

## The Spectrum of Search Solutions

***Presenter: Rob Mosley, Senior Director – Next Level Exchange***

Rob is a Partner and Sr. Director of Training and Development for Next Level Exchange. Rob comes to Next Level from MRINetwork™ Corporate in Philadelphia, PA, where he served as the Chief Learning Officer, responsible for all training and sales development of 1,100 offices worldwide. Previously Rob was with the Acclivus Corporation, an international performance development company; he has facilitated the Acclivus curriculum on five continents and was part of the Acclivus team responsible for global relationships with companies as diverse as Dell Inc., Accenture, KPMG Consulting, and CDI Corporation. Rob is a keynote speaker and facilitator at continuing education seminars in the areas of Business to Business Sales Execution with a focus on collaborative client development.

### **About This Session**

In this presentation entitled, “The Spectrum of Search Solutions”, Rob gives an overview of developing your value proposition, presenting your recruiting and search solutions, and the “Client Focused Search®” Approach.

### **Meeting, Week 1: “The Spectrum of Search Solutions” by Rob Mosley**

**If you are reviewing this episode with a team, there are several role plays and continued discussion exercises that will help ensure the successful implementation of the material shared. For the first segment’s role play, watch until 8:47 and pause at the natural break that Rob has created.**

**Facilitator (start from beginning and pause at 8:47):** Let’s take a minute to recap what Rob just shared prior to jumping into the role play scenario. It’s a reasonable expectation that a client will have some issues and questions associated with how we work and what we are proposing, and it is imperative that we are able to address those concerns in a way that’s good for both the client and the recruiter.

In a perfect world, you will first have the opportunity to gather strong insights into a client’s areas of pain and needs for growth before you begin rolling out your service charge and terms for working together. The phrase “prescription before diagnosis is malpractice” is incredibly relevant to this step in the client development process - the discussion around recommending a solution and your professional fees should not take place until you fully understand where the client is in their hiring process.

However, before we get to the point of earning the right to gather insight, we must first have a strong response to the client’s question of “*how we work.*” Use Rob’s script and the additional examples in this Guide to craft your own response, and role play with others on the team if relevant. As an additional challenge – try to make sure the word “I” never appears in your response or script! “You” aren’t the central point of this perspective; make sure to speak in terms of what’s in it *for the client.*

### **Possible Script #1: “How do you work?”**

*“Our service and our fee structures are customized to the specifications of your search and are always performance based, the majority being contingent upon our success.”*



*A performance based approach leaves the burden squarely on our shoulders to meet expectations and complete the search in a timely manner. We work closely with our clients to determine the best possible approach and offer several options depending on the level of service required for each assignment.*

*I recommend we invest the next 20-30 minutes together to discuss the specifics around your current opportunities and allow me to provide some recommendations based on what I see on a daily basis in the market place.*

*We speak with hundreds of qualified candidates in this specific market. I can provide you with valuable insight that only comes from being a subject matter expert in this industry.*

*If we are in alignment on these issues, I will recommend an approach for how we might work together. How does that sound?"*

### **Possible Script #2: "How do you work?"**

*"Allow me to give you a brief overview of how our process works. To summarize the dedicated search process - I will create an extensive plan customized for this search to ensure that we have a real strategy to identify, evaluate, attract, and secure the very best talent available in a timely manner. I will create a compelling presentation to take to market that you will approve prior to me picking up the phone for that first call. Once I cover the market and screen based on the skills and parameters we've already discussed, I will offer you a 'first right of refusal' and will not present candidates to any other company until you have made a decision to proceed with an interview or pass.*

*This process will, truthfully, ensure that there is absolute accountability from me and my team to not only get your problem solved, but solve it with the best possible solution. Does this sound like a viable solution for you?*

*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 to solve your challenges. Is now as good as a time as ever, or should we schedule an appointment for tomorrow?"*

**Facilitator: (Resume the video and play until the subsequent breakout exercise at 22:15; pause the video at 22:15 and discuss prior to wrapping Week 1's meeting):** There are three primary areas of differentiation between dedicated and contingent search – the process, the relationship, and the terms by which you work. The purpose of this exercise is to create a strong list of questions that can be asked that will effectively guide your client's thought process to the best solution for their particular need, at this particular time, and in this particular circumstance. Remember – the best solution needs to be the best solution for the client – not for you!

