



How to Work Effectively With Recruiters

By: Linda Matias



“R-E-S-P-E-C-T / find out what it means to me” is a line made famous by Aretha Franklin, and one that recruiters have adopted as their mantra. This is probably because there is a love-hate relationship between candidates and recruiters. Specifically, candidates love what recruiters can do for them, but at the same time, aren’t fond of the fact that they need their services.

One can hardly blame candidates, since over the years recruiters have been branded as uncaring, money-hungry vultures who have their eyes set only on the bottom line. Whether there is a grain of truth to that belief or not, I can’t say for sure. However, what I do know is that recruiters have been, and will continue to be, a viable resource for candidates. For this reason, recruiters shouldn’t be dismissed, but instead appreciated for the role they play in the career services industry.

Many recruiters suggest that job seekers don’t fully understand what a recruiter’s function is in the job search process, and that this is where the lack of respect originates. In an effort to educate job seekers, below are some pointers that recruiters want every job seeker to know.

Respect what recruiters do. Although recruiters don’t work for you, the good ones will work with you. With a hiring company in mind, a recruiter will make recommendations on how you should change your resume, the way you interview and/or the way you dress. If this is the case, heed his or her advice. Recruiters have insider information on the specifications the hiring organization is searching for, and the clues they provide are based on that knowledge.

Respect what recruiters can’t do for you. The recruiter’s allegiance is to the hiring organization. Therefore, he or she is going to spend his/her time and resources on scouting a candidate that fits the hiring organization’s specifications, not on finding you a job. That’s why it is important to realize that recruiters are just one source of getting interviews. Your job search plan should include other methods of gaining employment such as networking, answering want ads and responding to Internet postings.



Respect the interview with a recruiter. Save your war stories for your local bartender. When you contact recruiters, be discriminating about the type of information you provide. A meeting with a recruiter is an interview. Don't allow the informality of the conversation to convince you otherwise. During a meeting with a recruiter you will be judged on your performance; therefore, be professional at all times.

Respect a recruiter's time. When a recruiter has recommended you for a position, that means he or she has invested time in your career; therefore, respect their time, return their phone calls, and provide them feedback on the company after any interview. Recruiters are especially interested in knowing your interest level, your thoughts about the interviewer, the run down of the interview process, and the next step agreed to by you and the company.

Respect a recruiter's reputation. Recruiters aren't just out to fill a job order. Their credibility is dependent on the caliber of candidates they send on interviews. As a result, recruiters look for candidates who know what they want, present themselves professionally, and are out to win job offers. When working with a recruiter, a partnership is formed; and in order for the relationship to be successful, there must be a mutual respect between the two of you. Recruiters want to work with candidates who want to work with them, not candidates who are having difficulty finding a job and want to be rescued. If you can effectively convey to a recruiter that you have a sincere interest in working with him or her, you'll find yourself in turn treated with respect.



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Recognized as a career expert, Linda Matias brings a wealth of experience to the career services field. She has been sought out for her knowledge of the employment market, outplacement, job search strategies, interview preparation, and resume writing, quoted a number of times in *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Newsday*, *Newsweek*, and *HR-esource.com*. She is president of CareerStrides and the National Resume Writers' Association.

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