

## Big Biller Secrets

**Presenter: Chris Rios, Founding Partner of Blue Rock Search, a member of the Sanford Rose Associates® Network of Companies**

Chris Rios is a founding Partner of Blue Rock Search, a member of the Sanford Rose Associates network of offices. Chris has leveraged his 15-plus years of recruiting experience to build a Fortune 500 Corporate Desk in the areas of supply chain, finance, engineering and hospitality industries.

His desire and passion to deliver to customers – client and candidates alike – the ‘best recruiting experience’ they have ever had, has led him the role of Chief Customer Experience Officer, solidify Blue Rock’s commitment to developing long-standing relationships with both the client and candidates alike.

In this big biller presentation, Chris will provide you with a crash course in developing an unbelievable Customer Experience for your clients and candidates.

### Meeting: “Big Biller Secrets” by Chris Rios

**If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch the entire Episode and ask your group for their key takeaways and insights. Review the following below to fill in the gaps.**

**THE HUMAN COMPONENT:** No matter how busy recruiters are, Chris reminds us that on the other end of the phone or the email is a human – and in some cases, a human frantically seeking to continue to provide for his or her family. Although we cannot spend time with each of them, we can set up form emails to educate candidates and provide them with a piece of value. Instead of “thank you for your application, we will contact you if interested” consider instead providing a standard template document with resume tips, interview preparation guides, or helpful articles related to a successful job search. Even if it never comes back around to benefit you, remember the difference between the Golden Rule and the Platinum Rule. *“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”* - the Golden Rule implies the basic assumption that other people would like to be treated the way that you would like to be treated. The alternative to the Golden Rule is the Platinum Rule: *“Treat others the way they want to be treated.”* How can you embody the Platinum Rule while making sure you do not deviate from your core revenue-generating activities?

**MINI-ME:** If we assume that most hiring managers are looking for candidates who remind them of themselves, let’s expand on that during the search assignment call! Why is this? Drawing from 120 interviews with employers, as well as participant observation of a hiring committee, Kellogg School of Management professor Lauren Rivera has found that hiring managers want recruits who have the potential to be friends. Rivera says it’s because when we don’t have a rigorous, replicable set of criteria from which to evaluate a potential hire’s merit, we fall back on our most immediate instrument: ourselves.

*“Hiring is more than just a process of skills sorting,”* writes Rivera. *“It is also a process of cultural matching between candidates, evaluators, and firms. Employers sought candidates who were not only competent but culturally similar to themselves.”*

If we know this is a strong component of making a successful match, ask in the intake process *“what characteristics do you feel have made you successful that you’d like to see in this hire?”* or *“beyond just the professional abilities, what makes you click with the people you work with?”*

**PREPARATION:** Chris is giving you a formula for success – are you ready for it? Former Washington Redskins coach George Allen famously said, *"Winning is the science of being totally prepared."* This sentiment, while seemingly obvious, is at times counter-intuitive to the dominant, lack-of-conformity nature that makes recruiters successful! As Chris says, knowledge is power and with that power comes incredible confidence and greater ability to sell to potential passive candidates. At the end of this Facilitation Guide is an example Search Assignment Form (additional forms available in the NLE Library). Take some time to rate yourself on how well you actually know your clients – and if you don't have the knowledge you need, create a form that will eliminate gaps in the future.

**EXPERTISE:** Be deliberate in the information you gather; if we keep the end in mind, we want clients and candidates to be calling US because we know more about what is happening in their world than they do. If that is the desired end result, what questions do you need to start asking on a daily basis to secure that competitive edge and inside track of insight? You don't get what you don't ask for – so make sure your questions are deliberately crafted to gather information your audience will value.

**FOUNDATION:** Pop quiz – who are you? Okay, think about it further – what defines you as a recruiter? To what do you root your foundation of being identified as a recruiter? How do you want to operate your business? Although these questions may seem slightly esoteric, this platform provides common ground for all recruiters within Blue Rock's office, and how they choose to operate with clients and candidates. What is your foundation?

