

OPINION

Secrets behind a Winning Recruitment Team

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The procurement director of one of the world's leading chemical and pharmaceutical firms was evaluating her company's HR department and reviewing the recruiting agents it employed.

The director consulted Optia and asked about the characteristics of an excellent HR recruiting team. She wanted her company's HR recruiting team to improve and attract more talented candidates.

With such a high demand for bilingual talent in Japan and with a limited supply of candidates, top professionals can pick and choose. With the current market conditions in mind as we brainstormed, I started to think about the scores of companies Optia has worked with in the past. What was the nature of their HR recruiting departments? How did they behave? What were the company conditions in terms of pipeline and growth?

We were able to categorize companies into three categories: "High Maintenance", "Solid, Slow and Steady", and "High Performance".

The High-Maintenance operations often involved an emotional HR director or manager. Job specifications could change quickly and positions were put on hold, frozen, or an internal employee was rushed into the position. It appeared that recruitment decisions were made on the fly and there was a lack of succession planning. These companies often had trouble attracting talent and when offers were made they were often turned down because of the slow processing and inconsistent communication to candidates.

The Solid, Slow and Steady group's motto: the tortoise wins the race for talent. These departments take time making decisions and sometimes the process is slow. Often they have a low turn over and believe the right candidate will wait for them. At times they can be arrogant and this can cost them candidates.

Our favorite companies are the high performers. They mean what they say and say what they mean.

They often have a strong pipeline of products and strong leadership. High performers are a jewel-in-the-crown for a recruiting company. These dynamic organizations move quickly and have sustainable growth. They understand there is a race for talent and do not dilly-dally in the interviewing process. Decisions are made quickly and letters are sent off in a timely manner with a deadline.

The following summary highlights the nature of the three company types

1. High maintenance

* Lots of rules and regulations, emotional, all candidates have something wrong with them, job specifications continually change. HR focuses on rules and regulation rather than results. The line managers appear to have unrealistic expectations. Turnover is high.

* Get excited quickly. They want to see a stack of candidates then circumstances suddenly change and they hire internally. HR is often the last to know.

2. Solid, Slow and Steady

* HR is a key player in the growth of the company, has good connections with line managers, decisions can take time but once they are made they are solid.

* Think: "We are the best, the candidate can and will wait."

* Low turnover and solid growth, probably has a long history in Japan.

3. High Performers

* Fast moving, strong growth. Line managers are accessible and make quick, solid decisions. HR is an integral part of developing top performance.

* HR is given a lot of credit for hiring top talent.

* Execution of interviews and offer letters are done in a timely fashion.

* Strong growth and can be a new or an established company in Japan.