set it higher than your actual bottom line because anything below this number truly won't be extended to you. Now, if we are fortunate enough to get an offer at the end of this process, we will make sure it's the best offer that they can extend as well. If they say to me, 'let's see what he says' – there's more money there and I'll get it for you. When we put an offer together for you, it's going to be one final offer – and you'll either accept it or decline it. If it takes you longer than 24 hours, it tells me that it's not the right situation for you, and we will advise our client to pursue candidate number 2. Does that make sense?"

KEEP THAT RELATIONSHIP: Once you have placed your candidate, do you have a systemic way to keep in touch with them? Do you send a Happy Anniversary card each year? Do you send them Holiday E-Cards? Happy Birthday emails? Although some clients are weary of the recruiter who stays close with their clients post-placement (for fear that you will take them right out again), the better job you do staying in touch with your success stories, the more referrals and placements you will make.

NUMBERS TO TRACK:

- Diversity Statistics
- Retention
- Performance – Have they been promoted within (# of) years
- Interview to Hire Ratio
- How long it takes to deliver the candidate that is ultimately hired (how many days)
- How long it takes from Identification of Target Candidate to Offer & Hire Stage

KEEP GOING: Have you ever heard the phrase, *'you are only as good as your last phone call'*? This is a constantly changing business, and you've got to be on the phone to be making things happen. You can't get too caught up in recent success, nor can you allow yourself to get discouraged by a few (or a ton) of tough calls.

What if we changed the phrase to:

*You are **about** to be as good as your **next** phone call.*

Your career can change in an instant. Your next call might be the key account that rockets you into Big Biller status, or your next placement that happens in record time. What if that call wasn't all that? Doesn't matter – because *you are still **about** to be as good as your **next** call.* Make it!

IT'S ALL ABOUT WHO?: What makes a good recruiter? Most would say an outgoing individual, type A personality, someone who can engage others quickly. All of these are good traits – but the best recruiters out there are ones who **ask great questions**. They don't ask questions because they already know the answers and can't wait to sound smart...they ask great questions because they remember that this entire process isn't about them – it's about the candidate. Are you asking great questions? Do you truly know your candidates well enough to be able to know what's a great move for them?

**VIEW THE PROTIS SCORECARD
AT THE END OF THIS FACILITATION GUIDE**

Big Biller Secrets – Week 2

Presenter: Vern Davis – Partner, Protis Executive Innovations

Vern Davis is Senior Vice President of the Consumer Packaged Goods Team and a principal at Protis Executive Innovations. As the Team Leader for the Consumer Products team, Vern is responsible for leading the sourcing and recruitment for human capital talent acquisition with the Consumer Products Team's client partners. Vern's team's objective is focused against positions within Sales, Category Management, Trade Marketing, Consumer Marketing and Consumer Insights. He has been with Protis Executive Innovations since 2000. Since 2000, Vern has billed in excess of \$4 million.

NOTE: This episode reiterates much of what Michael Bitar covered in his Big Biller Episode. If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire episode and then ask your group for their key takeaways and insights that they pulled from the episode. Review the takeaways below to fill in the gaps from what they picked up.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Vern talks about the importance of taking a thorough job order on the front end of your search. This is one of the fundamentals we learn in training – but as you advance in your career, do you hold yourself to that 100% of the time? Are you using the same Job Order Form you used in the beginning of your career? When was the last time you reworked it to ask more sophisticated questions?

Let's consider the main points of a Job Order Form:

- Company Information and Key Selling Points
- Candidate Background Requirements and Ideals
- Salary and Benefits
- Status of Search
- Hiring Process Agreement

Look at the current Job Order Form you are using and evaluate it on each of those five key areas. Are you asking surface level questions, or digging further to get answers that most other recruiters don't have? For example, to determine the current status of the search, you could ask *"what's been done so far to get this position filled"* and stop there. Let's brainstorm some additional questions that will help us dig deeper and uncover more information:

- Have you held anyone "accountable" for filling this yet?
- What is the level of involvement other search firms/recruiters had in the hiring process?
- Do you feel as if the other recruiters had a real understanding of your company culture and future goals (short/long term)?
- Have other search firms presented their presentation/script to you for your approval/suggestions? Is this important to you? Do you know what they are saying about you in the industry?
- Do you have pre-screening questions that you have given HR? If not, can we build a list?
- How long has the position been open? Why? (Promotion, Firing, Lay Off, New Position)
- Is there anyone within the organization who has the ability to perform in this position and is available?
- On a scale of 1-10 (10 being highest), how critical is it that this position be filled?
- Has your human resources staff been able to turn up any viable candidates? Do they direct recruit or just field inquiries?



- How many resumes have you reviewed? How many interviews have you had? Have you made any offers?
- The candidates you liked best – why did they stand out? The ones you ruled out – why?
- Why do you think your efforts haven't your efforts produced desired results?
- What has been your greatest challenge in getting the right person hired?

In an ideal scenario, you'd be able to ask all of these questions (and more) in each of our five Job Order areas. We all know that's not the case – but look at your current Job Order Form and determine which areas could use some revamping to ensure you are asking the best questions that will yield the most impactful information.

HOT BUTTONS: What do each of your clients have in common? They want you to give them great candidates that they can hire. Outside of that, don't assume that they are all the same when it comes to how else to measure success. Understand the metrics that are important to your clients, find out a way to measure those metrics, and report back on a regular basis. This complete transparency will help them understand the amount of work that goes into completing a search, and help them help you when they current methods aren't uncovering the right people.

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Creating Your Personal Scorecard



A personal scorecard is a compiling of your goals and desires, not only in your career, but in your personal life as well. Once identified, these items should be your drivers, or motivators, not only career-wise, but in all facets of your life. There is no right or wrong answers – each individual's scorecard is unique. Many of your goals will be shared by your family members as well, and they should be consulted in this process.

A personal scorecard is not an exercise you complete quickly. You need to give serious thought to your answers and discuss them with your spouse/significant other, mentors, parents, or other individuals important in your life. First and foremost, you need to be candid with yourself.

All items should be time bound and quantifiable. Identify how you will know when you are there – achieve the goal.

Personal:

(What do you want to accomplish personally in the next twelve months? The next five years? Go on a dream vacation? Start a family?)

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Professional:

(What do you want to achieve professionally in the next twelve months? The next five years? Earn a designation or complete a degree? Reach a particular level in your career?)

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Financial:

(What do you want to achieve financially in the next twelve months? The next five years?
Purchase a home? Buy a dream car? Reach a certain income level?)

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