The topic of burnout comes up frequently in my consulting work with recruiting and staffing firms. This is particularly true when the economy is in recession and the overall business environment is less than robust, although burnout can happen to anyone at anytime. Actually, it is rare that I hear about a staffing professional suffering from burnout when they are experiencing great success on the job. Therefore, although not set in concrete, it is relatively safe to state that burnout primarily (but not exclusively) happens to individuals who are struggling with the business.

In fact, from my observation of thousands of practitioners over the past 40 years, I can say with a fair degree of confidence that burnout is the primary cause of turnover for those individuals with more than one year in the business. Now, depending on how burnout is defined, this can be interpreted in several different ways.

What prompted me to write this article was an email I received recently from a recruiter with 15 years in the business. She asked me if I knew of anyone who specialized in providing a “quick cure for burnout” that did not entail “more hours on the phone.” This stimulated a rather in-depth exchange of emails.
Ignoring Employee Burnout Is Not An Option

This month’s cover article by Terry Petra is an eye-opener; one that should be read by every agency owner, manager, and team leader. Burnout may be one of those fashionable expressions describing everything from simple physical to the severe physical and emotional symptoms Terry describes in his article.

Most of us have experienced bouts of burnout even if we didn’t recognize it for what it was. Those periods of time when we just couldn’t seem to get going on the important work, and instead drifted with filing, sorting and “planning.” We may have felt angry for no reason. Mondays were dreaded, rather than anticipated; the joy we took in our work ebb.

Occupational burnout is most prevalent among those involved in human services, and disproportionately among high achievers. Besides the enormous pressure to produce among agency recruiters who must place to eat, there’s the constant rejection and, at the other end, the desperate pleas for help by the unemployed and unhapy others.

As Terry points out, this combination is lethal to newbies. While newbie turnover carries its own costs, the drop off in production of a veteran can be disastrous. Since almost 8-in-10 agencies have fewer than five workers, the loss of one person’s production is an immediate hit. What’s more, that person’s feelings of irritability, unhappiness and other social dysfunction can quickly infect the entire team.

When you first notice a change in a producer’s behavior, that’s the time to intervene; burnout festers if nothing changes. There are plenty of resources to help you and your workers identify the symptoms of burnout and deal with it. Just don’t ignore it.

John Zappe, Editor – The Fordyce Letter
5 Ways to Keep Counter-Offer at Bay

Dear Barbara:

I’ve recently lost four placements because my candidates accepted counter-offers. Three of them accepted a counter-offer more than eight weeks after they started. I cover the topic of counter-offer immediately after I extend an offer and email an article about the negative impact of accepting a counter-offer. Do you have any other suggestions how to prevent this from happening again?

Danielle B. – Dallas, TX

Dear Danielle:

The following are five solutions which will drastically reduce counter-offers.

1. When you are interviewing a candidate and want to uncover their real reason for talking to you, ask them the following question: “If you were your boss, give me five changes you would make.” This question uncovers the real reason they are contemplating a career move. If the only changes they list are money and advancement, they will accept a counter-offer. You need to suggest they meet with their employer and attempt to obtain their next raise and promotion. If they don’t get the raise and promotion, you have a viable candidate.

2. Cover the topic of counter-offer in your initial interview. You will be amazed how many candidates will admit they would accept a counter-offer if one was extended. You need to walk away and surface another candidate.

3. If the candidate insists they will not accept a counter-offer if one was extended, ask them to give you the reason why (in their words). Draw a square on your application form and write down verbatim what they say. When a counter-offer is extended, you read them their own words. This brings them back to the other reasons they were contemplating a change, which cannot be solved by a promotion and raise.

4. Always discuss the lack of trust issue. They might forgive the fact that you were out interviewing with other companies, but they never forget. When another opportunity becomes available in the company will they offer it to you or someone they know has been 100% loyal to them?

5. Follow-up, follow-up and follow-up. Your job begins after the candidate accepts the offer. Walk them through their resignation, give them samples of resignation letters and have them fill out tax papers or benefit papers before their start date to align them to your client’s company. If at all possible have their new boss take them to lunch prior to their start date.

The new trend in counter-offers is not an immediate counter-offer, but one that happens on day 13 of a two week resignation or 30 days after the person starts their new job. We have seen counter-offers being extended 6 months after a person leaves, because they have not found a replacement. You must mentor and guide this new employee through their first year with the company. You have to become their trusted adviser so you can uncover any problem areas.

Barbara J. Bruno, CPC, CTS

Help the 'Least Placeables' This Way

Dear Beverly:

I had a client blatantly discriminate against one of my candidates during an interview. The next thing I know we are being audited by the Department of Labor. We treat all our candidates the same and were found to be compliant. However, they suggested that we should have done more to help this candidate find employment. I explained that our clients will only pay fees for candidates who are in our area of specialization which is IT, and have the credentials, experience, and certifications they will hire.

The DOL rep felt we should be doing more to help everyone who sends us a resume. I remember you talking about providing the people we don’t place or hire, with a resource. Can you elaborate what you do, which cannot be solved by a promotion, assistance, they now consider you their free careers consultant. Surveys have proven that most recruiters spend 60-90 minutes daily taking incoming calls and providing free advice for individuals they will never place in a job, contract or assignment. This is one of your greatest time wasters.

The fact that we only place 5% of the candidates we attract has bothered me for years which is why I created a career portal and now help 100% of the job seekers we attract. You need to provide candidates with resources they can use to help themselves. If you want to review a career portal go to www.myjobsearchresources.com and register as a job seeker. You could set up a customized career portal in less than 30 minutes and it will appear you have created this resource for them. This can be done by going to www.happycandidates.com.

Once you review our career portal, you could also create something similar or at least begin to provide resources that can assist the candidate you won’t place. In this candidate driven market, it has never been more important to improve the overall candidate experience. This is also the right thing to do.

Barbara J. Bruno, CPC, CTS
How to Get Your Client to Work With You

Dear Barbara:

I’ve had it with clients who negotiate our fee after the fact, take forever to hire and change the specs of jobs when we have already put hours in working their search. How do we educate them and get them to realize it is not easy to find qualified people and most of them are getting more than one offer before our clients even extend their offer. Then they are angry with us when our candidates are no longer available.

Dan F. – Austin, TX

Dear Dan:

You can’t control what your clients do, but you can change the way you interact with them. It is important to realize the importance of always focusing on the WIIFM (What’s In It For Me) of your client. If they understand they are losing top talent, they will make changes.

