

Big Biller Secrets

Presenter: Mike Silverstein, Managing Partner for Direct Recruiters

Mike Silverstein is a Managing Partner for Direct Recruiters and is the Director of the Healthcare IT Practice. Mike is spearheading the expansion of DRI's Automated Healthcare Solutions Division and his diverse background helps him to identify exceptional Leadership, Sales, Sales Management and Engineering candidates for Fortune 500 clients. Mike joined Direct Recruiters in 2008 with no previous search experience; in his first full year he billed \$400,000 and has increased each year to close out 2012 at just over \$1 million. He continues to increase year after year by dominating his niche and being a market master.

In Mike's presentation, he shares how he got started in search, his transition to the Market Mastery model of the search business, how he continues to build his practice, and much more.

Meeting: "Big Biller Secrets" by Mike Silverstein

If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire Episode. Use the notes below in both weeks to identify the gaps between knowledge and application.

CONTINUED EDUCATION: Mike is fortunate to be in an office that recognizes the importance of continuing education, and more than likely you do as well since you are watching his Episode! If continuous education has been an exception for you, and not the rule, place a reoccurring Outlook calendar invitation on your schedule each week or every two weeks. Set aside time for ongoing learning through NLE TV, to scroll through the scripts in the NLE library, or to reach out to some of the bigger names in the recruitment industry. There is no pride in authorship – look to others for best practices and new techniques!

ACTIVE CANDIDATE MARKET: Mike smartly reached out to the senior level professionals in his niche – but pursued those who were actively pursuing a new opportunity. Those candidates were more likely to talk with him, educate him on the market, and teach him the buzzwords. They would share insights that others might not take the time to share, because they had a vested and immediate interest in possibly partnering with Mike to find a new opportunity. In addition to industry insights, keep in mind some of the questions below which can assist in soliciting referrals from active candidates:

- *If you left, who in your department would backfill your position?*
- *Where have you interviewed in the past year and who did you interview with?*
- *Who else in your department is considering change?*
- *Who are two people you respect at competitors doing what you are doing?*
- *How active are you in the industry - are you a member of a committee or any trade associations? How many members are there? Who is the lead/head/director?*
- *Where did you get your degree? Who did you graduate with that you still keep in touch with (in the industry)?*
- *When you send me your resume, please also include six references who can vouch for you if we move forward – make sure two of the references are people you've reported to, two are peer level, and two are individuals who have reported to you at some point.*
- *Will you do me a favor - shoot me an email with a directory of your past/current company, or an org chart.*

MAKE IT PERSONAL: Mike attended trade shows early on and made it a priority to meet clients and candidates face-to-face. He then made it a goal to secure more first time face-to-face meetings year after year. If personal interaction is one of your weak areas, what are your goals for getting in front of your audience on a more regular basis?

MEANINGFUL METRICS: All Big Billers know the importance of meaningful metrics – you will be hard-pressed to find a Big Biller who ever utters the phrase “numbers just don’t really matter to me” or “I don’t take the time to track that kind of stuff”. Mike did, and that consistent marketing and recruiting effort is part of what allowed him to experience million-dollar-success in just a few short years in the industry. Mike made it a goal to have three meaningful or informative discussions with new decision makers in his industry every single day. That yields 15 decision makers in a week, 60 a month, and over 700 a year. Are you willing to hold yourself to a similar level of meaningful metric?

GIVE AND RECEIVE: Mike knows that in order to succeed, you’ve got to make matches between your candidate and your client. This doesn’t mean that he doesn’t recognize the value of providing value to the market even if there’s no immediate return on the investment! Mike shares his list of possible “pro-bono” acts he conducts – do you know enough about your market to be able to inform your niche about hot products, great compensation structures, or strong work environments? Do you have a way to provide interviewing tips or resume guidance to candidates you can’t help? Do you have the expertise to be able to offer suggestions to clients on how to maintain a strong value proposition, or introduce them to potential clients for their own lines of revenue? If not, think of ways you can give back to those in your industry.

VOICEMAILS: Mike makes the suggestion to return EVERY phone call you receive, even if you don’t believe you are in a position to help that candidate or hiring manager. Even when there seems to never be enough time in the day, this is a great tip that can separate you from others in the industry – and you never know who that person knows or who that candidate becomes in the future!

COMPLIMENTS: Don’t forget the power of the compliment! Mike reminds us that people at every level appreciate praise, especially when they are in uncharted territory or in an uncertain situation. Executives show their vulnerable side when interviewing and extending a sincere compliment is a great way to build trust.

BEWARE THE ADJECTIVE: Mike makes the suggestion to be acutely aware of overused sales adjectives or terms in your vernacular. This doesn’t mean to abandon them altogether, but be aware of throwing the adjective out there without having concrete facts or statistics to back up your statements!

- Great
- Awesome
- Fantastic
- Innovative
- Stunning
- Cutting-edge
- Game-changing
- World class
- Amazing
- Win-win
- Out-of-the-box
- Hit the ground running

BUILDING A TEAM: Mike shares his top tips for building a successful team. If you are not at the point yet where you are personally responsible for the success of someone else, you are still responsible for yourself! Take a look at the list below – how well do you exceed EVERY DAY in each of these areas?

- Find people who are problem solvers not problem stators (or be someone who is a problem solver, not stator)
- Find someone you can trust (or be someone others can trust)
- Work with people you want to see succeed
- Find people who are competitive and internally motivated
- Find people who do what they say they will do
- Be generous, but set high expectations
- Create a culture of accountability

PHONE VS. EMAIL: Be judicious with the time you spend with your clients and candidates. Mike shares that he views email as an appropriate tool for conveying information, and the phone is necessary for a conversation. If information is purely factual – send it in email. Save the phone calls for the important and essential conversations!

MOTIVATIONS: A good recruiter knows the significance of spending a good amount of time understanding the deep motivating factors for a candidate to consider change - what's worked in the past, what they'd like to avoid, and make sure both sides have a strong picture of what the candidate is looking for so you know when you've found it. Some possible questions to ask:

- 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)?