



FRUSTATED WITH YOUR JOB SEARCH!

I received this note from a friend & business associate who is currently hunting for a new senior sales management position. Karen wrote this after attending a networking meeting for job seekers a few years ago and coming away with the impression that many people believe all you have to do is give your resume to a headhunter and leave the rest of the task up to them. She provided this information to the networking group message board and sent a copy to me thinking it might help other job seekers. Karen focuses on how important it is for you to keep control over both the recruiter and the job search function.

Over the years I have worked with a lot of recruiters, when I was looking for a new career and when I was a senior manager looking to find qualified staff for my companies. Here are some important points that people need to keep in mind. As in every profession there are good and bad recruiters. But I have found even with the good ones – they don't work for you – they work for the client and that has to be at the forefront of your thought process or you will get frustrated.

Recruiters are all over you when the client likes you and no where to be found if they have a better candidate in front of a client. But this is a fact of their profession and you must not rely on them to find you a job. It isn't personal – they are paid by commission for placing a candidate. Being in sales myself, I don't like it when they fail to follow up with me, but I do understand.

A lot of the recruiters I have met are very, very young and green and haven't learned what it takes to succeed in their profession. I find some of the best recruiters are working for the boutiques companies. These professionals gain experience at the big firms and then often start their own specialized recruiting businesses. Sometimes you will get sick of them contacting you since they will often try to recommend you for positions that don't interest you. I found it best to bite your tongue and help them if you can since it's often an "I'll scratch your back" scenario. I keep a list of recruiters I have worked with over years when I was in a hiring position – they were the ones who have helped me the most when I was looking to make a career change.

The most successful way to find a job is through networking and contacting employers directly since most jobs are not posted through job boards or recruiters. Even with this, you have to be patient – it could take weeks or months to hear back and being a sales/marketing person – jobs are like leads for a product – you will only get 1 to 2 percent success rate based on contacts.

Recently, I landed a VP of Business Development role with a small telecom company in the GTA. I started interviewing in February for a Marketing role and I was the final candidate for the job, only to find out at the last minute they promoted someone from within the company to the position. Shortly, after being told they had hired internally I found out they had a business development position open. I contacted the president directly and notified him that I was fully qualified for this position.

Although I wanted this position – I still continued searching for other sales management jobs. I sent letters and marketing presentation to dozens of venture capital companies and recruiters who targeted the venture capital market. I had pretty much resigned myself I didn't have the job and even told the President (after 6 interviews) there wasn't any thing more that I could say to convince him I was the right person. Three weeks later I was offered the job and got everything I asked for. A couple people have said it – it does take perseverance.



In the meantime I started hearing back from all the letters I had sent out weeks before. I felt good because I knew even if I hadn't got that job – I had filled my job pipeline again. Another important thing I learned was its wrong to believe people don't hire over the summer. I had more responses from companies I targeted over the summer than I did during the previous months.

Here are a few key points that worked well for me.

1. I researched and targeted recruiters at search firms in my industry and contacted them and then sent a resume. It is good to talk to them directly so they don't call you about positions that aren't a fit for you. Yes some won't talk to you – but the good ones will. Find out the name of a specific recruiter and start up a relationship with them – don't just call the office. Look on their website and find the companies who specialize in your industry.
2. Join networking groups like Happen and LinkedIn and look for associations in your field. This is invaluable. Keep up with all your contacts.
3. Contact everyone you previously worked with or had relationship with (employer, vendor, partner, peer, competitor, friend, etc). I find most will go out of their way to let you know if they know of an open position. If they tell you about an opening ask if they would be prepared to make an introduction directly to the company or hiring person if they know them.
4. Don't sit and wait for recruiters to call or spend your time just looking at job boards. Create a "marketing package" about yourself (in the job world – you are the product) and depending on your comfort level contact the companies you have targeted. I looked at all the private hi-tech companies which had revenues of \$5-10 million. I sent a personal email directly to the President and then followed up with phone call after I knew they read it. My response rate was 1 to 2 percent.
5. Apply for all relevant positions on job boards that look like a fit even if it's a bit junior or senior for you qualifications. In one instance I found a company that was advertising a junior sales role but when they received my resume they contacted me to interview for a more senior position that was not being promoted.
6. If you are waiting for recruiters to get back to you don't; you'll just get frustrated. They are also sales people and it isn't personal. If you aren't a fit for them they won't be interested in you unless something comes up that will work out. I find the experienced more mature recruiters are more will get back to you since they know if they help you get a job you may be in a position to recommend their services in the future.
7. Don't give up. When you least expect it – it will happen.

I hope these ideals can help someone else as they have helped me over the years.

Karen Fischer

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Karen has a very impressive background in senior sales and business development management with a number of very well know multinational companies. Her expertise in creating and driving sales channels for organizations has been exceptional. I would like to thank Karen for letting us share this post with you.

AIM HIGHER!

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Robert J. Weese is managing partner of B2B Sales Connections, Canada's premier niche job board and career website for business to business sales professionals. He has a proven track record of success, with over 29 years of direct sales, management and executive level business to business experience. Before co-founding B2B Sales Connections, Robert gained marketing, sales and general management experience in the business technology and office equipment industries. He also has experience in broadcast advertising and journalism. Currently, Robert provides revenue-generating consulting services to sales organizations and sales professionals in the business to business marketplace. He is currently a member of the Ajax Pickering Board of Trade, as well as an Ambassador for the Toronto Board of Trade. For more information, please visit www.b2bsalesconnections.com , or contact Robert directly at rjweese@b2bsalesconnections.com or www.linkedin.com/in/bobweese.