Here are some steps you need to take:

1. Provide your clients with written expectations. What they can expect from you and what you need from them in order to attract the talent they will hire.
2. Obtain interview times when you write your searches and have the name of an alternate person who can book interviews, if your client is not available.
3. Request an exact target date to hire and stop writing down ASAP, yesterday or immediately.
4. Identify the problems that exist as a result of this job being open. If there is no problem, there is no urgency to hire.
5. Send a copy of your order to everyone in the hiring process. Over 50% of our clients make major revisions after they read our documentation. Often the actual hiring authority wants to replicate additional skills or talents that the most recent person in the job brought to the table. Unfortunately, we are often sent the requisition the company used before the most recent hire.

If HR will not allow you to send a copy to everyone in the hiring process, ask them to have everyone sign off. When they see the major changes being made – they will appreciate your request. This should be included in your list of expectations.

If you have worked three orders with no results and did submit great candidates, you may decide to request an engagement fee before you work on another order.

Barbara J. Bruno, CPC, CTS

Facing a challenge? Need advice. Barb Bruno is ready to answer your toughest questions. Email her here.

Barb Bruno, CPC, CTS, is one of the most trusted experts, speakers, and trainers in the staffing and recruiting professions. If you want to receive free training articles from Barb, sign up for her NO BS Newsletter! Barb has spent the last 20 years helping owners, managers, and recruiters increase their sales, profits, and income. Her Top Producer Tutor web-based training program jumpstarts new hires and takes experienced recruiters to their next level of production. If you’d like to contact Barb, call 219-663-9609 or email her at support@staffingandrecruiting.com. If you enjoy Barb’s training, join her Premiere Coaching Club.

EDITORS NOTE:
For more suggestions, see Gary Stauble’s 2-Minute Coaching column on page 10.

RETIREE RESTARTING: A PROFESSIONAL ENCORE FOR BABY BOOMERS

Have you heard about retiree restaffing yet? With an entire generation of mature American workers reaching retirement age, this contract staffing practice is becoming commonplace — and necessary. Even giants like Proctor & Gamble and General Mills are turning to retiree restaffing to fill the gaps left by the departure of their most experienced and knowledgeable leaders.

In this article, we’ll explore the reasons behind the growth of this trend and how it will soon impact clients, candidates, and recruiters alike.

Baby Boomers and the Imminent Brain Drain

In the next few years, companies will be hit hard by “the largest occurrence of brain drain the US workforce has ever seen,” according to Staffing Industry Analysts. What do we mean? Consider the following facts:

1. Baby Boomers (the generation born between 1946 and 1964) today make up only 24% of the total US population, but they account for 24% of the workforce.
2. 56% of Boomers held leadership positions in their companies, according to a 2008 AARP survey.
3. Full retirement age, as determined by the Social Security Administration (SSA), is 66 rising to 67 for the Boomer generation.
4. By 2029, all Baby Boomers will be 65 or older.
5. By 2020, 50% of the workforce will be made up of Millennials.

The US workforce is undergoing a fundamental shift, and quickly. Baby Boomers, many with decades of experience in their career industries, will be leaving the workforce in droves as they hit retirement age. At the same time, Millennials will make up the majority

(Cont’d on page 8)
of the workforce and will find themselves lacking mentors to pass on valuable industry knowledge.

**How Will Companies Be Affected?**

The imminent brain drain could spell disaster for many companies; 62% of employers at Fortune 1000 companies believe retirements will result in skilled labor shortages over the next 5 years. Despite this, only 19-37% of employers have taken action to prevent Baby Boomer brain drain within their companies.

Since the overwhelming majority of employers are making no plans, companies will be faced with a major skills crisis very soon. While this is bad news for them, it is great news for recruiters.

**What About Recruiters?**

Now is the time to start building your stable of skilled, experienced candidates, either retired or soon-to-be-retired. When your phone starts ringing off the hook with requests for seasoned talent to fill the gaps left by retirees, you will be ready and able to offer these candidates back to them — on a contract basis.

While companies need these workers, both for their skills and for their ability to mentor younger employees, they are faced with certain limitations due to Affordable Care Act considerations, pension plan limits, and other reasons. Contract staffing is the perfect solution. To make this part effortless, you can outsource to a backoffice service like Top Echelon Contracting (TEC), which will become the employer of record for the W-2 contractors.

**Baby Boomers in Retirement: Prime Candidates for Contracting**

For a variety of reasons, 54% of workers over 60 will end up back at work on a part- or full-time basis after retiring, according to a 2015 CareerBuilder survey. With their skills and experience being highly in-demand and their own need for flexibility and health benefits, these are prime candidates to contract through an ACA-compliant backoffice.

For a number of current or soon-to-be retirees, retirement may not be turning out the way they envisioned. Whether due to investment portfolios that took a hit in 2008 or other unanticipated financial hardships, many struggle to make ends meet in retirement. Of the workers aged 60 and older who are delaying full retirement, 78% cite their household financial situation and 60% cite the need for health insurance and benefits as their reason.

Even for those pensioners whose financial situations are comfortable, retirement doesn’t always deliver enough of the mental stimulation and satisfaction that working life provided.

**Top Industries for Retiree Restaffing**

Experts agree that the brain drain will be experienced most acutely in knowledge-intensive industries, making those same industries ideal for contracting retirees. Top examples include:

- Finance
- Engineering/Manufacturing
- Information Technology
- Insurance (The average age in this industry is late 50’s.)

However, management and other leadership positions in every industry are going to be affected by the brain drain, thanks to the large percentage of Baby Boomers in those roles.

**Retiree Restaffing: How Are Social Security Benefits Handled?**

For those Baby Boomers who have retired or semi-retired, how will working on contract impact their Social Security (SS) benefits? Many may not realize that they can receive Social Security retirement benefits and work at the same time. Several potential scenarios exist.

- **Scenario 1:** You are 66 or older, receiving full SS benefits, AND you are making any amount of income. Benefits are not affected.
- **Scenario 2:** You are between ages 62 and 65, receiving early SS benefits, AND you make less than the 2015 income limit of $15,720. Benefits are not affected.
- **Scenario 3:** You are between ages 62 and 65, receiving early SS benefits, AND you make more than the 2015 income limit of $15,720. Essentially, the Social Security Administration (SSA) will deduct $1.00 from your benefit payment for every $2.00 earned above the annual limit. BUT monthly benefit amounts will be higher upon reaching full retirement age because your recalculated monthly amount will give you credit for unreceived benefits.

