

Has The Recruiter Botched Up the Job?

A Research Paper on the Reasons Why a Recruiter Compromises While Hiring Talent

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Abstract:

It's essential for any enterprise to have qualified talent in order to be successful at business and organisations do incur lot of expenditure towards hiring talented professionals. The Talent Acquisition Group (TAG) that comprises of recruiters play a very vital role in this function. Though this activity is strategic in nature, the role of a recruiter has been majorly disparaged in corporate. It is a discreetly known fact that Recruiters also compromise while hiring talent and this could be due to various reason. This Research paper examines the main reasons behind why the sentinel who guards the inward flow of quality talent compromises at work. What are the reasons and how are they created.

Keywords: Recruiter, Hiring, Interviewing skills, Reasons for a wrong hire, Cost of wrong hire.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the strategic goals of a growing organisation is hiring the right talent and a Recruiter is the person who contributes immensely to this activity. If the organisation fails to hire right manpower then it is almost impossible for it to make progress in delivering its business objectives. It's a well-known fact that recruiting is a high pressure job and it is tough for an individual who is performing this role to be always motivated. Though the role of a Recruiter is critical for the growth of an organisation unfortunately the job does not carry a great image and as any other support function it is not given much of importance in an operational context. An organisation has to deliberate on various factors while hiring manpower into their organisation, the inflow of talented manpower depends on various factors like the market conditions, availability of right resources, salary grid, marketing budget, company's image etc., but the most important beyond all these factors is inevitability a good team of skilled recruiters. A subpar recruiter would not only fail to deliver results but also spoil the company's image in the job seeker's community. It is mostly an unknown fact to various hiring managers that the recruiters also compromise while hiring resources on several occasions as part of the hiring plan. Though there is a high level of camaraderie between the hiring managers and the recruiters, on several occasions a recruiter could overlook the job specifications and deviate while identifying the right talent. There could be several reasons behind this but, if the hiring activity is botched up then the organisation would accumulate a pool of under qualified resources who would only be able to contribute towards the negative growth of the company and the after effects of this could be colossal few of the important are briefly mentioned below,

II. ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

If the work force does not deliver the desired results, the overall organisation goals and deliverables are effected severely. The top management is then compiled to spend more time in doing an introspection and controlling the factors that influence the hiring of these underperforming resources rather than looking forward towards the accomplishment of strategic plans. As a result of this the growth rate of the organisation would be effected.

Organisation Politics and Conflicts:

When the pressure on the under-performing resources increases, there could be rise in the organisational political scenario as these sub-par tend to blame the management for hiring them and not giving them a gliders path. It's a common tendency for employees to blame their managers to be biased towards other employees and this gives way to several conflicts within the team that leads in rise in organisation politics at various levels.

Employee Morale:

The morale in the team goes down when they observe that the new addition is a subpar resource. The discussion around the subject as to why the manager has added a wrong candidate gives rise to several questions amongst them and this leads to the lowering of levels of morale.

Team Performance:

The objectives of a team are achieved only when all the members in the team equally contribute towards the achievement of the goals. But if an under performer is not able to contribute to the pool, then performance levels of the team would go down. Though the team is adequately staffed the top management would brand them as under performers and the goal are not met.

Manager's Brand Image:

The image of the manager who is leading an underperforming team is always at stake. The leadership team of the organisation would always doubt the ability of the manager to deliver as the team which is staffed with subpar resources would always fail to deliver results on time.

Attrition:

A Harvard review points out that 80% of the attrition in an organisation occurs due to wrong hiring decisions. Once inside the system, when a subpar resource is not able to perform to a minimum qualifying levels, the team resists the acceptance of this new member as a part of them hence, these resources come under immense pressure from their managers to perform and this leads to them resigning from the services voluntarily. In several instances the management identifies all the underperforming resources and lets them go, in both the cases it's a loss to the organisation.

