

## **Headhunter Myths and other Bedtime Stories.**

**By JEFF BURRIDGE**

Most candidates do not understand how the executive search process and headhunters work. Most candidates think if they post their resume to the web, fax it to a recruiter or respond to a "job posting" and sit back the calls will come. Lots of calls and e-mail responses should bring lots of opportunity....right? *SO HOW HAS IT BEEN WORKING FOR YOU SO FAR?*

*ARE YOU GETTING DISILLUSIONED YET*

Lets look at some Headhunter reality:

Perception is reality:

- Recruiters need you, but you need them. Consider that they are the customer.
- Every candidate is convinced they are the "perfect candidate". Recruiters deal in reality.
- Companies pay recruiters to present candidates who match their requirements not yours.
- Companies hire candidates who have the right chemistry (50%), qualifications (30%) and experience (20%).
- Companies pay recruiters. Recruiters must first search for the right candidate for a job not the right job for a candidate.
- Recruiters do not have a drawer full of ideal jobs waiting for you. Timing is everything.

Recruiter will work hard for candidates however and present a candidate to numerous companies when the candidate:

- possesses good personal communication skill sets (*unfortunately we are not chemists*)

- possesses good skills and qualifications based on their number of years of experience
- Has a fairly consistent employment history and valid reasons for prior job changes
- is realistic about income required, title, relocation, etc.
- is sincere and motivated to make a change and accept a new opportunity (*not tire kicking*)
- is responsive & cooperative with the recruiter (*follows directions / communicates*)
- Contacts the recruiter within two hours of leaving the interview (*always*).
- is not working with a lot of other recruiters (*but don't put all your eggs in one basket*)
- is not mailing or e-mailing their resume directly to every company / job opening they can find. If you see a position that interests you contact your recruiter first. If they can't present you to the company they should let you know, then you can go it alone.
- is not posting themselves all over the internet for the world (and their current employer) to see

Remember, the worst thing a recruiter can ever hear about you is "*we already have his / her resume*" regardless of how they got it. The second worse thing is probably "the parole board has revoked your ..."

What can you do:

- When a recruiter calls, LISTEN
- When a recruiter calls be very responsive.
- Do not lie to a recruiter. Tell us where you have already applied, who else you are working with, etc.
- Never try to get a recruiter to submit you somewhere you tried to apply on your own and were turned down or just never received a response.
- If we ask you about your interest in a certain company and you have already submitted your resume to them let us know up front. Not doing so is the cardinal sin.