NLE Quick Tip: Spin Selling

Presenter: Scott Love, President – The Attorney Search Group,
a member of the Sanford Rose Associates® Network of Companies

Scott Love is President of The Attorney Search Group – a member of the Sanford Rose Associates network of offices. Scott is also a leading expert and authority in the executive search industry and has been quoted in the Wall Street Journal and Selling Power Magazine and is the author of "The Recruiter's Adventure Book! How to Find Buried Treasure in the World of Recruiting". Scott has spoken to nearly every major industry group and is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

In Scott's quick tip presentation, he discusses how you can leverage spin selling to ask great questions with your customers and elevate your recruiting game.

Meeting: "Spin Selling" by Scott Love

(Facilitator): We live in a noisy world. So much so, that we barely have time to sit down and breathe in the silence. That noise often trickles down to many aspects of our professional lives, including our client relationships. In the quest to move quickly and on to the next call or placement, we rush and often fill the conversation with unnecessary commentary. When partnering with others and building new relationships, how do we begin to understand our client's problems so that we can offer alternative solutions?

Often, recruiters, are so busy filling a call with noise, that we forget the power in seeking to listen through thoughtful questioning. By stepping back and asking questions to diagnose our client's problems, one can help see the solution and how we are part of that solution. Welcome to spin selling! Scott reminds us of author Neil Rackham's book, *Spin Selling*, on breaking down our selling relationships by asking the right inquiries of our clients to get to the root of the problem and identify solutions.

Scott reiterates four types of questions asked of the client when spin selling:

1. **Situation** – Questions around the existing situation
2. **Problem** – Questions regarding the client's pain while further clarifying the position
3. **Implication** – Questions on how the problem is affecting the client; driving motivation for change
4. **Need-payoff** – Questions designed to get the client to share their needs without you explaining the benefits to the client

By asking pointed questions of our clients, we are building strong sales rapport in hopes for a more fluid and meaningful conversation. This technique requires active listening, which is open, thoughtful, and unhurried. The ability to not rush and interrupt allows the other in the conversation to trust, ask thoughtful and targeted questions that lead to the opportunity for partnership.

(Facilitator): Let's breakdown a client scenario to further demonstrate spin questions:

Client Scenario: Through calls with candidates in your market, you discover that there is a vacant account manager position with a prospective "A" client. You have never worked with this potential client before but have had several productive conversations with them over the last year. The need is in your F.I.L.L., you have possible candidates to present, and the position has been open for over 30 days.

After introductions with the potential client and confirming there is an opening, you dive into your SPIN questions:

Starting with **SITUATION** questions of clients, recruiters can develop an understanding of the context of the existing situation. For example, *"How long has the account manager position been vacant?"*

Moving to **PROBLEM** questions of clients, recruiters ask questions to help clients understand their need. For example, *"That's a long time. How is that vacancy affecting other members on your team?"*

Problem questions open the door for **IMPLICATION** questions of the client, uncovering the effects or consequences of a clients problem. For example, *"That must be challenging for everyone. How often are the other team members getting pulled away from their responsibilities to handle the responsibilities of the open account manager position?"*

NEED-PAYOFF questions close with helping the client discover a solution by asking how to resolve the problem. For example, *"How would filling the account manager position impact the team and company in terms of time and cost?"*

(Facilitator): With the above client scenario as an example, pick another client scenario and script your SPIN questions below:

Client Scenario:

____

____

____

Situation question examples:

- ____
- ____

Problem question examples:

- ____
- ____

Implication question examples:

- ____
- ____

Need-payoff question examples:

- ____
- ____

(Facilitator): Practice makes perfect! Like Scott suggests, role-play with another recruiter both scenarios, and test the spin questions you created for each scripted situation. Keeping in mind in your feedback, make sure to share what you would keep, what you would change, and if good, make sure to give specific examples.

Last, spin selling is not unique to only client conversations! If recruiting, work through the above exercise and role-play your recruiting scenarios. Spin selling is universal and has a place in both client and candidate situations!