Hiring Costs:

Due to the fact that there is voluntary or involuntary attrition in the organisation due to various reasons involved towards hiring a wrong candidate, the hiring expenses of the organisation escalate. The cost involved in back filling the positions directly adds to the increase. It is estimated that the cost of replacing a bad hire could be five times the annual salary of the resource.

Brand Recruiter:

The Recruitment team is a major stake holder in the talent acquisition process for any organisation and when they tend to process an under-qualified resource into the hiring cycle their brand image within the organisation takes a major hit. The hiring managers would constantly blame them for doing a botched job. The element of confidence on the team is lost due to which a suspicious environment is created.

This research was conducted mainly to understand if there is a possibility for a recruiter to influence the hiring cycle and if so, what are the main reasons for a recruiter to deviate from the hiring objectives. It a little known fact to the hiring managers and the management of the organisation that even recruiters compromise while hiring talent and there could be various reasons behind this. This research paper is an account of the opinions collected from 63 HR professionals working in the corporate sectors across India. 63% of the sample collected has more than a decade of experience in hiring resources and 27% had an experience between 5 – 10 years. Each recruitment manager was given 10 popular reasons as to why a recruiter would botch the recruitment cycle and was asked to rank their preferences. (Fig -4)

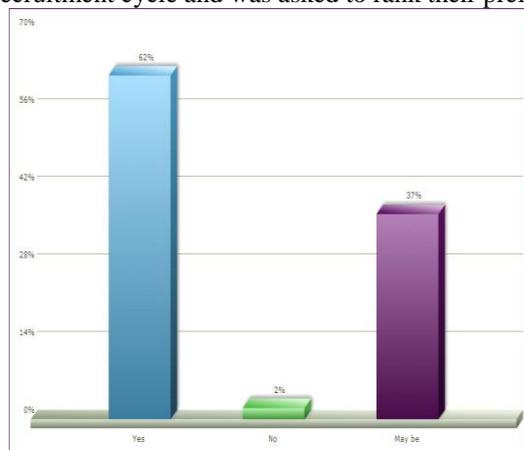
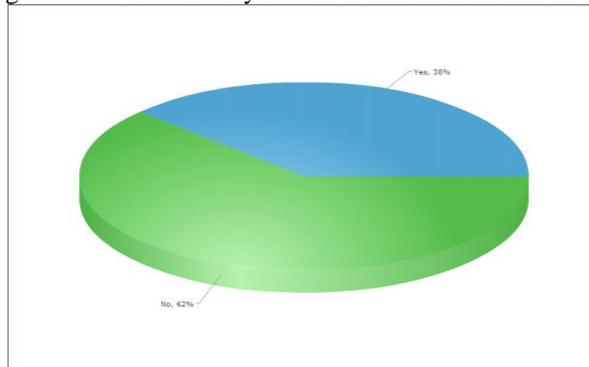


Fig – 1

As per the survey results 87% of the HR managers (fig-1) believed that if the recruiter who is the sentinel for hiring right talent for the organisations compromises while recruiting manpower, the organisational deliverables could also get effected. The hiring mantra has always been *Right candidate for the Right Job* and if the right candidate is not hired then there would be after effects. 62% of the sample believed that Recruiters at times do compromise while hiring talent and 37% of the sample were not sure that a recruiter could compromise. Only 2% cleared voted against the question hence it was evidently clear that yes, recruiters do compromise while hiring talent at times (fig-2) and this research paper brought out the real reasons as to why a recruiter could do a botched up job. 38% of the sample themselves have voted that they have compromised while hiring talent at some point of their career and this comes up as an big endorsement for the purpose behind this research. (Fig -3)