Take each of the areas that Rob created and add your own questions to supplement the list given. It is not realistic to ask all of these in each section, but it *is* realistic to have a select few prepared for each area that will help you earn the right to deliver your upcoming professional recommendation. Feel free to modify the scripted dialogue to make relevant for your style and industry as well.

**Process Scripted Dialogue and Possible Questions:** *In order for me to best prescribe what solution fits your current needs, I need to get an understanding of the kind of recruiting process that you envision. One of the three most crucial areas for us to gain common ground is around the area of the search process itself – how I go about identifying, attracting, and evaluating the select handful of individuals that are going to be put in front of you for consideration.*

- Candidate Identification Questions:
  - Utilizing Market Mastery:
    - Based on my knowledge of the market, there are approximately (# of) companies that have the role/title you are looking for. Would you say that's about accurate?
    - At each of those (# of) companies, on average I would estimate that they have (# of) titles within each company. Would you agree?
    - Let's use that math. Your search currently has been open for (# of) business days. If there are (# of) candidates that need to be contacted about your search, and a good recruiter can talk with (# of) candidates each day, why hasn't everyone in the market been contacted?
  - Have other recruiters presented their script to you for your approval/suggestions? Is this important to you? Do you know your recruiters are saying about you in the marketplace?
  - Have you ever experienced the "Start/Stop" phenomenon? (A flood of resumes at the beginning of you giving the search to a recruiter, and then the resumes taper off) Why do you think that is?
  - Do you know how many candidates were contacted about your opportunity? Do you know what their response was?
  - Have your recruiters used your name in the marketplace or have they kept it confidential? Have you ever experienced the benefits of the "free PR" that comes from employing a recruiter on a retained basis?
  - How do you know that you will have hired the *best* possible qualified candidate versus simply a *possible* qualified candidate?
  - How important is it to know that all potential candidates were called about your opportunity?
  - How much time a day is being specifically dedicated to your search?
  - How much of the market do you think has been penetrated at this point in time?
- Candidate Screening Questions:
  - How vital is it that recruiters thoroughly qualify the candidate's qualifications and interests before presenting them to you?
  - Have you ever had two firms present the same candidate? How did you handle it and which referral did you recognize?
  - How often do recruiters present people where issues, that would have prevented you from considering the candidate otherwise, arise after you have already exhausted time and resources on the interview?
  - Do you have pre-screening questions that you would like completed on every candidate prior to submittal? If not, can we build a list?
- Candidate Presentation Questions:
  - Have you ever had a search firm provide you with a customized in depth candidate evaluation summary along with the resume? Would that be of interest to you?
  - Have you ever co-developed screening questions with a recruiter and then received the answers to those questions from the candidate in a document attached to the resume? Would that be of interest to you?"

- Search/Status Update Questions:
  - What kind of search updates or progress reports do you normally get on a search (this one)? If none, how do you know then how much market has been contacted and that a recruiter is actually working on your assignment?
  - Do you know how many people have been contacted about your assignment and why qualified people are not interested? Is that feedback valuable to you?
  - Do you know how much time is being spent or is typically spent in a day on your search?
- Interviewing Process Questions:
  - How do recruiters typically prepare you for an interview? (not the generic skills, but for each specific candidate) What do they usually provide you with if/when they do?
  - Would you like to know detailed motivations for considering change, compensation expectations, status with other companies, and more of this type of information about each candidate prior to your interview? If so, and you are not getting it, then why?
  - Have you ever been in the middle of the interview and decided that the candidate you were interviewing was 'the one' but lacked sufficient knowledge of specifically what you needed to share to attract him/her?
- Offer Negotiation Questions:
  - Have you ever felt like the recruiter really did not have the correct pulse on where the candidate's head was when it was time to make an offer? Have you ever felt that the recruiter was usually suggesting very high raises?
  - Have you ever experienced a recruiter losing control of a candidate you really wanted at the tail end of a search?