**Note:** This will not, on average, reduce your total lifetime value of benefits. In fact, benefits may actually increase, since you will be continuing to pay Social Security taxes on earnings as long as you work. The SSA will check yearly to see if your additional earnings will increase your monthly benefit amount and adjust it accordingly. (TFL (back to TDC)

This article is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal or financial advice.

Debbie Fledderjohann is president of Top Echelon Contracting, Inc., the recruiter’s back-office solution. The company was founded in 1992 and places technical, professional, and healthcare contractors in 49 states. Top Echelon Contracting helps recruiters make contract placements and handles all of the legal, financial, and administrative details. They become the legal employer and take care of the employee paperwork, legal contracts, time sheet collection, payroll processing, payroll funding, tax withholding, benefits, workers’ compensation coverage, invoicing, collections, background checks, etc.
1. Rigorously qualify all searches before committing.

- I once heard from a $1 million producer that for every 15 job orders he wrote, only 2-3 of them would be worthy of a full search. Your standard may not be this tight but be sure you’re not investing time with tire kickers. Top performing recruiters are at peace with the idea that they can’t place every candidate and they can’t fill every job order.

- You should have clear standards for who you will and will not work with before starting the search. For example, you may only work on jobs with either an exclusive, a retainer or when you schedule interview times in advance. Or you might only work on positions where you have direct hiring authority contact. If a client is not able to come up to one of your standards, you can still work the search if you choose to, but only if the client is very cooperative.

- Managers: Require rookies to get your permission to work a search until they prove you can still come up to one of your standards, you can still work the search if you choose to, but only if the client is very cooperative.

2. Have a system for defining search quality.

- Label each contingency search as an A, B, or C. An “A” must have: Cooperation, urgency & marketability. An “A” search warrants both a database search as well as original research. A “B” is missing one of the above 3 components and a “C” is missing 2 or more. A “B” level search warrants a database search only and a “C” does not warrant any effort at all.

3. Tell your clients why it is in their interest to give you timely feedback.

- Set the tone: Your clients will treat you the way you teach them to treat you. Pre-close the issue of timely feedback in advance and be sure to highlight the benefits for them.

Here is an example of what you might say:

“We want to fill this position with the best person available and do the best job that we can on your behalf. In order to do that, we are going to need your cooperation and timely feedback to let us know when we are on target and also when we are missing the mark. We give the highest priority to clients who give us timely feedback.

“Our request is that we would hear from you within 24 hours after a call or submitting a new candidate. This allows us to keep your search moving at full speed. Is this workable for you?”

- See your clients as your peers; treat them with respect but not awe.

- Generally if you have urgency, you will get timely feedback. Only work with people who want the position filled as much (or more) than you do.

4. Talk to your clients directly about any lack of feedback.

- Remind them of what schedule they committed to if they flake out. Re-close: “The clients who get the full focus of my team are those who provide us with timely feedback. I want you to be at the top of our list.”

- If they are not responding, be clear on the fact that the search is on hold until you hear back.

- Let them know their decision making and timeline are being observed by the candidate.

- Make two calls then send one fax (unlike email, a fax is a physical object that will most likely be placed right on their desk).

- If you’ve tried all this and you are still not getting what you need, move on for now but circle back every so often to see if things have changed. A flaky client today can become a stable client tomorrow if they realize that you’re a pro who deserves respect and requires feedback in order to invest your time in their searches.

5. Ask your clients for concrete commitments.

- Get interview times in advance. This tests your client’s urgency and also motivates you to take immediate action.

- Add a “client responsibilities” section to your agreement letter. Be sure to also add “Search Firm Responsibilities.” Example:

**Search Firm Responsibilities:**

“Search Associates shall act at all times in an attentive, ethical manner so as to represent ABC Corp with the utmost concern for its interests, goals, and image with candidates, competitors and the general public. Search Associates will provide ABC Corp with timely feedback on the search efforts and results. Search Associates will comply with all EEOC guidelines.”

**Client Responsibilities**

“ABC Corp agrees to fully and expeditiously consider all candidates presented by Search Associates and to interview qualified ones. ABC Corp agrees not to change the job specifications, reject qualified candidates or delay the hiring process in any way without the prior written consent of Search Associates. ABC Corp agrees to provide feedback to Search Associates on presented resumes or completed interviews within 48 hours.”

- Get exclusives or retainers from your clients to ensure they are motivated to communicate.

- Get a small engagement fee ($5,000 is often easier to get than a retainer) if your main reason is to lock in exclusivity and test the client’s motivation.

- Schedule follow-up calls while your client is on the phone with you if communication has been an issue. TFL (Back to TOC)

Gary Stauble believes you should work hard and play harder. He assists owners and their teams in implementing leading edge strategies that create the biggest impact with the minimum effective dose of effort. You can download his complimentary report entitled “$1 Million Time Management” on his website. In the report, you’ll learn 9 time management secrets of a $1 million producer. Get your complimentary copy now at www.TheRecruitingLab.com.
The Lies We Tell OURSELVES  
(and why they hurt only us)

By Debby Millhouse CPC, CTS, CSP

When we think about the qualities we most admire in others, usually at the top of the list are things like integrity, honesty and sincerity — all different ways of describing authenticity. The qualities we despise include dishonesty, unscrupulous behavior, and corruption. Why then is it we are so often guilty of being less than completely honest with ourselves when it comes to our own work practices? When we lie to ourselves we employ some kind of misguided effort to mask our shortcomings or overcompensate for our fears of failures, but as the familiar adage states: “Oh what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive.” Time for a little self-reflection: are you just having conversations with clients or building relationships? Are you just having conversations with clients or building relationships? Calling and conversing about prospective and active clients. They will each have their own specific purpose, objectives and goals.

“Setting goals is a waste of time and doesn’t work for me.”

Really? These are the same people who also don’t believe in accountability. The research backing the concepts of goal setting, and even literally writing goals down, is overwhelming.

“If I cut my fees, I’ll get more deals.”

This one just drives me up the wall. Of course we need to be competitive, but if your immediate fallback position is to start slashing fees, you are not even trying. There are some clients who will always choose the lowest price, period. I really have little time for that mindset and usually won’t even bother with them. However, most customers are waiting for you to convince them your higher price is worth it. What makes working with you so much better than your lower-priced competition? How does it save them money in the long run? Are you just having conversations with clients or building relationships with them? Decide right now that you are worth the money you are charging and be prepared to explain why — in ways they cannot refute.