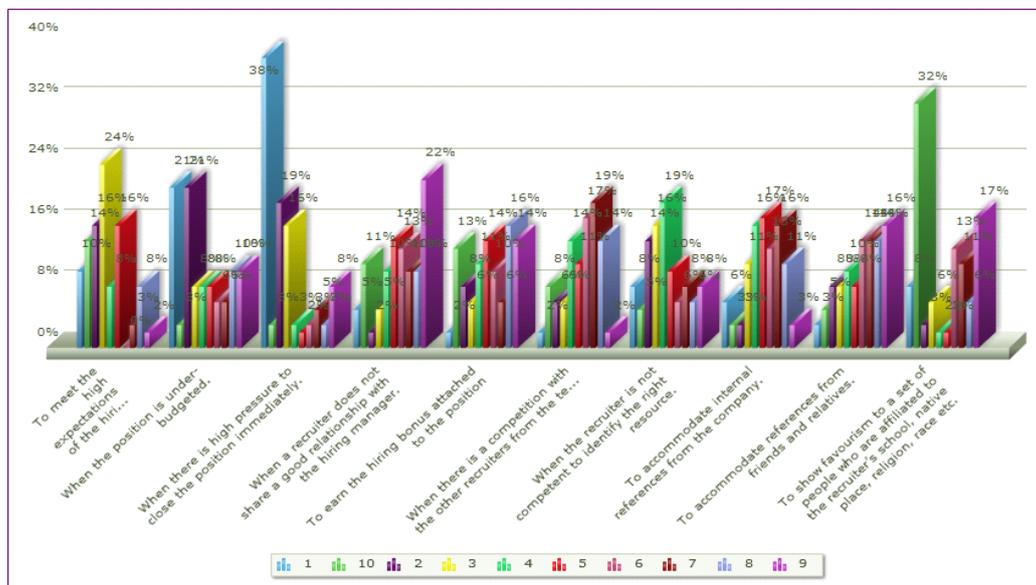
54% of the sample also believed that hiring managers do not have any specific interviewing method or they follow a process while interviewing potential job seekers, they seem to select candidates based on their gut feel. This mainly happens because the hiring managers are mostly not trained on the essential interviewing skills as mentioned in (1). The general belief has been that if you have been selected for a leadership role, you would know how to select the right candidate but unfortunately this is not true. 33% of the sample also felt the hiring managers seem to be biased while selecting candidates. There could be several reasons behind this that are out of the purview of this paper but yes, its essential for every organisation to understand that an hiring manager is also an equal stake holder along with the recruiter

in hiring manpower for the organisation as opined in (9). Selecting candidates based on gut feel is like betting on the player on the face value without not knowing their capabilities. Hence, unknowingly even the hiring manager would also add up to decision of hiring wrong candidates into the system.



(Fig -2)

The core of the research was to ascertain the reasons behind why a recruiter would compromise while hiring manpower for an organisation and the top reason that evolved through this study is that a recruiter compromises when he/she is under *high pressure to close a position immediately*. When an organisation has to hire talent on an aggressive mode or hire large numbers in a short span of time, it is for sure that the Talent acquisition team would be under tremendous pressure to deliver results and through this research we understand clearly that the recruiters may push in subpar resources into the hiring cycle due to the pressure on them to close the positions. The two reasons that were ranked second as part of the survey is *When the position was under budgeted* and *to meet the high expectations of the manager* the recruiters compromise with their work. Hiring the right candidate for the right job is something we understand but paying the right salary is also a strong reason for the potential job seekers to get attracted towards an organisation. There are various factors that are related around the budget allocation for a particular position but if the position is under-budgeted then recruiters would find it very tough to identify a suitable candidate and thus they tend to compromise on the quality to close the position. Another reason that was ranked second in the survey is, a recruiter considers a subpar resource when the expectations of the hiring manager is un-realistic. Contrary to the common belief that the recruiter is the person who hires manpower, the management has to understand and believe that, it is the organisation that is hiring talent and not the recruiter or the hiring manager and hence the skill or competency expectations from a job seeker has to be kept realistic as described in (11). Merely setting the bar high and chasing an un-realistic goal only exerts pressure on the TAG.