**Relationship Scripted Dialogue and Possible Questions:** *Typically, the area that clients usually express the most frustration to me is the area of the relationship with the recruiters they work with. It would be helpful for us to spend just a few moments talking about what has worked for you in the past, what hasn't, and what you want to see from me.*

- Partnership Questions:
  - Do you sometimes feel like the recruiter is representing the candidate even though they are being paid by you?
  - Do you see an advantage in building a long-term relationship/staffing partnership with a company that can act as your partner instead of a vendor who is always selling you?
  - Have you ever felt that recruiters frequently act more like vendors than consultants or partners?
  - Have you had bad experiences with recruiters? What were they?
- Operating Framework Questions:
  - Do you think that recruiters that are only paid when they sell you a candidate can remain unbiased in their interaction with you?
  - If people are one of your most precious assets, then how do you feel about recruiters who act more like salespeople selling products than a consultant providing a professional service?
  - Do you think recruiters are biased? If so, what impact do you think that has when they are sharing information with you about the candidate?

- Candidate Perception Questions:
  - Do you sometimes feel like the candidates think that the recruiter represents him/her as opposed to you and if so, how do you feel about that/what do you think about that?
  - Do you think that candidate's demands become greater to the extent that they think the recruiter will only benefit if he/she eventually accepts an offer?
  
- Recruiting Approach Questions:
  - When you yourself have been contacted by recruiters, have they mentioned the company's name to you? If not, why do you think that is?
  - How do you feel when the recruiter wants to know everything about you (housing, family, career, etc.) but won't disclose something as simple as the name of the company they are presenting to you?
  - Do you feel that you would be presented with more viable candidates if candidates knew the name of the company they were being contacted about in the initial call?
  
- Presentation of Candidates Questions:
  - Do you feel that recruiters always seem to be selling you people with at times limited information about the candidates they are pushing?
  - Have you experienced recruiters who always are creating urgency with candidates even when there might not be?
  
- Unbiased Advice Questions:
  - How often, if ever, have you had a recruiter share with you reasons why not to hire a person they presented after you have expressed interest in that candidate?
  - Have you experienced recruiters who only tell you reasons why to hire their candidates yet find many reasons why not to hire candidates you surface yourself or through other recruiters?
  - What have recruiters done to minimize your exposure to rising compensation demands and counter offers?

**Terms Scripted Dialogue and Possible Questions:** *I want to make sure that I don't just propose a one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to the terms of the search we will execute for you. Help me make sure that I'm customizing something that really gives you coverage in those areas that are most important to you – things like replacement guarantees, performance milestones, or the tools we use to perform this search.*

- Pricing Questions:
  - Would you be open to reducing your cost through a shared risk model?
  - Would you be open to a dedicated/financially committed, retained approach if I could lower the cost of the search?
  
- Time Allocation Questions:
  - Have recruiters ever committed to how much time, energy or effort they will expend on a search?
  - How do you know how much time is being spent or resources allocated to your search?
  - Do you ever experience a search process that ends when a few candidates are presented and new candidates are only presented when the lead ones begin to fall off?

- Competition Questions:
  - Have you often found yourself competing with other companies for the same candidate?
  - How would you feel about the possibility that the candidates being recruited for your opportunity are being presented to your competitors simultaneously?
  
- Replacement Guarantee Questions:
  - Have you ever hired a candidate, from a recruiter, who left after only a short time period only to discover that the recruiter's replacement guarantee had just expired?
  - Do you think the recruiter should be accountable in the event a candidate they place with you fails?
  - Have you ever seen an example of a "sliding scale" when it comes to a replacement guarantee?
  - Do you see a benefit in a longer replacement guarantee?
  
- Performance Guarantee Questions:
  - Have you ever set up milestones to determine that acceptable progress is being made on a search?
  - What milestones in a search give you comfort that the search is progressing favorably?
  - How have you ever held recruiters accountable to ensuring that they perform on a search that you assign them?
  - What are the consequences for them for failure with you?
  - What are the most important indicators for you to see as a means of communicating to you that this search is being thoroughly performed?
  
- Search Tools and Procedures Questions:
  - Have you ever wasted time and resources interviewing candidates who looked very viable on paper but disappointed significantly on "chemistry" or behavioral issues?
  - Have you ever used any behavioral profiling tools on a search? Which ones? What were the results?
  - Have you uncovered issues in background and reference checks at the "offer stage" that you wish would have been uncovered earlier in the process?
  - Have you ever had a recruiter conduct a competitive analysis, compensation survey, or market survey concurrently with conducting a search on your behalf?
  - Would it be valuable to you if a recruiter could leverage a recruiting call on your behalf to gain additional insight in the market place that you could utilize for your gain? Compensation surveys? Competitive analysis? Competitors policies on relocation, vacation time, benefits, etc.?

