

MAKING HITS OUT OF NEAR MISSES

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A frequently recurring frustration of a good sourcing recruiter is the laissez-faire attitude of many hiring managers. We dedicate ourselves to finding, attracting, and presenting well-qualified candidates on a timely basis only to receive, in turn, a nonspecific, “not quite what I ‘m looking for” response, or no response at all.

My remedy for this persistent corporate malady is the periodic invitational open house. Every two to three months, I reserve our conference center for half of a day and invite all hiring departments to participate in an in-house job fair. My recruiters and I then invite some of the highly qualified candidates we have recruited or received via employee referral over the past several months who have yet to be interviewed by any of our managers.

Our hiring managers, like so many busy business people, look at resumes expecting to find the “perfect” candidate as they might visualize that person. However, few managers have either the time or the experience to be able to “read between the lines” of a resume to discern the possibilities that might exist. However, put that candidate face to face with a hiring manager, and many of his or her objections or misperceptions can be mitigated through a brief but healthy dialog. Then, once engaged, the manager is far more likely to schedule an in-depth follow-up interview.

To ensure these events are successful for both candidate and manager alike, here are some organizational tips to consider:

- Ask managers to identify the critical skill sets they are seeking prior to advertising your event.
- Promote your event in appropriate media without revealing the date and location at least two weeks in advance to allow additional candidates to be identified and invited along with those identified from within your existing resume database.
- Email a personalized invitation to each candidate to include date, time, and directions.
- Upon arrival, provide a “map” to the appropriate booths or stations where each person’s skills will be of the most interest to the attending managers, thus minimizing unproductive conversations where there are no skills or interest matches.
- At the conclusion of the event, require each attending manager to provide a list of “candidates of interest” to allow timely scheduling of follow up interviews.

Unlike the come-one, come-all open house, these invitational events require prescreening by your recruitment team to ensure a meaningful and productive event for all concerned. Depending on the nature and number of your hiring requirements, employment offers to 10-20 % of the applicants attending should result. If anyone is keeping score, that’s a lot of “hits” obtainable in a cost- and time-efficient manner.