Customers are waiting for you to convince them your price is worth it

“Working LinkedIn works much better than calling.”

Statistically, calling doubles your results. I’m not saying resources like LinkedIn don’t have their place. They can definitely bring value to your overall success plan. However, those who don’t make calls and connect with people are either pathetically lazy or just too afraid to. Neither is an acceptable excuse. Studies show that 80% of sales come after five or more calls to the same customer, yet almost half of all sales people make only one call, and another 25% stop after the second call. At the end of the day, success in life and career is about making connections and building relationships. Calling and conversing with people is still crucial in sales and recruiting.

“I keep all my notes in my head.”

Unless you’re like Marilu Henner and suffer from hyperthymesia, this simply isn’t true and frankly, impossible. Success in sales, and especially recruiting, requires a comprehensive game plan. You need to obtain detailed information about prospective and active clients. They will each have their own specific purpose, objectives and goals. You can’t possibly keep all of this in your head and with the amazing technology we have today, there’s certainly no need to even try. Create a plan for success and follow it. You’ll never find a truly successful person who just wings it.

“The Lies We Tell Ourselves (and why they hurt only us)”

By Debby Millhouse CPC, CTS, CSP

When we think about the qualities we most admire in others, usually at the top of the list are things like integrity, honesty and sincerity — all different ways of describing authenticity. The qualities we despise include dishonesty, unscrupulous behavior, and corruption. Why then is it we are so often guilty of being less than completely honest with ourselves when it comes to our own work practices? When we lie to ourselves we employ some kind of misguided effort to mask our shortcomings or overcompensate for our fears of failures, but as the familiar adage states: “Oh what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive.” Time for a little self-reflection: are you just having conversations with clients or building relationships? Calling and conversing about prospective and active clients. They will each have their own specific purpose, objectives and goals.

“Setting goals is a waste of time and doesn’t work for me.”

Really? These are the same people who also don’t believe in accountability. The research backing the concepts of goal setting, and even literally writing goals down, is overwhelming. If you really believe goal setting is pointless, then I challenge you to put your ego aside for a moment, write down some specific goals and post them in your work area. Look at them every morning and watch how production rises.

Customers are waiting for you to convince them your price is worth it

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Unless you’re like Marilu Henner and suffer from hyperthymesia, this simply isn’t true and frankly, impossible. Success in sales, and especially recruiting, requires a comprehensive game plan. You need to obtain detailed information about prospective and active clients. They will each have their own specific purpose, objectives and goals. You can’t possibly keep all of this in your head and with the amazing technology we have today, there’s certainly no need to even try. Create a plan for success and follow it. You’ll never find a truly successful person who just wings it.

“Hey, a maybe is better than a no!”

No it’s not. Actually maybe is the worst answer. Trying to sell against a maybe will drive you crazy. I know it does me. Maybe only strings you along and waste your time. Go for a yes or no and then move on.

“I just need a little time to gear back up.”

I’ve watched recruiters waste an entire day “gearing up” and working out their strategy and big game plan. They don’t work here any longer, but I’ve watched them do it. Seriously, if your plan takes longer than an hour, you are hiding behind your planning.

Yes, I’ve already stressed the importance of having a plan, but the vast majority of your day has to be spent immersing yourself in the game. Figure it out and get moving. Get out there and recruit. That’s where the money is.

If you can’t admit to telling yourself at least one of these, then you really do have a problem. If you suddenly realize you tell yourself many of these — that’s okay. The fact that you recognize it means you can quickly make changes and start a new diet of honest and productive self-talk. Being honest with yourself is crucial to self-improvement and overcoming delusional thinking. It’s painful for sure, but it’s the only road to long-term success and happiness. I wish you both, TFL. (Back to TOC)  

Debby Millhouse is the owner and CEO of CEO Inc. Founded in 1994, CEO Inc. is an award-winning, full-service recruiting and business resources firm offering direct hire placement, temporary staffing, and human capital services. Honors include being named as one of the Top 25 Charlotte Business Journal Best Places to Work for multiple years, one of the 2013 Fastest-Growing U.S. Staffing Firms by Staffing Industry Analysts, and the Best Staffing Firm in the 2014 Charlotte Observer Reader’s Choice Awards. For more information, visit www.ceoinc.com or call 704-372-4701.
A One-Page Summary Will Make Your Candidate Stand Out

By Debra Wheatman

Gone are the days when hiring managers will give you time on the phone to present a candidate. In today’s world, if you call a hiring manager or HR manager, you’ll likely hear, “Just email me the resume.” If you rely solely on sending a resume, you are missing the chance to pitch your top candidates. You want to share what makes your candidate unique and how they do more than fill the basic qualifications.

Know the Requirements

The starting place is to understand your client’s needs, including the key selection criteria and work environment. Only then can you find a good fit. Interview every candidate before you present the candidate to your client — no exception. That is the best way to determine if they are qualified for the position and if they are a strong candidate. Are they a good communicator? Do they interview well? Will they fit into the company culture? Also, ask the candidates what makes your candidate unique and how they do more than fill the basic qualifications.

Create a Candidate Summary

The candidate summary is a one-page, easy-to-read document that presents your candidate as the candidate to interview for the job. This is a depiction of the candidate’s professional brand and how they will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary does not replace the resume. These are the elements of an effective candidate summary:

- Brief statement of why the candidate is looking for a new job (or open to making a change).
- Quick list of major job skills and areas of expertise. Skip the soft skills and vague characteristics such as “strong team building skills” and “highly motivated.”
- A word about those soft skills. I maintain that soft skills are expected in all interactions and stating these things seems trite. Perhaps they are worthy of mention in a cover letter on a very limited basis. I don’t believe they bear referencing elsewhere when a candidate can use the space to highlight how he or she would solve a significant issue for a company, which would be a better use of time and space and yield stronger results from the perspective of securing an interview.
- A bulleted list of recent, relevant accomplishments. This can include awards and media coverage. When listing a major initiative, include the outcome with measured results.
- Short quotes of praise from respected references, including past managers. Endorsements on LinkedIn can be a great resource. Not all candidates will have access to endorsements.
- A statement of the candidate’s availability to interview, to start work, and in some cases the ability to relocate.

