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REASONS WHY EXCEPTIONAL CANDIDATES ARE TURNING DOWN EXCELLENT JOBS!

In the middle of a drought – a talent drought, with the highest level of employment since 1971, the lowest level of candidate availability since 2007 and the greatest number of vacancies, companies are fighting over a reduced pool of candidates for all roles, and let's be clear shall we, we all know that the calibre of candidates available to all employers have reduced significantly in the last 2 decades. In my experience, schools and colleagues, despite increasing numbers of GCSE A grades, they are not producing youngsters who are work ready in the way that they were when I started this business back in 1988.

With the youngest of the baby boomers now reaching their mid-50's, the number of 40 year-olds in the workforce is less than 2/3rds the number it was 15 years ago. (9670 vs 6580) – Source Institute of Directors.

Our own detailed research informs us that whereas the most important thing job seekers were looking for in 2012 were money, then training. Only 4 years later and post-recession, whilst training and opportunity remain at number 2 & 3, the most important thing job hunters are looking for today is the ability to work close to home. The number 1 reason for leaving jobs is due to an un-supportive boss. It's also worth noting that the number 1 reason that people stay in a job is because of their relationship with colleagues.

With salary increases slowing down, we know that your clients like ours, are struggling to fill positions at all levels from board directors to trainees. In this race to secure the services of exceptional candidates, some employers are losing out simply because they are not taking the recruitment process and candidate engagement seriously.

These are the mistakes that some companies are making that we know result in exceptional candidates turning down their offers of employment.

1. They don't confirm the interview day/time directly with candidate.



Even if they engage an agency to source candidates and arrange interviews for them, it takes only a few minutes to email the attendees confirming the appointment. Failure to do so provides a poor impression of their organisation. Candidates are increasingly deciding who THEY want to work with based not simply on money, location and job content; but also on professionalism and the employers' levels of engagement. This simple strategy takes little effort & sets the tone nicely. If you have time between the appointment's confirmation & the interview, send a letter with sales literature and company information. Classy.

2. They don't call or text the day before.

No, this is NOT stalking the candidate, but it will do two things. Firstly, it will save you time in the case of candidates who have already found a position who were NOT intending to let you know and just NOT TURN UP! Secondly, it illustrates to the candidate that you are an effective communicator and are genuinely looking forward to seeing them.



3. They have not sent them a job description and person specification either directly or in advance via your agency.

This reeks of a lack of professionalism. How can they prepare properly without knowing what they are REALLY looking for. Don't cut corners; impress with YOUR attention to detail.

4. Nobody has been briefed to welcome the interviewee.

It's easy, simply let staff know that you are expecting someone for an appointment and to let you know when they have arrived....which leads on to....

5. They keep them waiting!

This is probably THE NUMBER ONE reason that exceptional candidates turn down an otherwise great opportunity. I have heard of people being kept waiting for up to an hour, without being provided with a reason for the delay. I was once kept waiting in a prospective client's waiting area for 40 minutes without a reason provided by the embarrassed receptionist. I left shortly after. The (amazingly) disgruntled employer called me to apologise and to enquire why I had the temerity to leave! Naturally I could not recommend him as a courteous employer. Likewise, treat a potential employee with respect and as if they were your number 1 client!



6. They are not offered any refreshment

No opportunity to use washrooms or told where the fire exits are.



7. They are not interviewed in private.

Interviews are confidential. Treat them as such and discuss personal history, reasons for leaving and money in private.

8. The interviewer takes a non-urgent phone call during the interview.

Seriously, it happens again and again, surely they could turn their phone OFF!

9. They spend only 20 minutes interviewing the candidate;

Surely their attendance warrants a little more time? They will invariably have taken time off work to be at your premises; we should all be respectful of their commitment.



10. They are interviewed for hours and hours and hours...

honestly, I've had clients who have put people off because they ramble too much

11. They explain why their organisation is so amazing...

and what a fabulous role they are offering, and yet give the interviewee no opportunity to talk. The interview is a TWO WAY dialogue of course.

12. They don't ask THEM if they have any questions.

Today's interview style is more of a two way dialogue but there are usually some questions unanswered. Don't let them leave still curious.



13. They have not read the candidate's CV in advance and have not prepared any interview questions.

In short, they try to 'wing it'. Please don't. If you have genuinely not read their CV or prepared any questions; ask for a 15 minute delay, offer them coffee and prepare yourself.

14. Their interview questions are inappropriate.

All references to age, gender, family circumstances, religion etc. should be avoided.

15. Their interview technique is poor.

They should get proper training, read a manual or get some coaching. If you are new to interviewing or are nervous, ask a more experienced colleague to interview with you.

16. They are tired, grumpy or miserable..

and are negative about their company, colleagues, products or clients. Remember this is 'SHOW TIME'.

17. They omit to take notes.

This shows a complete lack of interest and is rude and disrespectful.



18. They don't show them around where they would be working if they were successful in their application.

OK, I'll accept that it is NOT always possible; but mostly it is. Not only is this common sense, but great PR too. Even if they don't join, let them tell the world about what a great company you have and the positive atmosphere they encountered.

19. They don't walk them to the door, exit or car park.

It's like a first date remember! Of course, you will try to impress.

20. They don't provide your agency or the candidate with feedback within 24 hours.

There is NO EXCUSE for not giving this information within a day. Many employers 'blow it' simply because they are bad communicators. If you are like this at interview stage, how bad will you be at appraisal time, for example.



21. The confirmation letter is slow at being delivered.

Sure, they have said yes in principle, but many employers blow it at this stage simply because they are tardy compared to another employer who ACTS FAST!

22. They try to collude with the candidate by going 'behind the back' of the introducing agent..

by suggesting that the official starting salary is lower than the real one or that they join the company after a cooling off period so that the agency won't be able to charge the correct, if any fee! Nice..! Of course, it does occasionally happen and most recruiters are wise to this so few clients actually get away with this. How does such duplicity sit with the candidate? If they are dishonest with their agency, the employer may try to rip them off at some stage in the future. They end up scoring an own goal!

23. Their offer bares little or no resemblance to the potential offer originally suggested.



A candidate currently earning £30,000 is looking for £33,000 and sponsorship to take professional qualifications. The company decides that for whatever reason they are not 'worth' £33,000 despite offering this in principle originally. Guess what, they turn them down AND THEN after they have increased their offer up to £33,000 the candidate STILL turns them down as being inconsistent and maybe a 'little underhand'.

24. The offer letter and contract are poorly written with spelling mistakes.

I have known candidates 'walk away' because of this!



25. They don't stay in contact between offer and start day.

Yes, the new employee might have said "I do" but might ending up 'running off' with someone else! Send a welcome pack, invite them in to meet the team or to a staff social night. Picking up the phone and say "we look forward to you joining us" makes all the difference.

Knowing the mistakes that other employers are making means that you can put in place strategies to help you avoid many of the reasons that suitable candidates are turning down exceptional offers from employers. A little thought and preparation goes a long way.

To discuss YOUR vacancies with a recruitment firm who fulfill these criteria contact:

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