



Have you wondered how the recruiting model used by headhunters really works? ..And why it may be overdue for a change?

Let's unpack the headhunter recruiting model and identify three reasons why it needs a change, while at the same time emphasize that hiring people needs be conducted with a different approach than a commission or a transactional model. Then, I'll suggest some different questions that your business might ask a prospective recruiting partner.

Reason 1) What's in a Name?

Let's start at the beginning. The first thing that head hunter model greets you with is the name itself, "Headhunter".

If hiring the right talent is a critical part of a business's success and your business has leaders called Directors, CEO's, VP's and Managers, shouldn't we have something better than headhunter for the individual that your business trusts to bring great talent?

What do you think of when you hear the word headhunter?

Baseball defines headhunter as: "A pitcher who throws at the batter's head".

Wikipedia says it is: "A savage who cuts off the heads of his enemies"

Do these sound like something your business would pay for to attract great talent?

If we are going to think about a different approach, let's change the optics.

Reason 2) What's in it for You?

Since successful hiring needs to deliver value to the employer along with the candidate, shouldn't you the business leader or you the candidate feel that this model is designed to deliver value to you?

Who does the headhunter's business model serve?

The model is based on a straightforward commission fee scale. The more the employer agrees to pay the newly hired candidate during the first year, the more commission paid to the recruiter, just like a property listing.

However, the fallacy is that the

highest paid talent is not always the best fit for your business and this model rewards the headhunter for submitting the candidates who will drive the highest recruiting fee.

I am not here to challenge the commission fee business model. It works well.... for transactions and commodities (like property listings).

But when it comes to the hiring of people, isn't there a better model?

3) Does this model have alignment?

Simply put - The employer needs a great fit while the recruiter is looking for a commission. How can these goals match up?

Shouldn't the model align with the goals and objectives of the employer?

Shouldn't the model serve the employer as a trusted advisor?

Where does this model identify the candidate as being a cultural fit?

The model is so far out of alignment that your business could find itself in direct competition with your head-hunting recruiter.

What model makes sense where you are in competition with the person that your company is paying a fee to?

I'll explain: Let's assume that while using a headhunter, your business is also searching for talent. Not unusual.

This is where candidates find themselves caught between headhunting recruiters who spend more time "registering" the candidate as their candidate than they spend time discussing the hiring opportunity. The race of competition is for the headhunter to register the candidate before your business identifies the candidate through your own efforts.

Remember, the only way for the headhunter to earn their commission fee is for their candidate to be hired. Therefore, the emphasis becomes more about owning the candidate then about solving the business's challenges by hiring the right fit.

This commission model has moved recruiting into a transactional event. Hiring people is not transactional

because we are not a commodity or a widget or a property listing or certainly not human capital.

4) Is there a better way?

As a CEO or business leader, what could you ask a recruiting professional that might take this in a different direction?

Many employers ask the recruiter: "How do you find candidates?" Since the recruiter is representing your business, perhaps better questions might include examples such as:

- Explain how the business part of your recruiting model aligns with the success of my business?
- Show me examples of what you will say to prospective candidates as you are representing my company?
- How much time will you take understanding my organization and our culture?
- Talk me through how you will promote my company's job description to prospective candidates, how you will promote my company to prospective candidates and what you communicate when our company has declined to go further with a candidate?

In Summary:

- Wouldn't hiring models work best when there is more focus on human interaction, not more focus on a commodity?
- Let's remember that there is nothing more complex than the people who are in your organization. We need to think of hiring differently than the commodity model if we want a better outcome.
- Shouldn't the business model relationship between a recruiting expert and a business leader be designed for alignment, trust and goals in common?

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