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

## **Week 2's Meeting: "The Spectrum of Search Solutions" by Rob Mosley**

**If you are reviewing this episode with a team, this second meeting is another great opportunity to customize and role play the material shared. For Week 2's meeting, pick up the video at 22:15 and watch through the end of the Episode.**

**Facilitator (start from 22:15 and watch through end):** When it comes to articulating our professional recommendation, why do most recruiters get a bit nervous and tend to waver, backpedal, or flounder through this part of the process? It all comes down to preparation! If you are not confident in your recommendation, no client will trust aforementioned recommendation! Can you imagine hearing a suggested course of action from a surgeon, who sounded unsure? If this can be a pivotal moment in the relationship between you and your client, be prepared to make it one that continues to solidify your market mastery and expertise.

Use the scripts below to create your own, and role play with your team. It is suggested to close your script by asking if there is anything further that needs to be discussed, clarified, or negotiated before you get off the phone. This will help eliminate the issues that arise post-emailing of the agreement. Finally, make sure to close on a timeframe for next steps; if you are uncomfortable in closing, it's typically because you are still unsure if you have buy-in from this client. If there are issues, questions, or they are still un sure about moving forward, the best opportunity you have to answer those questions or solve those issues is while they are still on the phone.

### **Possible Script #1: Fee Structure Presentation**

*"I would like to share with you exactly how our business relationship works contractually and how our service fees are structured. Our total professional fees are based on the industry standard of one-third of the estimated first year earnings of our candidate. For positions paying commissions, bonuses or other incentives as well as salary, the fee is based on a reasonable estimate of the first year's compensation.*

*We would begin our process with your approval of the Confirmation Letter which helps ensure that we have thorough knowledge of the search and your expectations of the search process.*

*With the signing of our search agreement, payment of one third of the total professional fees is due. An additional one third is performance-based and is due and payable upon presentation of a short list of qualified candidates.*

*The balance is due and payable upon completion of the search and will reflect adjustments to the estimated total service charge if actual earnings are to be higher or lower than the original estimate when the search began."*

### **Possible Script #2: Fee Structure Presentation**

*"Due to the challenges that we have discussed around this opportunity and your need for this position to be filled in the next (# of) days, I would recommend that we initiate a dedicated search to maximize our chance of success. In my experience, I am fearful that any other approach is not going to ensure that your position is filled within the timeframe you need and the market coverage you desire.*



*Our service charge is 35% of the 1<sup>st</sup> year's guaranteed compensation. An upfront, non-refundable \$10,000 payment is due to initiate the search; the final payment of the difference is due upon the start date of the candidate you hire. What questions have I not yet answered that you need clarity on prior to initiating this search?"*

### **Possible Script #3: Fee Structure Presentation**

*"Our service charge is 35% of the first year's estimated compensation for the position. One third of the estimated service charge is due upon the initiation of this agreement. The second third of the service charge is due 30 days after the initiation date and then the final third will be due 30 days from that date. An additional payment will, however, be due if the actual compensation offered to a selected candidate is higher than the estimate when the search began. If the search is completed prior to the final payment then we will simply adjust the final payment to reflect the actual final compensation offered. What needs to happen to initiate our agreement?"*

**Facilitator:** As it relates to the replacement guarantee, put yourself in the shoes of the client. What concerns do they have that they are trying to solve with this clause? What past issues have taken place that cause this to be a point of concern? Remember to think not in terms of what you need in this relationship, but how you can best position your solutions to address the underlying concerns of your client.

### **Possible Script #1: Replacement Guarantee**

*"If the services of the candidate are terminated for any reason other than elimination of the position or lack of work, within \_\_\_ after the date that the candidate is to begin we will present \_\_\_ additional qualified candidates as potential replacements for the terminated candidate. We will do so within \_\_\_ days after you send us a written notice of the termination of the candidate and the reasons for such termination. You will only be responsible for expenses related to hiring the replacement candidate. 'Qualified candidate' means a candidate who possesses the material qualifications of the position to be refilled, as described in our Confirmation Letter. This guarantee is to ensure your satisfaction that the candidate has the requisite experience and qualifications, and that information provided by the candidate and other sources, directly or through us, is accurate."*

### **Possible Script #2: Replacement Guarantee**

*"We will provide a \_\_\_ (length) guarantee based upon the candidate's starting date. If you retain a candidate who resigns or is terminated for cause during the guarantee period, we will replace the candidate without any additional fee other than the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses as described in our search agreement. This guarantee is to ensure your satisfaction that the candidate has the requisite experience and qualifications, and that information provided by the candidate and other sources, directly or through us, is accurate."*