- Trust - Say what you will do, doing what you say
- Mutuality – Think of others when making decisions
- Generosity – How can others enjoy a similar if not better experience?
- Passion - Love what you do, do what you love
- Commitment - Willingness to do whatever it takes to take care of your clients/candidates alike

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE:** Customer Service limits itself to the many critical moments when candidates and clients are interacting with you directly. Consider that the narrow definition of such creates a distorted picture, suggesting that extent of their judgement is formed based on those interactions alone. Instead, Customer Experience is a bigger and more important picture: the customer's end-to-end journey. Interested in providing an exceptional service to your candidates and clients alike? Blue Rock's Customer Experience encompasses:

- Voice of the Customer
- Continuous Improvement Efforts
- Digital/Marketing Engagement
- Operational Excellence
- IT
- HR

To break down to core competencies:

- Compelling Brand Values - Are your brand attributes driving decisions about how you treat customers?
- Team Engagement - is your team fully committed to the goals of your organization?
- Customer Connectedness - is customer feedback and insight fully integrated throughout your organization?
- Purposeful Leadership - do your leaders operate consistently with a clear, well-articulated set of values?

**Basic Information**

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Client Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Number Needed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Determining Wants and Needs**

*Let's start by putting together a picture of the ideal candidate you are looking to hire. Obviously, not all candidates who are interested in talking with you will get through my screen, but I need to make sure that when you receive a resume from me there is a one-to-one ratio of submittals to first time interviews. I can only do that if I truly understand not only what you **need** to see in someone, but also what you **want** to see in someone.*

**What is the ideal candidate's qualification and background for the role? What all does the experience include? (years in the industry, project types, project size, software, etc.):**

**Regarding the background, what is required and what is preferred?**

**How do you measure each of those soft skills? For example, if you want someone with leadership skills, what does that look like in your office? How does it show up?**

**Describe someone who I should quickly turn down.**

**Are you open to relocating candidates from outside of the area? Of the last (# of) people you've hired, how many of them required relocation?**

**Additional "Wants and Needs" Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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### **Determining Duties and Responsibilities**

*What I've found is that what a (title) does at one organization may be vastly different than what a (title) does at yours. It would be valuable, and time-saving, if you could send me a job description that highlights the duties and responsibilities of the position. However, no matter how thorough though that description, there is a lot that isn't typically covered - which is what I'd like to go through with you.*

**Can you describe for me a 'day in the life' of this individual?**

**Are there any duties and responsibilities that aren't typically held by someone within this role, but are unique to this role within your firm? (could be either junior level or senior responsibilities)**

**What will this hire accomplish in three months, six months, and one year from now in order for you to know you made a *great* hire?**

**If I surface a candidate within a larger organization who has the background, experience, and track record that indicates they are ready to take on additional responsibilities, should I pursue that individual?**

**Additional "Duties and Responsibilities" Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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### **Uncovering What They Offer**

*In my experience, there is so much more to the financial offer than simply the 'base salary' that most recruiters will cover with you. I can pinpoint so many great hires that have happened not because the base was higher, but because I was informed enough to be able to walk that candidate through the components of the entire offer. I'd like to get a copy of the benefits summary that you might give a new hire, but also spend some time on the additional components of a financial decision.*

**What is the base salary? OR What is highest amount you could see offering on a base? What would you prefer to pay? What is the low end of the scale?**

**What is the bonus potential? How is the bonus calculated?**

**How often are bonuses given? Month/quarter/year?**

**Has anyone done a recent salary survey to ensure that your salary range is competitive?**



**What expenses do you cover when relocating a candidate? (Examples: packing, moving, unpacking, trip(s) to see the area for candidate/spouse, house hunting trip(s), temporary living expenses, en route expenses, closing costs, lump sum for miscellaneous, etc.)**

**Additional “What they Offer” Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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### **Understanding Company Info**

*One of the most important things I need to be able to attract passive candidates is the ability to have a good story, and that is the story of your company. People like to hear where you’ve been, where you are, and most importantly where you are going. They can’t help but put themselves in as a central character and imagine how they could play a role in chapters that have yet to be created.*

**When was your company founded?**

**How many offices do you have? Do you anticipate opening others in the coming years? If so, where?**

**Where do you focus geographically? Do you anticipate expanding? If so, where?**

**Describe your physical office location and environment. (offices/cubes, small campus, etc.)**

**What was your previous year’s volume?**

**What is your current year’s expected volume?**

**How does your company’s size and volume compare to where it was five years ago?**

**What are your plans for growth?**

**What would you consider to be your company’s share of the market? What plans are in place to increase market share?**

**What are the rumors, or negative perceptions, about your company that someone may have in the marketplace? Every company has people who have left, and true or untrue, they talk about their past employer. What objections am I going to hear that I need to anticipate, and what do I say to get around those?**



**Additional “Company Info” Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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### **Understanding Selling Points**

*Probably the most important area for us to cover is that of the ‘sizzle’ of this opportunity. I am going after the happy, passive market – which means that I have to be able to **sell first** and then **screen second**. If we don’t do a great job of selling the ‘sizzle’, we’ll miss out on attracting a higher layer of the candidate pool.*

