

Members Quarterly

Winter 2014 Edition

Ask the Expert

Coaching: The Move from Head Coach in the CFL to Corporate Recruiters

Lessons learned from professional football

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Q • As a former professional CFL Head Coach, what lessons and advice can you provide recruiters to enhance their performance?

A • Having the opportunity to do performance appraisals and coaching for a recruiting firm has been a rewarding and enlightening experience. Prior to working with the recruiters, I completed IPM's Professional Recruiter Accreditation Program. Although there are many similarities to coaching and recruiting, I felt it was important to not only speak the same language as recruiters, but also understand the demands and legalities of the profession. After completing the RPR training, I did some training with the firm's new recruiters. This exposure to professional recruiting left me with a genuine respect for the diverse and complex nature of the work that is required to be successful in this field.

As a professional football coach, my work has many facets that are the same as the recruitment business. In the area of candidate recruiting, coaches spend an inordinate amount of time recruiting players in a highly competitive field. In game planning, coaches analyze and verify data in many areas of the game. Before and during competition, coaches prepare the players for the many steps that will ensure peak performance. In a very transient business with high stress and turnover, coaches are relentless marketers for themselves and their assistants. But most importantly, coaches and recruiters are masters of working with people to ensure the best possible outcome for everyone. Furthermore, recruiting and coaching professional football are two of few professions where you are responsible to see the full completion of a competitive transaction.

As a consultant to a recruiting firm, I assist both recruiters and management. I provide assistance in the following areas:

Time Management

As a head football coach, I managed up to 100 people per day in season. We have very distinct periods in our day including practice, meetings, administrative duties, recruiting and evaluations to name just a few. Working with recruiters, I give them feedback on their time management. Marketing, candidate recruitment, research and administrative responsibilities are some of the areas we examine. I review their tracker reports so that we can identify where the gaps are between time and production.

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Marketing

Pro sports demands that coaches are creative and 'outside the box' thinkers. Furthermore, we are responsible to link data that supports production. We develop unique marketing ideas for recruiters, helping them in areas such the ratios between marketing time, activities and job orders. Evaluating marketing calls with recruiters based on set criteria has also given them useful feedback.

Goal Setting

Setting performance goals is a universal practice. Setting production goals with recruiters and the subsequent performance objectives to meet those goals has been exciting. If our goal is to earn "X" amount of dollars per year, how many placements will that represent? How many job orders will be needed? How many client meetings per week will that require? How many marketing calls will that require? It is interesting to not only set the overall goal but also all the corresponding objectives that support that production.

Unique Ideas

Coaches are always looking for new innovative ways to outperform the competition. Every coaching session that we have our recruiters bring a unique idea. They are encouraged to have and implement anything they think can give them an edge. I have seen exciting new marketing flow charts, geographic regions expand, new networking ideas and unique MPC calls to name a few.

Processes and follow-ups

Coaches and recruiters work in a high speed industry that demands precise communication and follow-up mechanisms. Sometimes it is email follow-up with a client to determine what the meaning of "start immediately" really means. In pro sports it may be finalizing a contract negotiation before a hard deadline. We work together to create a process or system that alleviates any chance of a miscommunication or expectations not being met.

Assisting recruiting firms or managers benefits both the individuals and their organizations in numerous ways.

It provides feedback on performance. Managers get immediate feedback that can facilitate training. The quickie reports a coach uses will communicate potential gaps that can be addressed.

It helps with the onboarding process. Coaches are very good when dealing with rookie players and their needs. Helpful follow-up can identify any -supplemental needs that may be required for optimal performance.

Coaches help build more productive teams. Coaches are ultimately good at improving the production of a team or team member. This is ultimately what I have tried to do in order to assist both the recruiter and the organization.

To all recruiters, you are a special group of professionals that perform a noble and necessary service to all industries!

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