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EMPLOYER Issues

“The Big Mo’ ”

Momentum as defined by Webster’s is: strength or force gained by motion or through the development of events. For our purposes, the interview process is a “development of events”. Creating and maintaining momentum throughout the interview process is critical to attracting and securing top candidates in today’s competitive market. Momentum or “The Big Mo’ ” as I frequently call it is a term widely used by sportscasters to describe the modification of energy between two parties in a sporting event or game. As a recruiter, we see both sides of the hiring process. Rather than have momentum shift from one participant to the other, we seek to have momentum or positive energy shared and exchanged by the participants, moving in unison with each other towards a common goal.

In the initial stages of the recruitment process, the responsibility for initiating momentum lies with the client employer. Once a candidate has been approached about the client employer’s opportunity and expressed interest in pursuing a discussion, the client employer must be very cognizant of moving the process forward in a very timely manner. Our suggested timeframe, bearing in mind that professionals have very busy schedules, is to schedule the first in-depth conversation within 48 hours of candidates’ expression of interest. This first conversation should be used by both the client employer and the candidate as an exploration of the needs and exchange of “technical” information about the opportunity and candidate’s respective background and experience. At the conclusion of the first meeting, the client employer is responsible for setting the stage for subsequent meetings maintaining positive momentum.

Again, barring scheduling concerns, the second, and more in-depth meeting, should take place no later than 7 days after the first discussion. Between the first and second meetings, part of the responsibility for positive momentum shifts to the candidate. The candidate should make, at the very least, verbal or written communication directly to the client employer expressing desire and interest in moving the process forward. Momentum moving into the second meeting should then be on an equal scale, each side sharing their burden. The second meeting gives both sides the opportunity to seek additional common ground on both a technical/skill based perspective, and a “chemistry” basis as well. Exchange of opinions and perspectives are critical here and honesty is the best policy for both sides. This is the stage where both candidate and employer should seek common ground personally and professionally. If that can be achieved momentum is maintained and the process moves forward. If it cannot, momentum comes to its natural conclusion.



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Pulling the Trigger: Positive momentum is at its most tenuous when both sides are ready to “pull the trigger”. Many employers make the mistake of letting momentum slip at this stage of the game. They feel that the candidate is suitably comfortable and interested in the opportunity so they can simply take their time in preparing and executing the formal offer process. Wrong. You see, the candidate is also “pulling the trigger”. Making the decision to interview for a new job is one thing, but now the candidate is faced with a decision: Move from the known to the unknown. That’s correct, the client employer has spent all this time making the candidate feel comfortable, wanted and even desired but they still must make the conscious choice from going from their current employer to you, the “unknown”.

That is why the client employer must execute here without flaw or delay. Momentum should be at its highest point, the candidate is at the point of no return where he overcomes his natural reluctance for change inherent in all humans. The candidate must mentally cross the bridge to the unknown by accepting a mutually agreeable offer of employment, verbally framed and presented by the client employer and reaffirmed in writing. Observant client employers can share in the reflection of potential hires gone awry from lack of momentum in the process. An otherwise exceptional candidate that somehow “slipped through the cracks” or was not “moved on” in a timely manner costs the company in the end as they are delayed in executing their business strategy. My advice to client employers: Be aware of “The Big Mo”

Keys to Positive Momentum...

- Timely responses to initial inquiries from top quality candidates.
- Direct involvement with key decision makers early on in the process.
- Direct communication between the parties beyond the interviews.
- Punctual presentation of Offer Letter and related material.

William (Bill) A. Werksman is the Managing Partner and Principal Shareholder in Resource Partners. A skilled professional recruiter and advocate for his clients, Bill has personally completed hundreds of searches while managing a staff of full time recruiters. With a diverse client base encompassing publicly and privately held companies, Bill’s experience and tenacity allow him to find and secure the critical candidates his clients’ desire and need for their continued growth and success. He is a frequent speaker to executive forums and career seminars throughout the western region as well as contributing author to many career focused web sites. Bill personally directs the firm’s pro bono search activities offering their services to charitable organizations, non-profit organizations, public cause or public service organizations, volunteer organizations, medical research and cure foundations, or other select causes or organizations.