### **Possible Script #3: Replacement Guarantee**

*"I want to share with you a story that is actually quite painful for me to share, but that I will anyways. I have a son, and when he was 16, we got him a new (type of car) for his birthday. We shopped for the car together, we decided on the car together, and we paid for the car together. He drove it for a week, then ran it into a stop sign for reasons that we don't need to get into right now (said with a smile). He asked me if we could take it back to the dealership and get our money back. You've got to love the eternal optimism of a 16 year old, right?"*

*So, of course, my parallel is this. At some point, he needs to assume responsibility for the fate of that car, and obviously in the dealership's opinion it's when he drives it off the lot. I'm actually open to taking a little more risk than that, in that I will give you a guarantee period of (# of) weeks/months to make sure that you bought the right car, so to speak. What kind of replacement guarantee do you feel would give you a good enough window to evaluate the individual you've brought on board?"*

**Facilitator:** What is the benefit of exclusivity from the client's point of view? How could it be in their best interest? It certainly takes the responsibility of screening all of the unsolicited candidates off of their plate; if this client has now taken the time to walk you through every aspect of what they are looking for, what they aren't looking for, how to draw in the right candidates, what they are offering and why someone would want to consider them – they no longer have to repeat that to all of the recruiters who call asking to submit candidates on the position! They no longer have to spend time screening candidates who more than likely aren't a fit, they no longer have to spend hours with recruiters going through the specifications of their search, and they are able to put all candidates – regardless of the originating source – through you. You then will put all candidates through the same screening process that you would put your own candidates through, in an overall effort to deliver the absolute top talent and best fit for your client.

#### **Possible Script #1: Exclusivity**

*"You have no doubt invested a great deal in your branding and culture? While the benefit of multiple recruiters potentially opens the opportunity pool to more candidates, it also dilutes the consistency and quality of your company's message in the community of possible candidates. I would be concerned about the accountability for whom is recruited, market feedback, and distribution of your opportunity message?"*

*Choosing our firm as your exclusive representative empowers you to control the message and filter, ensuring strict documentation and relationship of mutual benefit."*

#### **Possible Script #2: Exclusivity**

*"For the next (# of days/weeks), I would ask that we work on this search on an exclusive relationship. If at the end of (# of days/weeks), you aren't completely happy with what our joint efforts have produced so far, I give you full permission to work with anyone and everyone who comes along. But in the course of the next (# of days/weeks), it is imperative to the success of this search that any efforts we are making on your behalf aren't being duplicated by others."*



## EXAMPLE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

(Date)

Client Name,

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you as a partner in your search for talent. It is only through the fostering of trusted relationships that we are able to find you talent who possess the skills necessary to excel at the job and personality traits that are aligned with your organization's culture. Therefore, your new hire doesn't just meet your specifications, but surpasses your expectations.

To ensure that we are in alignment with you at every stage of this search process, we suggest the following mutual commitment:

### **Our Investment in You:**

- Thorough assessment, prior to each search assignment, based on our areas of expertise and the timing and urgency of each search.
- A timeline or project plan for your search to confirm that expectations are aligned, respective roles are agreed upon and that all parties are committed to the process.
- Qualification of candidates based on skills, chemistry, and motivation. Once we have qualified potential candidates, we take careful consideration to insure that we present those who meet your criteria and would be motivated by the right opportunity.
- Coordination of the interview, ensuring that all parties are prepared. Candidates are given an in-depth understanding of the position, company and people. Hiring managers are provided with detailed information regarding a candidate's interest, motivation, compensation, and family when appropriate.
- Assistance with candidates in tendering their resignation and ensuring a seamless transition into your organization.

### **Your Investment with Us**

- A commitment to action. Your action may be a "yes" or a "no" or you may require additional information. Our only real challenge in the search process is a lack of a decision.
- Timely communication within 24 hours of both presenting candidates and interviewing candidates.
- Working with us to follow a consistent interview process. If you have a specific preference in how we will work together, please bring this to our attention prior to beginning the search.
- Access, when necessary, to the ultimate decision maker in addition to the hiring authority.

Thank you for your trust; we look forward to a mutually beneficial partnership.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Firm

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client