

## **Partnering with Human Resources: Everyone is a Winner!**

A company's hiring success, as well as their reputation within the industry can be measured by the effectiveness of their Human Resources department. No longer is this department the administrative group that tracks and houses all company benefit information and decides what to serve at the company picnic. This dynamic and integral position has been elevated over the years as important employee policies have evolved and because Human Resources has become the front - line sales contact for the corporation. Whether the size of the corporation is small or large, all corporations have begun to value their Human Resource department. Because of their position in the hiring process we will explore and lend suggestions on establishing relationships and working with Human Resources rather than against them.

***Listen:*** Whether or not you are attempting to do business with a particular company as a recruiter or as an interested job applicant, you have been directed to the HR department. Pleasantly you introduce yourself, share your claim to fame and anxiously wait for their response and the next move. Take note - this is the most important step in the process: L-I-S-T-E-N. It might not be what you want to hear but this is where you are being measured as well as being instructed how to proceed in the process.

***Follow-up:*** As you were listening to your instructions and discovered what is expected in the introductory call; it is time to make another phone call to HR. This call will be to gather that important job order or determine if there is an actual job need. However, the HR manager, that you are attempting to impress is away at a seminar this week. Why didn't they tell me that last week? Stewing about this snag in events, you wonder whether or not you should "go around" HR ? If you ever want a chance to speak with and work with this HR department in the future, DO NOT go around the person you are trying to establish a relationship with (even if you know that there is a job available within the company).

***Patience:*** (Some of us have it and some of us don't!) You can't get the HR contact on the phone after leaving many voice mails, as you were instructed. Perhaps there is a legitimate reason why your call can't be addressed. This is not the time to take charge of the situation or become overly forceful. It is not appreciated by the HR department that you have the time to schedule their interviews, set up appointments or just drop by to meet with them. Be patient.

***Honesty:*** Reputations are built on honesty and truthfulness, why not start the relationship in a positive manner? As a representative of the hiring company, HR will share the company's job requirements, truthfully. As a recruiter or an interested candidate, you will gain no points and may even jeopardize your chances of building a future relationship if you embellish, over-emphasize or stretch the truth. Credibility begins here.

***Sincerity:*** Careers, professions, as well as the actual search are emotional; for everyone involved in the process. Because we cross over the "personal " line in relationship building, we can't overlook the fact that every step of the process is decided by a human being. Sharing a personal event or victory as you build a relationship builds trust and lends a sense of caring. Professional conduct is knowing what to keep to yourself and what information can be shared.

***Disappointment:*** We don't always win every time! HR might not be able to capture the "ideal candidate". The recruiter loses the fee to another recruiting firm. The candidate loses the job to the other candidate. We can't always win but we can understand how these decisions were arrived at and what to do differently the next time. We have learned along the way that we can all work together and that there will be another opportunity.

The value added benefit in the personnel business is communication and relationship building. Not really too much different than sales. Isn't selling yourself and your capabilities the hardest thing you'll ever have to do? Remember that the HR department is trained to look for "buying signs". They are the department that you "close" the sale with.