A good headline will draw the reader to the top of your one-page candidate summary. A strong presentation will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary. The summary will fill the needs of your client. The resume is an addendum to that one-page summary.
and required me to quantify my perspective on this all-important topic.

Therefore, we will consider the three categories of burnout, their causes and the cures that are most effective for dealing with them.

**Physical Burnout**

This can best be described as the 24/7 syndrome and can afflict even the most successful practitioner. The individuals who suffer from this form of burnout are virtually never able to separate themselves from their work. Long hours and no days off generally lead to an unhealthy living pattern that encompasses everything from a poor diet, lack of exercise, deteriorating personal relationships, sleepless nights, and an overall loss of energy and motivation. In some instances, physical burnout may be caused by disease or extended illness. Bottom line, the individual no longer possesses the physical strength necessary to continue their work at an effective level.

The cure for physical burnout, in addition to a vacation and scheduled weekly time off may include having diagnostic testing completed by a physician or clinic in order to establish physiological parameters and appropriate treatment options. Counseling, personal trainers, dieticians, and physical therapy may be needed in order to help change the workaholic pattern. Without a basic change to the manner in which the person approaches their life, physical burnout will keep repeating itself while unnecessarily shortening a successful career.

If you have an interest in learning more about how to “balance your life” and prevent physical burnout, I strongly recommend that you read *Life Matters* by A. Roger Merrill and Rebecca R. Merrill. This book should be on every professional’s must read list.

**Emotional Burnout**

With this form of burnout, the individual’s emotional well runs dry and they no longer can find the enthusiasm and motivation necessary to meet the daily challenges of the job. The only option that seems reasonable to them is to just give up and quit. Emotional burnout can have many causes including personal challenges like chronic pain or illness, loss of a loved one, divorce, or any one of a variety of addictions. Symptoms include low self-esteem, self-doubt, insecurity, compulsive worrying, self-induced stress and a general sense of helplessness. Together, these symptoms needlessly consume the individual’s emotional power at a rate that many times exceed the psyche’s ability to replenish it. This person really needs help.

The best cure for emotional burnout, regardless of the cause, is outside intervention by a qualified professional or group that possesses the necessary counseling, therapeutic and/or spiritual skills required to assist the individual in solving the problem. The causes of emotional burnout generally run deep within the person. Thus, most cures will require a major commitment of time, effort and resources from both the individual as well as their personal support network. Stepping away from the business may very well be necessary before any significant improvement can be realized.

Although both physical and emotional burnout occur with a certain level of regularity in our industry, they probably represent no more than 10% of the turnover that is blamed on burnout. By far, the most pervasive form of burnout that exists in the staffing industry is no-growth burnout.

**No-Growth Burnout**

This form of burnout can afflict both the experienced professional as well as those new to our industry. The symptoms mirror those of emotional burnout, particularly the general sense of helplessness. The progression of no-growth burnout fits a defined pattern that usually begins with poor or nonexistent initial training. The rookie may be exposed to books, CDs, videos and tapes that are full of useful information. However, they do not actually learn and master the basic skill sets necessary to be successful. They cannot transfer the knowledge into an effectively consistent application phase. Since repetition is the key to learning, the lack of an effective application phase dramatically diminishes the learning process. At best the result is a novice practitioner who may achieve a limited amount of success but is incapable of sustaining it. Thus, they become frustrated, disheartened, lose their motivation and, in the final stages, succumb to a general apathy that is almost impossible to reverse. In this situation, assuming a proper hire in the first place, the manager is generally at fault.

Basic skill sets are not learned merely from listening and watching. There is knowledge acquisition and there is knowledge application. In the area of training, most managers struggle with the knowledge application phase. Once the knowledge has been provided (best if provided in a structured progression format), the manager or trainer needs to carefully guide the trainee through a process of action, critique, and repetition until they are relatively certain the individual is fundamentally sound and conceptually secure in their ability to execute that particular skill set. This is where real learning takes place, in the action and repetition steps.
I look for wisdom anywhere I can find it.

Last week, wisdom showed itself in the most unlikely of places — the local sub shop. Up on the wall, for all to see, was a small sign that said, “The gap between more and enough never closes.” As I munched on my sandwich, I mulled over the eloquent simplicity of this quotation. By the time I finished the last bite, I knew I had to write a column.

As recruiters and as consumers generally, there is a hunger (pun intended) for us to achieve more and more. We are addicted to success and fail to see its true cost. Each placement is a rung on a ladder that has no end. We climb and climb, and when we think we are done, we find we need to climb some more.

If we tie our personal happiness only to our business successes, we will always fall short because we can’t ever close that gap between “more” and “enough.” Many self-important recruiters bark at you to “be a million dollar biller,” “close at any cost,” or “call till your fingers bleed.” They mistakenly tie self-worth to a bank statement as being the only barometer of happiness. If your perspective differs, they will accuse you of being myopic and soft. For some, this leads to self-doubt and increased stress. Burnout is the usual consequence. (See the cover story, “Burnout.”) The trail of casualties is easy to document.

To combat this, I suggest taking a step back today. Let’s agree to view our lives as a pie chart. Certainly, our professional recruiting life is part of the whole, but there are other crucial parts — family, friends, activities, health, psychological wellbeing, and recreation that may suffer tremendously if we only focus on placements to the exclusion of all else. Tunnel vision in this area is not our friend; it is our enemy.

As recruiters, we sometimes neglect the things that, ironically, provide us with many ways to close the gap that have nothing to do with making placements. I would remind all of us that we are here for a limited time and need to make the most of the whole life experience. When you do this, don’t be surprised if your production increases as well because you will have brought balance to your life which may be in need of an adjustment. TFL

Joe Ankus is the President of Ankus Consulting, Inc., a Florida based legal recruiting firm near the fish filled waters of Fort Lauderdale and the Florida Everglades. After practicing law in two of the nation’s largest law firms, Joe entered the recruiting field in 1991. Joe has 25 years of professional experience and has successfully assisted in the placement of over 500+ attorneys in some of the nation’s most prestigious law firms and corporations. In addition, Joe has been a featured public speaker, author, conference panelist, and personal recruiting trainer to hundreds of recruiters on a nationwide basis. His website is www.ankusconsulting.com and his email is info@ankusconsulting.com.
Most Rookies Give Up

Unfortunately, many rookies never become fundamentally sound and conceptually secure with the basic skill sets required for success in this business. Once again, assuming a proper hire, the rookie either has to possess an extreme tolerance for pain as they proceed through the process of trial and error, until they finally gain the required skills, or they quickly become frustrated, lose their motivation and burnout. Most succumb and either quit or are fired for lack of performance. This helps create the high rate of turnover among first year employees.

