Best of the Best

Presenter: Erin Bent, Partner, Senior Director of Training, Next Level Exchange

Erin Bent is the Senior Director of Training for Next Level Exchange and Director of Training for Kaye/Bassman International. Erin joined Kaye/Bassman in 2007 as a Senior Search Consultant specializing exclusively in the Consumer Products industry, focusing primarily on sales and sales support roles. Erin is a key facilitator for the Foundation Training Program for new hires and conducting ongoing learning and development. This core training program applies to all associates at each stage of career progression, from the basic recruiting fundamentals to effective marketing techniques, to a more sophisticated curriculum for long-term development. Erin has trained hundreds of recruiters and leveraged the 300+ hours of training on the Next Level Exchange website.

In this presentation, Erin will be reviewing the best tips from six trainers found on Next Level Exchange. In all instances, the advice she's sharing is an excerpt of a longer training video found on Next Level Exchange. These "best of the best" tips are intended to support what you are already doing well or improve your recruitment practice.

Meeting: "Best of the Best" by Erin Bent

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): Remember, Erin's goal with the six tips she selected isn't to overwhelm with a lot of information. Her goal is to inspire you to choose the next area to review (or rediscover) on your continuing education journey. Each tip throughout the facilitation guide will begin with the actual tip, where the video is located on Next Level Exchange, and the title of the original training video for reference.

Tip #1: To create "engagement" with your candidates, remember three essentials: Credibility, Mystery, and Delivery.
NLE TV – (under) Recruiting - *"Engagement"* by Kent Burns

(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 how 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 take 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: ____

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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 a 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 other recruiters say them?
- 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 slightest change can make the most significant difference in your ability to open up the door for 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?"*
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> *"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 several 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: ____

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

- Have you said anything that creates a 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 other recruiters say them?

- 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 an honest conversation, and deliver a value proposition that matters. That's how relationships happen!

Tip #2: Don't marry your candidates
NLE TV – (under) Recruiting - *"Hooks, Bricks, Toilets, and Pride"* by Greg Doersching

(Facilitator): Greg starts us off with the first of four essentials to increase production – sink your hooks in! Without hooks, there are no connections. Of course, we aren't talking about metal fishing hooks, but instead the emotional, personal, and highly targeted mental hooks that will get into the minds of your clients and candidates and stay there. Hooks are not designed to close a deal but instead to open the door to a longer discussion. Which of the following do you want to commit to strengthening within your search practices?

- Do not take on a search that you will not work on; clients will believe that you are dedicating efforts to it and are unsuccessful, which ruins credibility

- Do not take on searches for positions of which you do not have experience recruiting

- Do not take on searches in locations that are truly undesirable or too remote

- Know what you are going to say before you say it; sell facts, memorize your power pitches, and practice before you preach

- Invest at least a minimum amount of effort, defined by Greg as 120 phone calls, with half of them being "cold calls."

- Release candidates, you cannot help; develop a script that turns them down with care and dignity

- Create an easy way to add value for those candidates you release (send an interview preparation packet, a document on creating an effective resume, etc.) but that requires no continued time investment from you

Tip #3: View the Gatekeeper as a bridge to build trust and legitimacy
NLE Quick Tip – *"Engaging the Gatekeeper"* by Rob Mosley

(Facilitator): Take a Deep Breath: Rob makes a point in being mindful of being nervous on your calls as that will likely transfer to your voice, making you not sound as confident as you would like to project. Another way to calm the nerves is by sharing insight, which can help establish legitimacy.

Avoid Offering Too Much: Do not sell to the gatekeeper – influence.

Pattern Interrupt: Interrupt the flow of the conversation by taking control early in the call. Review Rob's script and edit it to match your next request into a gatekeeper:

"Good afternoon, this is Rob Mosley, with Accenture; who am I speaking with, please?
"Hi Ruth, it's very nice to meet you. I'm calling for Sam Smith, your CIO."

Keep it Personal: Just like you remember your candidates and clients, take notes on gatekeepers. Remember their names, be personal but not too memorable. Additionally, be different by sending a handwritten note to stand out in the crowd.

Plan B: Always have a backup plan! If you can't get through because you are communicating with an adversarial gatekeeper, your best bet might be a call before or after regular business hours. You never know, the decision-maker might be the one to pick up the phone!

When tackling the most common questions asked by recruiters, Rob encourages us to use a response that involves the 4Cs: Correct, Concise, Courteous, and Confident. With these Cs in mind, script your answer to the following questions commonly asked by gatekeepers:

"May I ask who is calling?"

Your script: ____

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"Can I tell them what this is about?"

Your script: ____

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Tip #4: Don't burn bridges

NLE TV – (under) Personal Development - *"Don't be That Recruiter"* by Michael Pietrack

(Facilitator): This tip from Michael is an excellent reminder of our actions and how they affect others we interact with daily. The hardest recruiters to coach won't take time to self-reflect and improve. When individuals give conscious consideration by reviewing their actions to learn how to be better, everyone benefits! Self-reflection gives our brain time to pause, work through experiences, and see through the lens of others.

If this is you, and you need to carve out time for more self-reflection for the sake of burning fewer bridges, work through the following questions to target a place to begin to be more aware.

If you were to live your life in a fishbowl, and others could see you working, what would you eliminate from your day in the spirit of operating from transparency? ____

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With your clients? ____

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With your candidates? ____

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What steps could you take to be more fully present in your daily interactions with others? ______________

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Think through your last search that did not end successfully; if you could do one thing repeatedly, what would you change? Additionally, what steps can you take (starting now) to address that area of concern?

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Think through your last successful placement; if you could do one thing repeatedly, what would you change for the better? Additionally, what steps can you take (starting now) to address that issue?

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Tip #5: Avoid burnout
NLE Quick Tip – *"Maintaining the Mindset"* by Nasrin Akter

(Facilitator): Nasrin reminds us of the consequences of burnout as they can be severe. Your productivity can drop dramatically, not only impacting your career but negatively impacting your team and relationships with colleagues, friends, and family.

What can you do to avoid this pitfall and improve your burnout probability? Review the following action items to alleviate stress and eventual burnout- what can you do in each perspective area to keep burnout at bay?

Find Purpose – *How could you add meaning to what you do professionally every day?*

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Review Responsibilities – *What are your day-to-day responsibilities, and what could you allocate to another person or outsource entirely?*

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Give Back to Others – *What random act of kindness could you do for your candidates and clients to re-energize your spirit and purpose?*

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Get Physical – *Do you miss running? Have you always wanted to try tennis? What physical activity are you willing to commit to over the next two weeks to refocus on interests away from the office? Get going today and track your experience!*

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Tip #6: Let go.
NLE TV – (under) Personal Development - *"So You Know How to Recruit, Now What?"*
by Karen Schmidt

(Facilitator): Often, the very traits we see as assisting in our success and accomplishments are the same that can hold us back. When we understand who we are and what makes us succeed, we become more self-aware. When we acknowledge areas to improve, we mature. Take a moment to answer the below questions and evaluate what you can recognize, and, in turn, let go.

- What attributes or characteristics are you most proud of that got you to where you are today?

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- What abilities do you have that allowed you to separate from your peers over the months or years?

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- Reflecting on the above answers, is there a chance that those very same characteristics that rewarded you so well are the same characteristics that can hold you back in the future?

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To begin to impact change, think about what got you here:

- What has contributed to your success so far?

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- How do you compare with others within your organization or industry in similar roles? What separates you from the average performer?

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- How have your responsibilities evolved as you've grown in the last year, as opposed to a year ago?

- When you are working, what activities make you lose track of time? Why?
