

The Washington Post

Do Your Own Recruiter Searching Long Before You'll Be Job Searching

By Vickie Elmer
Sunday, June 27, 2010

If your career matters to you, you need to recruit a recruiter.

The time to do this, ideally, is before you start hunting for a new job. And the way to do it is either to be discovered by a recruiter who joins your network, or to be recommended by co-workers and others who value your talents and contributions.

Kathleen T. Kurke hears from one such man who e-mails about once a month saying he loves his job but is ready to help her with connections in Texas, where he lives. He wants to help the executive recruiter now so when he's next looking, she'll be more likely to assist him.

That proactive approach demonstrates his talents as a business developer and keeps his connections strong with Kurke, national practice leader with the Starbridge Group in Fairfax. "The best time to approach a recruiter is when you're not looking for a job," she said, offering advice echoed by several others.

Get connected through co-workers, a former boss or someone on the nonprofit board on which you serve. "Referrals are the best," said Patrick Gray, a Korn Ferry International partner who specializes in government contractor searches in the aerospace and defense fields.

A third avenue in: Develop a robust online profile on LinkedIn and in your professional association or community. "Make yourself visible," says Bob Corlett, president of Staffing Advisors in the District, which recruits for nonprofit, association and entrepreneurial clients. Speak at professional meetings or serve on a committee -- and leave an online trail illustrating your professional skills.

This will make you "findable" to recruiters, Corlett says. They seek candidates by searching LinkedIn, by checking professional association sites or by Googling around for prospects.



This ~~Washington Post~~ article enthusiastically shared with our search entrepreneur & search consultant peers by **JEFFERSON GROUP CONSULTING** & **Jeff Skrentny, CERS***. Jeff can be reached at AskJeff@JeffersonInc.com, or



www.SkrentnySPEAKS.com



Jeff.Skrentny.CERS

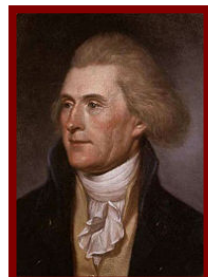


SkrentnySPEAKS



SkrentnySPEAKS

*CERS...Certified Employment Retention Specialist...the most advanced NAPS (National Association of Personnel Services) credential for professionals in the search profession, a credential that less than 60 elite senior search professionals in North America have earned.



You want to connect with a recruiter who works in your industry or at your career level. For Corlett's Staffing Advisors, that's often at the director level, including many searches for directors of HR or development. For Korn Ferry, that means mostly vice presidents and above. Some recruiters specialize in one job function, such as general counsels or graphic designers, and others focus on one sector, such as finance or legal.

Once you have been introduced to a recruiter, look for ways to make the relationship mutually beneficial and long-term. "Be a good go-to resource for discussions on issues and trends in industry," said Kurke, who is president of the Pinnacle Society, a group of star recruiters nationwide. Or as the Texas man does, offer to connect her to other candidates. "It's sort of like managing up when you work for somebody," Kurke said. You need their help -- and you help the recruiter succeed, too.

Recruiters are inundated with inquiries and résumés, so respect their time. Don't ask them for advice on your résumés or cover letter; that's for friends, family or résumés writers. And don't expect them to help you with career change thoughts.

Some recruiters will take time to meet you for a quick conversation or coffee; others don't want to see you until they have an appropriate opening. "When a search firm has a good opportunity for you, there's lots to talk about. When they're not working on a search, there's not much to talk about," said Corlett, who's been working as a recruiter since the mid-1980s. "We want to be kind and professional. . . . But I can't have 20 cups of coffee a week" with candidates.

So don't stalk them. E-mails or calls every week will turn them off, Gray said. He also tells people to be realistic about their career and accomplishments. Acknowledge to a recruiter: "I'm not right for that, but here's two people who are."




It's fine to work with two or three recruiters -- "a manageable number of relationships," according to Gray. But you need to be honest and open with each one, Kurke says, so they don't duplicate efforts or feel you're being secretive. "Share your goals and aspirations," she said, and never lie about your experience or accomplishments.

Recruiters are paid to identify people who are in demand or difficult to find, Corlett said. Recruiters work for the organization, so unless you're a good match for the employer's specifications, you won't make the slate of candidates. Said Corlett: "You could be my brother, and I'm not going to put you forward if you're not a good fit."

Vickie Elmer is a freelance writer.

The original post can be found at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/26/AR2010062601377.html>



This ~~Washington Post~~ article enthusiastically shared with our search entrepreneur & search consultant peers by **JEFFERSON GROUP CONSULTING & Jeff Skrentny, CERS***. Jeff can be reached at AskJeff@JeffersonInc.com, or www.SkrentnySPEAKS.com  Jeff.Skrentny.CERS  SkrentnySPEAKS  SkrentnySPEAKS

*CERS...Certified Employment Retention Specialist...the most advanced NAPS (National Association of Personnel Services) credential for professionals in the search profession, a credential that less than 60 elite senior search professionals in North America have earned.