Experienced Recruiters Can Suffer, Too

A more insidious form of no-growth burnout occurs with experienced practitioners. I use the term insidious because in its early stages, the individual is generally not aware of the problem. These individuals initially learned the basics of the business whether through good training or trial and error. Many times they begin to stray from properly executing the basics of the business that served as the foundation for much of their earlier success. Activity numbers decrease and contact time drops to a minimum as they rely more and more on the Internet and email as a replacement for results oriented telephone activity.

At first, they and their manager may not even be aware of the problem, but as it progresses, production drops off. This is usually rectified by an increase of effort that produces an upsurge in activity and results. However, this revival, based solely on physical exertion is generally short lived or the practitioner is in danger of becoming physically burned out.

Bottom line, the individual has ceased to grow. The job becomes heavy labor because the harder they work, the less they accomplish. Unless something is done to affect a change, frustration, apathy, and a loss of motivation will drive them to resign or be terminated.

The cure is simple but needs to be dramatic, immediate and requires a strong personal commitment. First, they need to get back on the phone, properly executing the basics in order to make certain their foundation is solid once again. Close monitoring, feedback and coaching from their manager can be a great help at this stage of the recovery process. Then they need to begin growing and developing skill sets to an ever-increasing level of effectiveness. This will put them on a path where personal confidence will once again bloom as their accomplishments reflect the growth of a true professional. They will approach each day with a renewed enthusiasm because they now look forward to applying newly mastered skills, techniques and strategies. The job becomes self-rewarding while reinforcing their feeling of self-worth, sense of contribution, and professional pride. The growth in their paycheck becomes a by-product of this on-going learning process.

Remember: Confidence comes from competence and competence is based on the continued positive growth of your functional skill sets.

The Confident Practitioner

A truly confident practitioner is good at what they do and continues to get better. Each day is a new challenge where they have the opportunity to learn and apply increasingly effective strategies and techniques. They are excited, enthused, and motivated as they track personal growth and accomplishment.

Although managers always shoulder responsibility to provide training and learning opportunities for their staff, the most important question is:

"Whose responsibility is individual self-development?"

Self-Development Is Up to Each

The answer to this question is fairly evident. Self-development is each individual's responsibility. Some assume that responsibility while others do not. For those who do not, their eventual burnout in this business is all but guaranteed. In essence, they have given up on themselves. They may blame their manager, their work environment, or circumstances not directly related to their problem. Nevertheless, an honest evaluation of where they are and how they got there reveals the fact they stopped growing, lost their edge, and began a downward slide that is very difficult, but not impossible to reverse.

The consistently top producers in our industry all have one thing in common: they are always learning, growing and developing their functional skill sets. In fact, their reality is exactly the opposite of burnout. They become increasingly effective at gaining significant results, in less time, with far less frustration and effort than is the norm for this industry. Their work becomes self-reinforcing.

With physical and emotional burnout, you need professional help. However, with no-growth burnout, you need to help yourself. Learning opportunities are endless whether through your manager, peers, professional associations, industry trainers, publications, DVDs, CDs, books or the Internet. Continue to gain the knowledge, apply the knowledge, and build your skill sets. This is the best way to avoid burnout while ensuring long-term prosperity and professional satisfaction from your career.

There is an old saying that defines the 10 two-letter words that spell success: "If it is to be, it is up to me."

Need I say more?

As always, if you have questions or comments about this article or wish to receive my input on any other topic related to this business, just let me know. Your calls and e-mails are most welcome. TFL (back to TOC)

Terry Petra has successfully conducted seminars for state, national, and international associations as well as in-house consulting and training programs for hundreds of staffing/recruiting firms around the world. Terry provides a full range of training and consulting services focused on the needs of the staffing/recruiting industry. Training products include the updated ‘Petra Training System’ and a newly revised advanced CD Training Program entitled, ‘Just Do It Right! A Client Centered Process That Works.’ For a full review of his products and services, visit his web site at www.tpetra.com.
Power Placement Payment Plays After 31 Days

Even if you follow my articles, books and audios on placement procedure, there will still be the occasional client who just won’t pay. There’s no law that says a fee fight must be a fair fight.

This PTL picks up after you’ve decided there are no defenses to payment, but before you call a lawyer. These suggestions are most powerful 31 days after the invoice is sent. The longer you wait beyond that, the less power they pack. Once 60 days have elapsed, it’s time to call your lawyer.

Here are some of the things you should do:

1. Force Communication

This might sound like it’s easy — but at least 70% of the recruiters who call our office haven’t discussed it with the client. When we ask why the client hasn’t paid, the response is usually:

• “I don’t know.”
• “They don’t have a reason.”
• “They won’t talk to me.”

These are all a result of a communication blockage with the client.

In Help Thy Neighbor: How Counseling Works and When It Doesn’t, psychologist Linda Scheffler placed the blame squarely on the recruiter:

“Whatever the client’s attitude, the [recruiter] is accountable for the process of identifying and wrestling with the elements contributing to both success and the failure to connect. If we are not involved with them, it is unlikely that we will get clients involved with us.

…”If they are doing things that keep us at a distance, we have to break the bonds of conventional reserve and ask them why. Obviously we must show tact and concern, but we cannot avoid questioning or confronting behavior that interferes with the work [getting paid].”

If you ask me to enter the case, I’ll suggest you do it first. Every supervisor will talk to you if you’re persistent and professional. There’s no law that requires it, but no supervisor wants you:

• Going over his head.
• Discussing the problem with your candidate.
• Raising his company.

So recruiters who haven’t been paid are either not persistent or not professional.

Lack of persistence is the most common mistake. It’s hardly what you expect from someone who just earned a fee, but there are three reasons:

1. Ego

That’s right — the recruiter doesn’t want to “lower herself” to collecting her own fee. If she has no manager or associate to help her, she’ll gladly pay a lawyer. Only once a lawyer becomes involved, the costs and the ante go up. Delay is natural because more people are involved. Settlement is less likely because positions polarize and harden. All because the recruiter doesn’t want to “lower herself.”

Scheffler cautioned: “However satisfying it is to be right, to feel smart, and to impress clients, our success is measured by the outcome.”

Let that five-figure fee fight its own battle too. Your invoice rings the bell signaling round one.

