

Can you really afford to spend 10 Hours a week on hiring activity?

Business decision makers within 86% of the UK's SMEs are spending up to *10 hours a week* on hiring related activities, new research commissioned by an online recruitment company has found.



The research reveals the frustrations that arise when general business decision makers find themselves in the driving seat of the hiring process. Over a third (39 per cent) of respondents believe that as a non-specialist, they do not have the right amount of time to dedicate to the recruitment process - 55 per cent believe that this can lead to the wrong hire being made.

Limited visibility of the process is noted as a frustration for over a fifth of

respondents (21 per cent), whilst 41 per cent say that they find it hard to find a quality candidate amidst a high volume of 'average' candidates. As a result of these issues, 23 per cent of those questioned are frustrated that candidates very quickly don't work out, meaning the hiring process needs to begin again.

However, it seems that an HR department is not always the solution to solve these issues. A quarter (25 per cent) said that frustrations arise because the HR department doesn't always have an in-depth grasp of the roles that they are hiring for.

Recruitment agencies exist to solve this problem, however choosing the wrong agency doesn't help. If the agency is good and finds someone who is right for the role and for your company and you hire them, great. A really good recruiter makes the whole process easy for the client and to an onlooker it may seem that they are earning their money for little effort. However the recruiters that constantly let you know how busy they are on your account are the ones that are *not* providing you with a value service!

The cost of working directly with a recruitment agency is often perceived to be prohibitive for smaller companies. However, the 'post and hope' approach of using a job board is a time intensive process that doesn't always get great results. The average time to hire via this traditional method is 60+ days for normal roles, much longer for senior roles, often the notice period alone at this level is 90 days. In most cases the need to hire is identified because the business is being stretched to the limit and the hire needs to be made as quickly as possible. But recruiting in haste, or having not been able to spend the required amount of time to find the best available candidate, can prove to be even more costly to your business.

Evaluate the cost of your time, the hiring/line managers time and the cost of placing an advert, take into account that no one can be in two places at one time. Time spent on recruiting is not being used on the day job!

If, on balance, you decide that you really should invest in a professional's help for your recruitment, you need to ensure that you get value for your money.

There are a number of things that you can do to make the right choice of recruitment agency for your needs, hiring people into your business is a big decision, a good hire will reflect well on your hard earned brand.

Here are 7 things that you should do:

- 1) Invest a couple of hours of your time at this stage, it will be a tiny fraction of the time you would spend on DIY recruitment.
- 2) Meet with the recruiter, invite them in to your place of business so that they can see, first hand, the environment in which the new hire will be working.
- 3) Introduce them to the team, especially the line manager that the role will report to.
- 4) Make sure you are meeting the actual person that will be responsible for resourcing the candidates for your role.
- 5) Spend some time at this stage making sure that you instruct the recruiter with your exact requirements for the role.
- 6) Ask what the agency process is, will they meet all candidates before recommending them for an interview? How will they communicate with you throughout the process?
- 7) Take as long as it takes to make sure you get the right person, if your agency is not providing you with the right quality of candidates ask them why?

And finally never underestimate the value of any soft benefits that you offer, the more *human* your company is towards its employees the more likely you are to be able to attract, and keep, good people. Your recruiter should be asking about benefits, incentives and anything that they should include in their discussions with candidates.