

How to get the most value from your recruiter

The successful partnering between you and your search firm is a two-sided arrangement that requires trust and professional respect. Your approach to the partnership influences the speed and outcome of the search process just as much as the recruiter's skill. One of the most important factors is your understanding of the process and the part you play in it. Here are a few suggestions that may be helpful:

- Do your homework before meeting with the recruiter. Define long and short term expectations for the job. Think through key organisational issues: reporting and working relationships; number of people the new hire will manage; who he or she will work with most closely.
- Make sure that your team agrees on the objectives of the position and that they are willing and able to commit time and energy to make the hiring process a top priority.
- Be prepared with the key elements that define the job description, such as:
 - Title
 - Objectives
 - Criteria for measuring performance
 - Major issue that new hire will address immediately
 - Organisation charts
 - How many and what kind of people will be managed
 - Current budget of the department
 - Salary, including bonus, incentive plans, benefits
 - Career path opportunities
- Provide any additional information your recruiter needs, job descriptions, company financial information, reporting structures etc. Be explicit about the chemistry and corporate culture of your company. Share both good and bad, positive and negative aspects of the job and have no surprises waiting.
- Establish high standards in evaluating candidates, but be sensitive to feedback. Understand the trade-off between the candidate qualities you require and those you desire.
- Keep things moving from your side: conduct candidate interviews promptly; give timely feedback; maintain security and confidentiality.

A successful search is a team effort. You and your recruiter complement each other's knowledge and strengths. A spirit of partnership will go a long way toward enabling you to reach your staffing goals.