2. Fear of Confrontation

Only maniacs don’t fear confrontation. I’ve worked with some of the toughest and meanest lawyers. They’re also some of the weakest and meekest.

They’re some of the “unprepared,” too. Gripped by a fear of confrontation, they bravado and bully just like anyone else using defense mechanisms. At the slightest resistance, they turn and run out of the courtroom.

I’ve worked with some of the holdest power-placers too. They fear confrontation the most for the same reason. So they “professionally” procrastinate.

3. Fear of Losing

High-billers are gamblers, and they’ll readily bet on themselves with five-figure fees on the line. But after the placement, the game is over. The thrill is gone. They anticipate a ration of recruiting rejection in exchange for their request.

Is it really a fear? The worst kind. Here’s what Tessa Albert Warschaw, noted about it in Winning by Negotiation:

“As one of my clients put it, ‘On my side it’s a squeamish request... in which I anticipate the answer ‘No.’” Afterward I have the feeling that it wasn’t a negotiation at all, but a settling for whatever the other party thought he could get away with.

“You begin to hate yourself and your job. You hear yourself telling others about the [supervisor] who’s ‘doing it’ to you.”

There’s only one way to overcome these fears — and it’s not by deputizing someone less effective. It’s by being persistent and professional.

If you really can’t get a response, do what lawyers do. Write a letter to the helium heavyweight hirer that won’t get you paid any faster. But if it makes you feel better, fine.

2. Start with the Billing Amount

The initial billing amount is always your “failsafe” number. As many placers increase the fee as reduce it. They’ve analyzed, agonized and antagonized so much about it that they either re-invoice at the “full fee” (from an inflated fee schedule) or a “discounted fee” (cont’d on page 24)
from a deflated expectancy of getting paid. It makes no sense at all. A “revised” invoice just shows you’re a lightweight. It allows even an amateur fee-fighter to throw you around the ring like that invoice itself.

Let’s look at why:
- It gives credibility to the assertion that the client didn’t agree to any specific fee at the beginning.
- It looks like you don’t know what your services are worth.
- If it’s lower, it shows that you don’t believe the fee is fair.
- It’s higher, it shows that you are reacting emotionally, not professionally.
- It shows that you don’t know the difference between preliminary negotiations and settlement negotiations.

In Power Negotiating, attorney John Ilich told how inconsistency telegraphs weakness:

“Maybe the [recruiter] does really possess strong negotiating power, but is unaware of it. The [recruiter] may be unaware of his or her true negotiating power for a variety of reasons such as lack of experience, failure to adequately research the facts or the laws, or even failure to spend the necessary time to think out the matter.

“Whatever the case, the [supervisor’s] negotiating attitude will severely hamper him or her and will thus play an important role in the final negotiating outcome.

“It is important for the [supervisor] to be constantly on the alert for trying to determine the [supervisor’s] own conception of the [recruiter’s] own negotiating power.”

You’ve lost the power of legitimacy. It’s a legal letdown to any self-respecting lawyer. This one won’t take your case if you’ve fee-floated like a featherweight.

3. Expect a No-Fee Counteroffer

That doesn’t mean accept it. Just expect it, so you won’t have a repulsive reaction.

There are three basic reasons to expect it:
1. There’s already an issue over the fee, so you’re dealing with a fee-fighter.
2. The placement has already occurred, so you’ve lost the primary incentive to pay. Litigation is a long, slow, precarious process; time is on the client’s side.
3. The candidate’s human frailties are surfacing. He’s no longer posing in a pair of snazzy trunks. He’s been in the ring — his trunks are torn and his body’s bruised. If he leaves, the value of your services appears lower. Again, time is on the client’s side.

Besides, no-fee counteroffers are a great way to knock your legs out from under you. They cause you to doubt whether you’re entitled to anything — after all, if the big, bad “hiring authority” thinks no fee is due, maybe he’s right.

Does he know something you don’t? Can he be planning a tag-team placement play with the candidate? Are they changing an application form or date stamp here; sanitizing a personnel file there? Can he backdate a response to an ad? Can a coworker be backdating an employee referral (for the bounty, of course)? Can a friendly recruiter help too?

No need to fret or bet. Just expect a zero counteroffer.

4. Recognize That Every Number Has Two Meanings

Follow the warning of Judge Bertram Harnett in Put the Law on Your Side: “Beware of throwing numbers around... no mentioned number is without an effect. In settlement discussions, never mention a number if you are not prepared to accept it later.”

Assuming a $15,000 fee, here’s a typical dialog:

**Supervisor:** We thought the fee would be in accordance with our “policy” of 15% or $7,500.

**Recruiter:** I never knew about your “policy” and I have $8,500 invested in phone bills alone on this search.

**Supervisor:** Okay, since we never agreed to the fee, why don’t I see if the company will pay your expenses, and we’ll call it even?

(See how it’s happening? But it might not stop there. Let’s go on.)

**Recruiter:** Nothin’ doing. I want to be paid for the search.

**Supervisor:** But even our policy amount of $7,500 is five times more than your expenses!

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5. Don’t Bid Against Yourself

Even professional negotiators do this. Recruiters do it even more. Let’s assume you say, “I won’t accept less than $25,000 for this search.” The supervisor says he’ll take the offer to management. Then you hear that the candidate has one foot on a treadmill and another on his resume.

So you panic. You call back the supervisor and say something like, “Well, just because I want to maintain our stupendous working relationship so desperately, I’ll reduce the fee fast to $20,000. Can you write the check now, since my landlord’s already on his way to pick it up?” I know, I know. You don’t have a landlord. But that’s pretty much the way it happens.

And you’re locked into that $20,000 (until you call back with a lower bid).

The lesson is taught in the first session of Negotiating 101: Never lower your fee until the employer has counteroffered.

You’re probably thinking that you’ll be able to take that lower fee and run (like your candidate might do). Not a chance.

In fact, you may even induce the client to find out why you’re so anxious. Whether it fires the candidate or he quits will matter little. It will have the defense of a failure of consideration — an annually-computed fee, but a candidate who left before a year.

Bidding against yourself is just beating yourself up publicly in the ring. Even if mere hunger pangs cause you to do it, you are losing more than your fee. You are losing your credibility.

