

Evaluating Search Assignments

Presenter: Michael Pietrack, Owner and Co-Founder of TMAC Direct

Michael Pietrack heads up a Pharmaceutical Industry search firm called TMAC Direct. Though Michael oversees all recruiting at TMAC Direct, he runs a very niched desk as a true market master. By dominating a small segment of a huge industry, Michael has grown his \$1.2M solo practice into a \$2.6M mega desk. As a result of his success, he is a sought-after speaker for both the Recruiting and Pharmaceutical industries.

Michael will share the evaluation process that he uses to predict the likelihood of each Search Assignment resulting in a Placement. You will leave this session with a clear picture of how to identify the searches that will break your heart and crater your year.

Meeting: “Evaluating Search Assignments” by Michael Pietrack

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

(Facilitator): In the tackling of running a successful recruiting desk, how recruiters chose to manage their time is paramount to long-term success. Anything that we can do to increase the likelihood of making a placement is worth exploring, yes? However, many recruiters don't invest the time needed to evaluate the searches they work, and they gamble that they will be able to overcome with an eventual placement, even though the quality of the search (for whatever reason) is less than stellar.

Like Michael shares, our time, both professional and personal, is precious. With that in mind, high producers need to master three things and do them well: get quality search assignments, move quickly to evaluate the searches they work, and have candidate recyclability. When it comes to assessing search assignments, he takes the guessing game out of what he views as an ideal versus poor search by establishing a grading system to ensure that he is investing his time wisely.

To evaluate a search assignment, Michael grades in the following seven categories:

1. Urgency
2. Hiring Manager Access
3. Realistic
4. Fee
5. F.I.L.L.
6. Sellable
7. Exclusivity

(Facilitator): Think of a current search that you are working. Use the grid below to rate the search. Additionally, review each category and what you can do to improve on evaluating or improving in each of those areas. As a reminder, the seven categories are scored from 1 – 5 (5 as highest) with 35 as the best *total* possible score:

Company						
Urgency						
HM Access						
Realistic						
Fee						
FILL						
Sellable						
Exclusive						
	=	=	=	=	=	=
Total						

1. Urgency

(Facilitator): To establish your clients, score for urgency, Michael shares that it all starts with the questions you ask of your client when taking the job order. He recommends asking the following questions:

- How urgent is it for you to fill the job?
- When do you need the person?
- Who is doing the job now?
- If you don't have someone in this position, what are the consequences of this position remaining unfilled?

What additional questions could you ask to establish your client's urgency?

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Hiring Manager Access

(Facilitator): Access to the hiring authority is a crucial ingredient to the success of a placement. Not all clients are willing to give this access to their recruiters; instead, they rely on HR to manage the recruitment process. Before rating this area, if you are struggling to get hiring manager access, push back politely and professionally as Michael suggests.

Review the below script provided in the session and dissect Michael's script when speaking to HR. What modifications would you make?

"_____, I truly respect your role in the process, and I would never go around you or communicate with the hiring manager without you knowing, but the only way for me to have any success on this search is to at least have an intake call with the hiring manager. I'm sure you've tried to fill positions without an intake call, and it never goes well.

Now, I've appreciated the insights you've shared, but I have a few more questions that I'd like to ask the manager, technical questions and the answers might lead me to even more questions I'm not predicting right now. Can we set up a quick 15-minute in-take call, I promise I will not waste this person's time?"

Thinking of your current search, if HR still pushes back, what technical questions could you ask about the search to demonstrate the importance of connecting with the hiring manager?

- _____
- _____
- _____



3. Realistic:

(Facilitator): Remember with this category, Michael is combining compensation for the position and how that aligns with what the client is looking seeking in a qualified candidate. This can be tested by submitting a “Test POEJO” or “Test Candidate” to ensure that your client's needs are aligned and realistic. After submitting your test POEJO:

- How long did it take for your client to respond with feedback?
- How did your candidate's compensation compare to what your client is willing to compensate for their position?
- Is their compensation competitive in the marketplace, and if not, how are you going to articulate that to the client?

With that above questions answered, what score would you rate your search in this category?

4. Fee:

(Facilitator): We must know the things that we are willing to negotiate with our clients when it comes to getting their business. Michael grades his searches based on the dollar amount of the projected fee versus the fee percentage. Where most would not consider lowering their fees; in certain situations, he is willing to negotiate. Those situations are bulk needs, high compensation, and clients that agree to pay money upfront.

Under what circumstances would you be willing to discount your fees? _____

With your client in mind, how does their fee stack up to other searches you are working? _____

5. F.I.L.L.:

(Facilitator): Sometimes, in our excitement to secure a new client, we take on searches that aren't in our sweet spot. With that creates, headache and stress as we scramble to find the right candidate(s), further taking us away from the focus we know so well AND from identifying candidates that we can recycle onto future searches in our F.I.L.L. How close is this need to your industry specialty?

For future client conversations, script out your “can't help” script for a job order you identify as outside of your F.I.L.L. How will you articulate that you are not the best client to take on the search?



6. Sellable:

(Facilitator): Candidates, primarily passive, want to learn about companies that are exciting and interesting! Not only will this pique interest for them, but it's also more fun for you to recruit! The more compelling their story is, the easier it will be to attract candidates to the opportunity. As recruiters, we must be willing to investigate the sizzle and be able to create a compelling story that will interest our candidates in learning more. With your client in mind, build off the list of questions below:

- Other than salary, what perks or benefits do you offer team members?
- Tell me more about the culture of the company and any differentiators that may help us in attracting high-quality candidates?
- Are there any opportunities for a flexible work schedule or work from home days?

What additional questions can you ask your client when taking their needs analysis of the search to be able to sell the opportunity to your market?

- _____
- _____
- _____

We also must be willing to learn about the challenges or negative information that might exist regarding our client. With this insight, we can be more prepared to address those concerns with the candidates that we are trying to recruit. What questions can you ask your client to uncover unfavorable information?

- Is the team dealing with any significant or unique difficulties?
- What are the rumors or negative perceptions about your company that someone may have in the marketplace?
- What objections might I need to anticipate, and what do I say to get around those?

- _____
- _____
- _____



7. Exclusive:

(Facilitator): Are you retained or exclusive with your client, or are you one of 5 firms working the search? Remembering that the value of your time is vital, the more commitment you have from your client, the better the chances of a successful placement! Review the below questions when taking your search assignment. How can you incorporate these into your dialogue with your client?

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