



Consultants-Contractor Forum

Consultants: Interview Your Recruiter

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Why This Topic?

- Ongoing need to network and interview
- Help you formulate a strategy and questions to ask during interviews for Consulting / Contract positions.
- For CA State projects, contractors rely on IT Consulting and Staffing Firms

Origins Of This Topic

- Personal experience
 - Newly relocated to Sacramento
 - Limited networking and business contacts
- Working with PMI-SVC Job Team
 - Job Seekers
 - Counseling others
 - Group think and collaboration
- Calls with unknown sources
 - Local and Distant
 - Limited networking and contact

The “Recruiters”

- Staffing Augmentation Companies
 - Local and out of area
 - Staff does not work onsite or on projects
- IT Technology Companies - Passive
 - CMAS/MSA
 - Founded by working professionals in the field
 - Management and Staff not be working on projects
- IT Technology Companies - Active
 - CMAS/MSA
 - Principal Owned and Operated
 - Working on projects and/or employing others on current projects

Online and Local Presence

- Online Job Boards
 - Dice, Monster, Career Builder
- Local Networking
 - PMI-SVC and the Forums
 - Personal Introductions
- Email blasts
 - Companies, IT Technology and Staffing firms, Business and Personal Contacts

A Common Theme #1

- “Good morning, Our preferred client, the State of California....”
 - “We are merely suppliers of resources for state projects and we’re looking to submit a resource, but we really do not have an ongoing working relationship with any state department in particular.”

A Common Theme #2

- “We are hiring...”
 - “We are merely looking to submit names to an open RFP, hoping you will be selected for an interview. If you are selected, we’ll follow up with you to sign an employment or sub-contractor agreement.

The Initial Phone Interviews #1

- Difficulty to connect with interviewer where the primary focus is to:
 - Recap of qualifications
 - Understanding desired position
 - Need to know availability and rate

The Initial Phone Interviews #2

- Difficulty to ascertain specific information for the project other than
 - High level description
 - Start date and estimated duration

The Initial Phone Interviews #3

- The unknowns ...
 - Division, Branch, Unit
 - Names of Project Sponsor and Managers
 - Availability of site staff and team members

The Horror Stories

- Based on actual experience....
 - I was sent in as a resource to be interviewed, when in fact the decision was made to hire someone else on a contract that was already awarded.
 - I was being recruited “just in case” the first choice decided to walk away from the project (which was a year late in starting with no real start date determined).
 - I was hired and stepped into a situation with a poorly defined scope, a very part time Sponsor, and no chance of project success.
 - I was hired into a hostile work environment and constantly threatened of being fired!

Creating “Interview Your Recruiter”

- The Need To:
 - Reduce and/or eliminate uncertainty
 - Improve overall quality of assignments to consider
 - Reduce risk of sub-par projects and unfavorable sub-contractor agreements
 - Build my own “preferred” partner list

Formulating “The Questions”

- Sources
 - Online posts
 - Contribution from other consultants
- Include topics commonly ignored during “typical” phone interviews or covered late in the process.

Your Step One

- Understand your needs
 - Availability
 - Desired position
 - Pay rate
 - Geographic territory
 - Who are you willing to work with?
- Prioritize and create a boundary
 - Be flexible but maintain core needs

Your Step Two

- Build your own questions
 - Gather, Organize, Categorize
- Understand “where” and “when” to use
 - Not all questions can be asked during an initial call
 - Not all questions are appropriate for every call or opportunity

Sample Questions

- See – “Interview Your Recruiter”
 - Introductions
 - About you and your company
 - Assignment and Project
 - Type of employment and pay rate
 - Contract terms, billing periods
 - Proposal and bidding
 - Review the RFP and Bidder Response



Discussion



Thank you!

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References

- [Job Search and Process Guide](#), 2007, Tom Carlos and Andy Wergedal
- [Risks of Subcontracting](#), 2015, Tom Carlos

References can be found at:

www.carlosconsulting.com