



Help Wanted, Incorporated
5001 American Blvd West
Suite 735
Bloomington, MN 55437
staff@helpwantedinc.com
www.helpwantedinc.com

Phone: (952) 831-5767

Executive Recruiters: Your Job-Search Commandos

Executive recruiters (also known as headhunters or search consultants) have firmly established themselves as a visible and highly valued fixture in today's employment landscape. Through their aggressive matchmaking, headhunters affect the careers of individuals, the lives of their families and friends, and the profitability of entire corporations.

No one knows exactly what the business world would be like without the influence of headhunters, but one thing's for sure: sometime in your career, you'll either receive a call from a headhunter, or initiate contact yourself. In either case, you should learn how to work with them effectively, and take full advantage of the many benefits their service provides.

Here's what you get from establishing a relationship with an executive recruiter:

- **Greater exposure.** Headhunters not only maintain a myriad of existing contacts within your field, they can also scout out new companies you never heard of.
- **Increased efficiency.** Headhunters are obsessive networkers; they spend their time researching and penetrating the job market. Their knowledge can save you time in identifying and pursuing prospective employers.
- **Personalized public relations.** Employers generally look more favorably towards a candidate who's professionally recommended. Headhunters stake their reputations on the quality of their candidates, and will always present you in the best possible light.
- **Confidential representation.** Some job search situations require a great deal of discretion. For example, you may want to explore an opportunity with your present company's direct competitor. In such an instance, a headhunter can present your background confidentially, thereby protecting your identity, and eliminating (or at least minimizing) your risk of exposure.
- **Authoritative career consulting.** Headhunters can help you determine the job or career track that's right for you, based on current market conditions and your own values and abilities. They're also in a unique position to walk you through (and monitor) each step in your job changing process.

- **Private training.** Headhunters can give you practical, time-tested suggestions on how to strengthen your resume and improve your interviewing technique. In many ways, a headhunter acts as a personal coach.
- **Third-party representation.** As experienced brokers, headhunters find ways to put favorable deals together, and iron out differences you and the hiring company may have regarding your salary, benefits, and relocation package.

In addition, working through a headhunter can actually improve your chances for success once you've been placed. That's because the search fee the hiring company paid the recruiter represents a sizable financial investment in your future success -- an investment worth protecting.

Some Common Sense Ground Rules

Let's talk turkey for a minute about what to expect from headhunters, and how to establish some common sense ground rules. Here are seven issues you'll want to discuss before you set any relationship in stone:

1. **Compatibility** -- Make sure you feel comfortable with the style, personality, intensity level, and integrity of the headhunter. As in any other business relationship, you want the other person to understand your needs and act accordingly.
2. **Confidentiality** -- Make sure your resume isn't going to get plastered all over town without your knowledge. An inept (or anxious) recruiter can overexpose your candidacy; or worse, reveal your intention to change jobs to your own company.
3. **Good Judgment** -- Make sure you're being sent to interviews that match your background and interests with the needs of the recruiter's client company. The most common complaint from both candidates and employers is that recruiters "throw candidates against the wall to see what sticks."
4. **Honesty** -- Make sure there's either a bona fide job opening or an upgrade possibility where you're being sent to interview. Otherwise, you'll be spending your valuable time on one wild goose chase after another.
5. **Tempo** -- Make sure to let the recruiter know at what pace you want to proceed in your search for a new position. If you're not ready to make a change until a later date, or simply want to explore the market, don't let the recruiter waste your time by sending you on an interview.
6. **Arm-twisting** -- Don't be pressured into accepting a position or a compensation package simply to please the recruiter.
7. **Exclusivity** -- it's fine to work with a recruiter on an exclusive basis, as long as you feel comfortable with the arrangement and the recruiter has earned the right of sole representation. By the same token, you must be fair with headhunters. For example, if

you're pursuing a job search on your own or through another party, keep the headhunter aware of your activity, so you don't cross paths. A recruiter's time and reputation are his most valuable commodities; he or she deserves better than to be manipulated or left in the lurch.

Recruiters can't work miracles by waving a magic wand over your resume; all they can do is match your background with a suitable opening, and help guide you through the job changing process efficiently and competitively. While it's true that headhunters have their limitations and can't be all things to all people:

It makes good sense to build a solid relationship with a competent headhunter.