(Fig -3)

54% of the survey sample indicated the hiring managers recruit candidates based on their gut feel hence it is vital and essential for the hiring managers are abreast about the industry standards and they also understand what are the kind of resources the organisation can or cannot attract. Their camaraderie with the recruiter can be of a great help here but, by merely setting up high standards for the skill requirement they would not only be escalating the hiring expenses but they would create a situation for a recruiter to compromise on the hiring activity.

The third top reason that evolved as part of the survey indicates that a recruiter can overlook on the quality of the resources and hire an under-qualified person when they are not competent enough to identify the right talent. This gives

rise to an important question whether the recruiters are trained before they start interviewing the candidates? If yes, then to what extent? Is there a different kind of training that needs to be provided to recruiters for interviewing senior resources? If so who imparts this training?

Several organisations strongly believe that hiring candidates through internal references would not only help in curbing attrition levels but it would also increase loyalty amongst the employees as mentioned in (2). In line with this belief organisations have also rolled out very attractive employee referral schemes to motivate the existing employees for referring suitable candidates for the open position. The participants of the survey opined that the forth top reason for a recruiter to compromise at work is when he/she has to accommodate these internal references. Though the objective of employee referral scheme is to increase the resource pool, a recruiter gets pressure from various individuals within the system that includes the leadership team, peers, sub-ordinates etc., to consider their referral. In order to accommodate the referral requests and to maintain a political balance a recruiter is compelled to hire a under qualified resource for the organisation.

The reasons that were ranked as fifth and sixth top reason in the survey was related to favourism a recruiter could show to a group of people with whom they are associated with as opined in (5). Could be towards a job seeker who belongs to the same educational institutions from where the recruiter has graduated or individual from a particular society, race etc. as explained in (6) or may be a friend or a relative or their reference. However, this could be the case with several individuals in the corporate. Though spoken very discreetly favourism is rampantly existent in the corporate segment. Hence, this reason can be taken up in a more generalised status. However where there is an influential leadership that backs up thought and actions of a recruiter in these lines it might prove to be fatal for the organisation's brand image on a long run.

One of the reason which has also surfaced evidently in this survey is that a recruiter can also botch up the hiring process if his /her camaraderie with the hiring manager is not good. Though several hiring managers and HR leaders believe that the talent acquisition team only collects resumes and lines up candidates for interview they would be surprised to know that the flow of candidates can be easily be manoeuvred by the recruiters or the talent acquisition team. The seventh reason why a recruitment process is under mined by the recruiter is when they do not share a good relationship with the hiring manager. This could be again due to various factors but yes it does have an influence on the process.

III. CONCLUSION

It is evidently understood now that, a recruiter does influence the hiring process and the paper clearly underlines the facts and circumstances under which a recruiter could botch up the well planned job. The leadership team of the organisation has to understand that as the jobseeker's community could contact the company only through the talent acquisition group, a recruiter becomes a key and is the first point of contact towards hiring talent. Before deploying a recruiter on the job, they not only need to be trained on how to conduct an interview and sell job opportunities but they also need to be trained on how to handle work pressure and importance of having professional ethics. On the other hand the hiring managers and companies should develop realistic hiring plans that includes a salary grid that is on par or better than the industry standards. The degree of the skill or the competency expectation should be based on the resource availability in the market.

Based on the empirical data we have now understood that recruiters do botch up an hiring cycle but, when we closely examine the top three reasons that have evolved as part of the survey, we understand that it is none other than the organisation that compels a recruiter to hire a subpar resource. This could sound a bit shocking but that's the truth! When the hiring plans are unrealistic or when the requirements are under-budgeted or when the hiring manager's expectations are un-realistic a Recruiter is pushed to compromise with the situation and this creates a way for an under-qualified resource to enter the system. Hence, organisations before drawing any talent acquisition plan should thoroughly understand their strengths and weaknesses. The more realistic the hiring plan is the higher are their chances of acquiring the right talent. Undermining the importance of the hiring function or disparaging the role of a recruiter only shows their under preparedness or unrealistic approach towards the strategic goal.

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