Things we all hate about recruitment agencies…

Recruitment is a career choice that will never make you popular, but it can be a rewarding one if you do it properly. Nonetheless we recruiters on a daily basis have to deal with a good deal of hostility and mistrust, which can make our jobs quite difficult. To be fair, most people who have ever looked for work will have experience of an agency with a less than scrupulous approach but if you know exactly what you are looking for, you can usually avoid the bad agencies and deal exclusively with the good ones. Today we are looking at some of the comments we hear on a daily basis as recruitment agents, why candidates say them, and how we try to address them.

'Agencies are all the same, you'll just send my CV off without my permission.'

Honestly? This would be a really stupid thing for us to do. Sending the CV of a candidate who had not given their permission would massively jeopardise our relationship with not just the candidate whom we have deemed good enough to represent, but with our valued client. Believe it or not, we have no interest whatsoever in submitting your CV without having a thorough conversation with you and making sure you are absolutely right for the role and it is right for you – if we don't both agree it is right then we have absolutely nothing to gain from sending your CV – but plenty - potentially – to lose.

'You'll say you've sent my CV, then I'll never hear from you again.'

We all know this happens sometimes – but as an agency we'll do everything we can to make sure it doesn't. If you haven't heard from us, feel free to get in touch. There are many reasons for a delay, such as the person who is hiring being off work, or changes within the business that have had an impact on recruitment. We'll try to keep you informed along the way. We would all love it if things move quickly, but unfortunately sometimes they just don't, and you can rest assured that we won't want to mess around – the longer the recruitment process takes, the more likely we will lose good candidates like you and have to start our campaign afresh.

'I hate having to deal with recruiters; they just lie to you and let you down.'

Recruiters get paid on results; our job is to find the right candidates for our clients, and we earn money from placements. If you are the right candidate and we help you to find the right role, then all of us will benefit. We have nothing to gain from letting you down or lying to you. And remember, for every candidate that we place, there might be three or four candidates who have gone through the process who were not successful, and who will be disappointed. So we have to handle that situation, making sure that we provide those candidates with honest reasons why they were not selected. And if we can't do that, then we are not doing our job properly. If we rated your CV enough to put you forward to our client, chances are we will want to work with you again, so we will do whatever we can to make sure you get it right next time.

'I never get feedback on my CV, it just disappears into a black hole.'

For every one person that is the successful applicant, and the three or four who were interviewed but not selected, there might be twenty, or fifty, or a hundred, who applied for the job but were not

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successful. We try to respond to every applicant – but it won't always be via a personalised response with specific feedback on your CV. It will be a general reply offering some tips on how to improve your CV and search for work. If you want more specific feedback, you can ask for it, but quite often it will be the case that you were simply not one of the most suitable applicants for that particular job. Be honest with yourself; it is a tough marketplace and if you do not have a well-written CV that reflects all or most of the skills the recruiter has asked for, you are probably not the best applicant. But you can improve your chances with a well-written cover letter or by adjusting your CV to bring out the skills that the recruiter is looking for. Don't be offended by impersonal feedback; just because you were not the right candidate for one role does not mean you will not be shortlisted in the future. If you are concerned your CV has disappeared into a 'black hole', give the recruiter a friendly nudge by email to make sure they have received your application.

'I would much prefer to deal with the company directly, and cut out the agency.'

In an ideal world there would be no need for recruiters – employers would have plenty of time and resources to invest in finding the ideal candidates themselves. But it is a time consuming process and finding the right people actually requires some skill – they have to be technically the right fit, but also in terms of their personality and attitude. We earn our fee by making life easier for our client. Do you want us to interview the candidates in the first instance? We'll do it. Or technically test them before we even submit their CV? We can do that too. Impressing the recruitment agency is the first step towards getting an interview with the client – by attempting to by-pass them you could be jeopardising your chances of getting an interview.

We like to do things properly and hope that our success rate with candidates and clients speaks for itself – we'll be going live soon on our website with some testimonials from both sides.

Unfortunately not all agencies get it right – but you don't need to accept bad behaviour.

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