

A Recruiter's Badge of Honor

This is the second in a two-part column dealing with the importance of a person's character in recruiting. The first column entitled [Up in the Air](#) is available at www.weddles.com/recruiternews.

We recruiters are constantly attending conferences and Webinars, training programs and tutorials on the best practices in our profession. That's especially true these days, when the pace of technological innovation—from social media and video to tweeting and texting—makes staying current all the more challenging.

But is all of that training sufficient to give a recruiter a competitive advantage in the search for top talent? Will best practices automatically lead to the best results?

I don't think so. I believe that the best practices in the hands of the best recruiters can do that, but in the hands of people who are less than their best selves, they're simply a tool, and not a very effective one at that. To put it another way, the best practices come and go, but a person's character endures. It is the bedrock on which performance is based.

As I said in my last column, "Recruiters of character have a powerful advantage in the War for the Best Talent. They bring in top performers because they are top performers themselves, and because they have personal attributes that resonate with those individuals. They transform the recruiting experience from a transaction between strangers to an interaction between those who share a commitment to being their best."

What, then, is character and, more importantly, how is it expressed by those of us in the recruiting profession?

One researcher has described character as the nexus of six attributes. I think they can be interpreted to describe recruiters of character, as well. They are:

- Trustworthiness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Caring
- Citizenship.

A recruiter is trustworthy when they are honest and reliable. For example, they can be counted on to tell hiring managers when their requisitions are unrealistic, given the supply of candidates in the market or the salary they are willing to pay.

A recruiter shows respect when they practice the Golden Rule. No matter how busy they may be or how cumbersome their systems and processes, they treat candidates as they would like to be treated—with courtesy and dignity.

A recruiter is responsible when they meet their obligations. They not only fill the requisitions they are assigned, but they ensure they have the skills and knowledge necessary to do so in the most effective and efficient way possible.

A recruiter is fair when they balance their obligation to their employer with their obligation to candidates. They do their best to ensure that those whom they convince to join their organization also have a reasonable chance to be successful there.

A recruiter is caring when they are considerate of the others on their team. They not only work hard to achieve their own success, but they also do whatever they can to help their coworkers reach their goals, as well.

A recruiter is a good citizen when they tap all cohorts of the population when sourcing candidates. They refuse to accept or condone the conscious or unconscious, hidden or visible biases of hiring managers and their own colleagues on the recruiting team.

It would be easy, of course, to sneer at such a list as a recruiter's version of the Boy Scout or Girl Scout pledge. In today's cynical world, focusing on character seems ... well pollyannish if not downright naïve. And if that's the case, I stand guilty as charged. Indeed, I think such idealism is actually a mark of character, and the best recruiters wear it as a badge of honor.

Thanks for reading,

Peter

Visit my blog at Weddles.com/WorkStrong

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