

Engagement

**Presenter: Kent Burns – Founder, Simply Driven Search,
A Member of the Sanford Rose Associates® Network of Offices**

Kent Burns is the President of Simply Driven Search, with offices in Indianapolis and New York City. Kent leads the team at Simply Driven, which specializes in delivering high-caliber talent across all facets of accounting and finance. Prior to founding Simply Driven, Kent delivered consecutive years of double-digit sales growth as Vice President of Sales for an award-winning national search firm. Under his sales leadership, the company set multiple revenue records, including the best single month and the best quarter in the company's 18-year history. Before entering the search industry, Kent was a CPA with two Big Four firms as well as a corporate Controller and Chief Financial Officer. He is the author of *"What's Your Why?"* and *"The Why Guide to Your First Job - College Edition."* Kent has been featured in publications such as Forbes, CFO Magazine, HR Magazine, The Journal of Accountancy and many more.

In this presentation, Kent talks about "Engagement", which is the point where you start selling and having real conversations with your candidates and clients.

Meeting: "Engagement" by Kent Burns

If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire Episode. Use the notes below to implement the best practices provided.

Facilitator: For most recruiters, the way we open up the dialogue with a candidate or hiring manager hasn't evolved much since it became something they got comfortable with. Think about it – when was the last time you looked through a critical lens at the manner in which you engaged prospects in the opening moments of the call? Whether you've been using the same introduction for a few months, a few years, or a few decades, Kent's thoughts around the psychology of engagement are timely thoughts to ponder. The key to this subject is implementation; our continued discussion today will be taking a deep dive into the routine scripts we use to initially engage both candidates and clients.

Starting with the candidate side of the equation, script out your introduction for the opening moments of the call with a new prospective candidate (Kent's example is below):

"My name is Kent Burns. I'm with Simply Driven Executive Search. We specialize in finance and accounting. Are you in a place where you can speak freely?"

"Good. Are you familiar with our firm?"

"How did you hear about us?"

"We work with some of the most recognized companies in the world, like Rolls Royce, Merrill Lynch and United Technologies. Also, over the past several years, just over 1/3 of the candidates we have place are promoted within 24 months. We are working on a number of searches and I am calling to find out if you are open-minded to a compelling opportunity in the marketplace."

Your script: _____

Now, go back and review your candidate engagement script. Take a hard look at what you've always said, and with a critical lens, answer the following:

- Have you said anything that creates mystery, or induces a fear of possible loss or missed opportunity?
- How have you appealed to the candidate's self-interest?
- What facts have you included in your message? Do these facts matter to your audience? Can they be said by other recruiters?
- What words are intentional? What language could be improved – either more descriptive, or elevated verbiage, or taken out completely?
- How have you created a dynamic that gets them to stay on the phone because they believe it's in their best interest?

Revise your engagement presentation based on your answers to the questions above; remember that the smallest change can make the biggest difference in your ability to open up the door for a continued dialogue.

(Facilitator): Let's move now to the hiring manager or client side of the recruitment process. As we did with our recruiting introduction, script out your intro for the opening moments of the call with a new hiring manager (Kent's example is below):

"My name is Kent Burns. I'm with Simply Driven Executive Search. We specialize in finance and accounting. Are you in a place where you can speak freely?"

"Good. Are you familiar with our firm?"

“How did you hear about us?”

“We work with some of the most recognized companies in the world, like Rolls Royce, Merrill Lynch and United Technologies. Also, over the past several years, we have a 3 to 1 interview-to-hire ratio and deliver the winning candidate to our client in an average of 21 days. We are working with a number of top performers who are not actively in the market and I am calling to find out if you are open-minded to evaluate exceptional talent.”

Your script: _____

Now, go back and review. With a critical lens, answer the following:

- Have you said anything that creates mystery, or induces a fear of possible loss or missed opportunity?
- How have you appealed to the client’s self-interest?
- What facts have you included in your message? Do these facts matter to your audience? Can they be said by other recruiters?
- What words are intentional? What language could be improved – either more descriptive, or elevated verbiage, or taken out completely?
- How have you created a dynamic that gets them to stay on the phone because they believe it’s in their best interest?

Revise your engagement presentation based on your answers to the questions above. As Kent shared, the name of the recruiting game is engagement – nothing moves forward without it. Are you an expert in engaging candidates and clients? You must be able to get above the noise level, overcome your target’s skepticism, have a real conversation and deliver a value proposition that matters. That’s how relationships happen!