

## HOW TO EVEN OUT YOUR PLACEMENT ACTIVITY

Recruiters are notorious for going in streaks and slumps, highs and lows. Over time this tends to even out but for many it is a repeating pattern that causes a lot of stress, agony and wasted energy. Being a recruiter can feel like being an addict at times because you experience the thrill of elation when you close a big deal and the agony of self-doubt when you lose one. This up and down cycle is not unique to recruiters- all salespeople can relate to the pattern. Staying motivated after you close some big deals is also a problem for many in our business. So, how do you increase your chances for more predictable results and fewer bottles of Tums?

First, understand that a certain amount of variance is to be expected. Don't freak out if you are not making the progress that you think you should be. If you have been doing this for any length of time you will have had good periods and bad periods. If you are in a slump at the moment don't globalize it and make gloomy future predictions. Take the emotion out of it and stick to the activity that you know will lead to placements. Ask yourself, *"How did I get out of the last slump I was in? What activities and methods helped me to get back on track?"* Focus on doing money-generating activities without being attached to the placement results. Have a simple system that makes it easy for you to track and evaluate your key numbers and ratios. A consistent focus on generating quality activity (marketing calls, recruiting calls, new search assignments etc.) and constant refinement of your methods will help you to improve your performance with less stress.

In terms of daily discipline, if there is a part of your day that you tend to dread, such as marketing calls, then do this first. Find several methods for introducing yourself to a company that feel authentic and that you will not dread executing. Then you can relax a bit and move on to less difficult tasks such as sourcing and recruiting. Another thing to keep in mind is having a balance in the activities that you focus on. Peter Leffkowitz says, *"In order to keep your paycheck balanced, you must keep your desks' activity balanced. And, in order to keep your desks' activity balanced, you must do a little bit of each part of the business everyday"*. When you have a hot deal in progress it is easy to go into a "placement coma" and not do the other activities that will keep your plate full after you make (or don't make) that hot deal. If you resist this urge and continue to market and follow up during and after the placement process you will make business development easier on yourself.

Planning is a biggie when it comes to consistency. When most recruiters hear about spending 30-45 minutes at the end of each day planning the next day's calls they generally hit the snooze button but it is one of the key defining differences between big billers and marginal ones. It also helps to even out your emotions and to stay on course with the right activities when more urgent, but less important, items come up during the day (as they always will). If you can't stand planning then see if you can plan your first 20 calls or plan from 8 AM to 12 PM. A little planning done consistently is better than a lot of planning done sporadically. It has been said that, "confusion is the chief cause of worry" and this is generally the case when a recruiter shoots from the hip and works reactively. Having a plan takes much of the stress out of the execution of your day. When I coach recruiters and owners on evening out their placement activity it often has more to do with working smarter rather than harder and staying focused on the small steps that lead to their goals.



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