**Why should a person who is happy and secure in his/her position, quit their position and come to work for you? OR Why would someone doing what you want done stop doing it for them and start doing it with you? What is exciting?**

**If the candidate hired turns out to be a superior performer, what is the next step up? Where can he/she be in 3 years - in 5 years? OR What is the career path from this position?**

**How long does someone stay in this role?**

**If the prior person in this role was promoted, causing the opening, does the same opportunity exist for this future hire?**

**What is the most rewarding thing that you have ever done for an associate?**

**Additional “Selling Points” Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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### **Learning About the People and Leadership**

*The number one reason that people leave a company isn’t because of money, or location, or anything else – the number one reason is because of a disconnect with the boss. People work for people – and it’s key for me to be able to paint a picture about the leadership of this group.*

**Who will this candidate report to?**

**How many others report to that same person?**

**Who does that person report to (who is the boss of the boss)?**



**What is that person's professional background? (years in the industry, years with company, positions held within the company, project experience, etc.)**

**What prior companies did he/she work with? What brought them/attracted them to this company?**

**What school did they attend? (degree/graduation year) What is their family background? (hometown, married, children, etc.) What are their interests/hobbies?**

**How is that manager measured? What parameters determine success in his/her role?**

**Additional "Leadership and People" Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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**Gauging What's Been Done So Far**

*Before I get started on this search, I don't want to duplicate any efforts that have been done thus far. In order for me to know how to proceed with my **search** process, I need to know where you are currently in your **hiring** process.*

**How long has this position been open?**

**What sources are you utilizing to fill this position? OR How have you attempted to fill this position?**

**How many interviews have already been conducted for this position? Who did you interview?**

**Who internally have you considered?**

**What candidates are currently in process?**

**How many offers have you extended that were rejected? Why?**

**Have you used other search firms on this position? What has worked? What didn't?**



**If other recruiters (internally or externally) have already searched on this position without surfacing the right candidates, what do I need to do differently to ensure a different result?**

**Why do you feel your efforts haven't produced the desired results?**

**Additional "Gauging What's Been Done So Far" Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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**Determining an Agreed Upon Hiring Process**

*Let's talk about your typical hiring process – I'd like to determine how to jointly marry your 'best practices' with those that have worked well for my other clients in the past.*

**Share with me the typical timeline of the interviewing process. When do you do reference checks? Do you prefer to do them, or have me? When do you extend the offer? Do you prefer to extend it, or have me?**

**What information are you accustomed to receiving in regards to a particular candidate? Just a resume? What other information is important to you? (Family status, salary, motivation for change, etc...)**

**Let's discuss each interviewer:**

**What kinds of questions does he/she ask?**

**What kinds of answers does he/she like to hear?**

**Who does most of the talking?**

**How long has he/she been with the company?**

**What kind of person is he/she?**

**Will I have access to him/her for direct feedback?**

**What is the process by which you will decide who to hire and why you will hire them over the others you interview?**

**Additional “Hiring Process” Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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**Determination of Cooperation and Urgency**

*It would be helpful to get an understanding of the urgency of this position. There is nothing wrong with us having the luxury of time on our side if this isn't a critically urgent position – but if that isn't the case, I want to make sure that I'm operating from the same timeframe that you are.*

**When do you want this position filled? Is there a drop-dead date to fill?**

**If the answer is ASAP, would you be prepared to make an offer to the right candidate tomorrow?**

**When do you realistically expect to have the position filled by?**

**What are some of the long-term, lasting effects of not having this position filled by your timeline?**

**Who is currently doing the workload created from this position being unfilled? What burdens or financial costs are associated with that extra work?**

**What type of milestones in a search give you comfort that the search is progressing favorably?**

**Under any circumstances, could you see this position being eliminated during the course of our search?**

**Additional “Determining Urgency” Questions – General or Industry Specific:**

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### **Establishing Mutual Expectations**

*Based on what you've shared with me, I think we're in a very good position to help you fill this opportunity. I've got a great understanding of what you are looking for and offering, and think that you've got a strong platform to land the caliber of candidate you're targeting. I'd like to talk about what you can expect from us moving forward, and what I'll expect from you. (Cover Mutual Expectations Document)*

### **Screening Questions**

*In closing, I'd like to get five questions that you ask immediately upon reviewing someone's information to determine fit and qualification. I'd like to ask those same screening questions, as well as know the answers you are looking for. I will ask all candidates I talk to these questions and present only those candidates to you who correctly answer a specific number of questions.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.