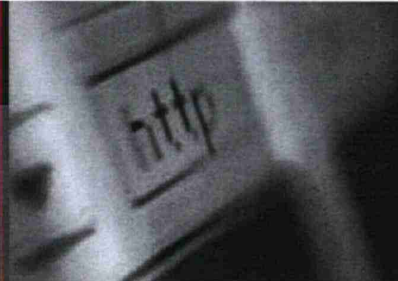


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The future today

As corporate clients begin to take up the technology available to recruiters, consultants need to work smarter argues Chris Berry



Traditional recruitment methods have endured for decades and they continue to hold a place in today's business world. In fact, for some organisations very little has changed. However, a growing trend towards the online world is undermining these traditional processes, introducing new approaches that promise (and deliver) greater efficiency, lower costs and quicker responses. And, from a corporate perspective, online recruitment methods help recruiters to manage their own talent pools and report on progress with much better accuracy and detail. The necessary tools are equally available and accessible to in-house recruiters as they are to consultants and this very fact is changing the role of the recruitment consultancy. It means that recruitment consultants need to work smarter to offer real benefits to their customers, differentiating their services and complementing the in-house processes.

Road ahead

Of course, there are certain requirements that still demand the services of consultants who have an in-depth knowledge of specific industries and a healthy database of prospective new recruits. And, for the niche, highly-skilled workers, there is still very much a tailored approach needed.

However, the large majority of recruitment takes place in the middle ground where the level of skills is often less demanding and where the number of candidates is far greater. It is here that the online facilities really prove their worth, helping organisations to explore a much bigger pool of talent and respond to the business need with greater speed.

The more astute organisation is now using its website as a recruitment tool – not just to post job vacancies, but to administer

the entire recruitment process, from publicising vacancies, through collection of candidate data, to offer distribution and the onboarding process. The organisation will run its own database of available staff, encourage them to register on their website, providing details of their skills, entering contact information, and indicating their preferred method of future contact when opportunities arise. All of this gives quick and easy access to a pool of willing employees at any given time and, when an organisation has seasonal staff variations, this is a huge advantage.

Changing times

So, where does this leave the recruitment consultant? Well, the good news is that there is a lot that the consultant can do but they need to start the process of change now. A willingness to work with the client organisation to complement their systems and perhaps even manage their systems for them is essential. They need to demonstrate a stronger knowledge of the candidates and how best to communicate with them, they need to encourage online registration and deliver the appropriate details at the right time to the recruiting managers. They should be using the latest technology to recruit staff themselves – working for them directly and establishing a strong database for client recruitment purposes. As popular technologies enter the fray, like social networking sites, these should be exploited for the purpose of spreading the word about potential work opportunities, thus widening the reach of any recruitment drive.

The recruitment market is at an exciting stage in its development and that means there is a real opportunity for competitive advantage for those that are ready to grasp

it. Moving to an outsourced recruitment services model is a sensible approach but adopting the right technology up front is a must to enable consultants to do their job better and more efficiently. It is no longer about placing ads. It is about attracting the right candidates through different media and administering an on-going dialogue with them using all the methods available, including text, email, phone, social networking sites, and many more to come.

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