

Working with Recruiters

Prior to the 1990's, third-part recruiting firms, employment agencies and temporary staffing firms connected employers with outside candidates. Job candidates or employers paid agency fees. "Employer fee paid" meant that the employer paid the associated fee and "Candidate fee paid" meant the job seeker who got the job through the third-party firm paid the associated fee.

Moving into the 1990's, recruiting industry terminology began to become confusing as most "employment agencies" stopped accepting fees from candidates and transitioned themselves into the staffing firm business model which derived almost all fees from employers. Today, virtually all third-party suppliers of external candidates are paid by employers, not candidates. In addition, the service portfolio of "staffing", "recruiting", and "talent acquisition" firms have become more and more similar.

According to multiple employment studies, third-party firms tend to fill 10-15% of all permanent professional and executive positions filled by external job candidates. For higher paying management and executive level positions, this percentage was likely to be somewhat higher over the long term. It is important that every corporate professional and executive, whether seeking a new position or a new employee, learn how to work effectively with internal and external recruiting professionals.

Since recruiting terminology can be confusing, it is helpful to begin with a basic understanding of the recruiting and staffing businesses. Here is some simplified terminology:

External Job Candidate: This job seeker does not currently work for the hiring employer and has completed the minimum qualifications for candidate consideration. The seeker has submitted a résumé, completed an employment application, and whatever else the employer requires to consider them a candidate.

Internal Job Candidate: This job seeker currently works for the hiring employer and is being considered for a new position within their existing employer.

Recruiting Firms (third party): Recruiting firms exist outside the hiring employer. They are paid to manage some or all of the processes of identifying, attracting, screening, coordinating, interviewing, and hiring desirable external job candidates. Portions of the recruiting process in these firms may be assigned to different individuals. Some recruiters may be assigned to finding candidates ("sourcing") and others may be assigned to screening and coordinating candidates through the hiring process. Larger firms may assign a subgroup of individuals to focus exclusively on selling their services to employer clients ("account management"). An individual who handles all phases of the recruiting process is said to be handling a "full desk" and some recruiting firms title them as a consultant rather than a recruiter.

Caution: There are career management firms who operate web sites that appear on the surface to be third-party recruiting firms. On these sites you will see advertising for career services. These sites are used as feeder sources for prospecting new clients for their career services. If you ever run across a web site that poses as a recruiting firm but looks garish – such as having large print with a sales pitch like "Six Figure and C Level Jobs" –be forewarned. The more subtle ones actually pose as recruiters and entice you to submit your résumé to them. Then, you get a call from the salesperson that flatters you and asks you to come in for an interview. Several say something like "Our President saw your résumé and is interested in speaking with you" or "We have reviewed your resume and we think we can help you." When you show up, you discover they want to sell you career services and are not actually recruiters. Similar deceptive practices have been around for decades and the Internet has increased this volume considerably, especially for job seekers who post their resumes on line.

Internal (Staff) Recruiter: This person is responsible for all or a portion of the recruiting process and is employed directly by the employer. They are typically a full time employee within the Human Resources (HR) department.

External (third-party) Recruiter: This person is a solo recruiter or works for a recruiting firm. They are responsible for all or a portion of the recruiting process and are not employed by the hiring employer. A special subset is **contract recruiters** who work (on contract, usually paid hourly and not as an employee) on behalf of an employer for a period of time. These frequently are housed on employer's premises.