

Rethinking the job order

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This month I hosted another Recruiter Boot Camp with online job portal Careers24. One of the topics I spoke on was the art of the job order. After the feedback from the previous Recruiter Boot Camps, it was clear that we needed to be rethinking the art of the job order, an essential piece of communication from client to potential candidates.



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The title 'job order' implies creativity, a sense of story, control, and choice. In reality, none of these elements are usually present. Unfortunately, more often than not, recruiters are data capturers, not 'writers' of jobs. My belief is that the concept of a job order is in direct conflict with a consultative selling process – which is what we should be aiming for with clients.

It's time for a new approach

So, how about we think about it this way: Every story is told from someone's point of view, and a job order is, traditionally, a story told from the client's viewpoint. But it doesn't have to be (and shouldn't be) that way. Jobs are best written with the recruiter, the candidate **and** the client in mind. A combination viewpoint is a lot more powerful.

The traditional (client-focused) approach results in this kind of job order conversation with the client: "I'm sure I could fill this for you. We have a lot of experience in that market and a proven track record of providing excellent candidates. If you could spend some time with me detailing the kind of background you would want the successful candidate to have, I'll be happy to work on it for you."

The new approach means you should be having these sorts of conversations with clients: “Let me give you an inside view of what makes finding a top level candidate tricky. The easy part is getting the ideal candidate on the phone. When we do, this is what they will be thinking.”

- I am good at what I do - I don't have to move if I don't want to
- I am emotionally attached to my work status
- I am so good at what I do, my company will do outrageous things to keep me
- I crave challenge and growth
- I need decisions made quickly

Give your clients something to think about, for example: "Let's assume I have a superstar candidate from your leading competitor on the phone. How am I empowered to get them locked in and on board? If you can provide solutions to all of the points the candidate is likely thinking then together we can be effective."

Traditionally the job order involves:

1. Specs
2. Urgency
3. Fee
4. Opportunity
5. Hiring process
6. Compensation

In the new approach, the trick is, when dealing with all these elements, to mix and match who your focus is. For example:

- **Urgency** should have a client and candidate focus. “How quickly can we respond to this candidate?”
- **Compensation** must have a candidate focus, i.e. “Are you going to vary your compensation based on the talent of the candidate?”
- **Specs** from a client and recruiter point of view could look like this: “From my point of view, here's what's in the marketplace and here's what these candidates are used to doing. What is your expectation?”
- **Hiring process** is most effective from a candidate's viewpoint: “How do we speed up your process in a way where you're comfortable that you've done your due diligence, but my candidates are comfortable that you can make a decision?”
- **Fees** need to come from the recruiter's standpoint: “From my point of view, it is not worth it to do this for less than a premium fee.”
- **Opportunity** works well when you approach it from both a candidate and recruiter's viewpoint: “I get more excited about working on jobs if I find your story compelling.”

Hot tip: You can combine hiring process and urgency into one section called timeline.

A good conversation that sets the tone for this new approach could sound something like this: "Since this is our first opportunity to help each other, let me tell you how I work. By design, I keep my client list small. I commit to very few and I deliver 100% of the time. I have multiple openings, I work with clients who are decisive, I need a compelling story (your employer brand needs to be strong), you need to respect my value and we have to communicate honestly."

If all of these elements exist in your client relationship then you can be effective as a recruiter.

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