



WHY USE RECRUITMENT AGENCIES?

The current employment market has thrown up a lot of challenges for recruitment agencies, not just in Australia but across the globe.

One of the most confronting ones is relevance.

This is a very familiar issue for me. When I started pounding the pavements of Sydney, as a junior recruiter in the early 1990s, unemployment rose from 8% to 11% and there were vast numbers of available and active candidates. The major 'sell' when I sat in front of a client or prospect wasn't (mostly) one of why I was better than my competitors, it was why use a recruitment agency at all!

Fifteen plus years later, I am certainly not expecting that unemployment will return to double figures (or even close) however I do sense that recruiters are yet again, confronting the issue of relevance.

As more people become active job seekers (combining those currently unemployed, with those who know or suspect they are soon to be unemployed) and the pressure continues across organisations for greater cost reductions, the use of recruitment agencies will come under the financial microscope like never before.

'Why use a recruiter when we can post a job online and have all the candidates we need?' I hear CEOs and GMs asking of their hiring managers. A predictable question, I would suggest and one that all recruiters need to be able to answer emphatically or risk death by irrelevance.

Here are 7 reasons why using a high quality, third party, recruitment consultant is still likely to be the most cost-effective option for a client seeking to hire the best employees, regardless of the economic climate.

1. Find the best candidates - just because there is a dim economic mood, it doesn't mean that high quality candidates are flooding online ads with applications. A high quality recruiter uses many tools and techniques to access and woo top candidates. Most clients just rely on online ads to generate candidates for jobs.
2. Speed - almost all clients attempting their own direct recruitment have higher daily priorities than hiring. Recruitment consultants have no higher priorities than

responding quickly to a client request for quality permanent and/or temporary staff. A high quality recruiter should always be able to provide suitable candidates to a client, faster than the client can do it themselves (if they can't then they don't know their market niche well enough).

3. Recognise liars and frauds - a database and filing system, with deep history, allows a recruiter to compare the resume currently submitted by a candidate to one they may have submitted in the past. Considering that between 20% and 40% of resumes have significant inaccuracies (depending upon which survey you believe), your chances of detecting a fabrication or omission in a candidate's resume is generally going to be better than your client's.

4. Skills testing and other assessment tools - all high quality recruiters have some form of testing that assesses one, or a combination, of a candidate's skills, competencies and motivations. Most clients do not. Any independent, valid and proven assessment tool is going to improve the chances of an effective hiring decision being made.

5. Temps - assessing and managing candidates for temporary or casual positions involves a slightly different set of skills to those required for permanent recruitment. See this [article](#) for more details. Most clients have very little competence in effective temporary recruitment because they don't understand the subtle differences.

6. Act as a client advocate - when the client is recruiting directly, they have no independent advocate going in to bat for them with the candidate (remembering that quality candidates will almost always have other choices). A high quality recruitment consultant knows how to most effectively present job opportunities and (mostly unknown) organisations to their candidates.

7. Market expertise - a high quality recruitment consultant knows their market niche so intimately that they can provide excellent advice to their clients about candidate availability, sourcing methods, salaries & benefits, hiring timeframes and key 'push & pull' factors for quality candidates. It is highly unlikely that a client will have anything close to the same level of expertise about the relevant candidate market.

Recruitment agencies are intermediaries. All market economy intermediaries (like real estate agents, travel agents, dating agents, shipping agents, mortgage brokers, share brokers, etc) have either thrived or withered over time, based on their level of effectiveness with which they bring together a relevant buyer and a relevant seller in a specific marketplace.