Don’t Bid (cont’d from page 25)

There are important negotiating reasons for this:

- Supervisors are never as excited about paying you as you are about getting paid. So you look more than just excited — you look delirious.
- Supervisors have supervising to do, and need enough time to present your offer to management. They might even be considering the best way to do it.
- Waiting a few days before responding to a supervisor’s offer will make him think you seriously considered it (regardless of whether you accept or reject).

Wait 2 days to call back

This two-day rule is one we rarely break. I remember time after time when the supervisor pressured the recruiter. But that’s pretty much the way it happens.

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6. Call Back Two Days Later

That doesn’t mean earlier. As a rule, you should never call back until at least two business days have elapsed after:

- Leaving a phone message.
- Making an offer, or
- Considering a counteroffer.

There are important negotiating reasons for this:

a. Supervisors are never as excited about paying you as you are about getting paid. So you look more than just excited — you look delirious.

b. Supervisors have supervising to do, and need enough time to present your offer to management. They might even be considering the best way to do it.

c. Waiting a few days before responding to a supervisor’s offer will make him think you seriously considered it (regardless of whether you accept or reject).

Zip your lips half the time

Just zip the lip at least 50% of the time. Most unpaid recruiters anxiously bang their gums on the supervisor’s drums 85% of the time.

If you doubt it, record your collection calls and use a stopwatch. We do it on a routine basis when the cassettes come in. The average over hundreds of them is a consistent 85%.

All blown fee collections.

8. Be Firmly Flexible

“Firm flexibility” sounds contradictory because it is. Contradictory and mandatory.

Judge Harnett advised:

- “If the [supervisor] says at the beginning ‘I am not bargaining, I will pay your $15,000, no more, no less’—test him.”

- “Naturally, circumstances and people vary, but common wisdom tells us that there is always more flexibility than originally indicated. The art in negotiating is to gauge when the other side has reached its maximum in concession. ‘Hanging tough’ in negotiation — insisting that the other side take it or leave it — is largely reserved for those who are in a plainly dominant position and can afford to ignore the adversary’s side.”

Lawyers try to avoid ultimatums.

You should be able to sleuth around and find out:

- What the client usually pays recruiters.
- What the client has paid to settle fee disputes prior to litigation.
- Whether the client has been involved in fee litigation. (Check the “Register of Actions” or similar court records where it is located.)
- Whether the client has settled litigation prior to trial. (Call the other recruiter’s lawyer. — Perhaps he’ll be the right one for you, too.)

9. Don’t Discuss Legal Fees

This is done all the time. Recruiters say negotiating:

- “Well, you know I’ll have to pay some lawyer a third of whatever he collects.”
- “You don’t want all the cost of using a lawyer to defend this fraud, emotional distress, harassment, punitive damage, federal case before a jury of my peers, do you?”
- “You know I’ll be suing you for all my legal fees too.”

Every one of these (and all the others about cost, delay, hassle and embarrassment) translate into only one sentence: “I’m afraid to go to court.”

You can’t perfect a delivery that will convey threats like:

- “Then what happened?”
- “Yes, I appreciate your concerns.”
- “That’s an understandable position for you to take.”
- “I see — your boss will fire you and promote the candidate to your job if you agreed to the fee.”

Those nine items are called “listening responses” by negotiating pros. Don’t telegraph your anger, shock, ecstasy, or anything else when delivering them.

Scheffler discussed why delivering them properly is so effective:

- “Although listening responses add no new content, they are powerful agents...(playing back, recalling, or summarizing client messages)...gives clients an unfamiliar opportunity to hear their own thoughts.

- “When [recruiters] listen and respond, clients feel as though their problems are being acknowledged.”

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- Whether the client has been involved in fee litigation. (Check the “Register of Actions” or similar court records where it is located.)
- Whether the client has settled litigation prior to trial. (Call the other recruiter’s lawyer. — Perhaps he’ll be the right one for you, too.)
10. Consider Your Ultimate Goal

Is it realistic?

Will you really get “exclusive assignments” if you settle? Can you be sure? How many? How “exclusive?” For how long?

Is the supervisor dangling a retainer check? How much? What do you have to do? For how long?

Volume hiring commitment? Fine. But do you have to charge a flat fee? A reduced percentage? What if fewer than the agreed number of candidates are hired? Is there a minimum fee? When does the client owe it?

In over 95% of the cases, a full fee now is the only goal worth pursuing. The reason is soundly based on recruiting reality: Placement is a “What have you done for me lately?” business. Take it while you can — take it all. You earned it.

Heed William Lareau’s observation in the recruiter’s rulebook Conduct Expected: The Unwritten Rules for a Successful Business Career:

“Even if the people you work with are reasonably decent and intelligent, they can’t be trusted. People aren’t their best at work. Most of them are there not because they love it, but because they have no choice...Yet almost all of us are forced by recurring hunger pangs and a reluctance to sleep in the rain to drag ourselves to some boring, mundane job day after day and year after year:

“The consequence is that people come to work out of frustration, anger and disappointment. Like caged tigers they are limited to pacing back and forth, forced to try to control their energy and emotions as they perceive that the world is going by without them.

“The [headhunter’s] jungle is carpeted with the bones of careers who’s owners let down their guard.”

Ten power placement plays to use after 31 days. Try them, and you’ll probably win the fee fight.

Judge Harnett and I concur in this conclusion:

“Discuss your settlement thoughts frankly with your lawyer. Elicit the best you can, his own thoughts. Form an idea of how much of the settlement relates to the merits of the case, and how much to the immediacy of the money. Insist on a full explanation. If you are not satisfied, say so.

“In the end, the settlement decision is yours.” TFL

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Jeff holds four certifications in placement and is the author of 24 popular books in the career field. Jeff’s experience includes: Author of “The Allen Law” — the only placement information trade secrets law in the United States; Expert witness on employment and placement matters; Recruiter and staffing service office manager; Human resources manager for major employers; Certified Personnel Consultant, Certified Placement Counselor, Certified Employment Specialist and Certified Search Specialist designations; Cofounder of the national Certified Search Specialist program; Special Advisor to the American Employment Association; General Counsel to the California Association of Personnel Consultants (honorary lifetime membership conferred); Founder and Director of the National Placement Law Center; Recipient of the Staffing Industry Lifetime Achievement Award; Author of The Placement Strategy Handbook, Placement Management, The National Placement Law Center Fee Collection Guide and The Best of Jeff Allen, published by Search Research Institute exclusively for the staffing industry; and Producer of the EMPLAW Audio Series on employment law matters. You can email him at Jeff@placementlaw.com.