

Finding the right people for the job

Hertfordshire based recruitment consultancy Courtney Smith Group specialises in the recruitment of management personnel for companies operating within the building services industry. Company Director Tony Smith, who has 17 years experience in recruitment, tells PHAM News why he believes the company is ideally placed to help the industry.

What makes your business any different to other recruitment companies?

I think it's important to stress that we are exclusive to the building industry and related trades. People take you a bit more seriously, because the credibility is there when you focus on one particular industry instead of various different product sectors. You're not stretched so thin and you can really focus on the issues at hand.

Those issues include the current difficulty in finding good quality candidates for job vacancies. In today's market, with unemployment so low, there is a real shortage of good management people out there, so it's important to steer our candidates to the right positions. This focus on quality rather than quantity is key to every stage of the recruitment process.

At Courtney Smith Group, every candidate is screened and interviewed, and we do a personal profile and assessment based on the interview as well, so that when a client does phone us we can take the pain and time element away from them, by only giving them people that they need. Basically, we're matching their requirements.

How closely do you work with clients?

Whenever we take on a new client, we will visit them at their premises. This is vital so that we can take a fully comprehensive brief on the company, its style and culture, and the kind of person they are looking for. We don't just play a numbers game. After the meeting, we will then put forward a short list of candidates that the company feels would be suitable for that position, both in terms of qualifications and the way in which the candidate, as a person, would fit into the ethos of the client's company.

Does the company get involved in the interview process?

No client is exactly the same, and they all work in many different ways, so we try to tailor the process to suit the needs of each individual company, making it painless for them. Because in today's market companies are so busy, a lot of our clients haven't got the time, so they



Tony Smith

ask us to arrange all the interviews and the venue, whether it be a hotel or our offices, whatever suits them.

How's business at the moment?

We currently have a database of 5000 candidates and 4000 clients. Of these, a large percentage repeatedly come back to the company when its services are required, and many new clients hear of Courtney Smith through referrals. The company has recently had two record months back-to-back, which we can attribute solely to the quality of candidates that are coming through and our name in the market place. We're finding that there are lots and lots of positions available at the moment, and a major shortage of good quality people.

Does the service you offer cover the whole country?

We are now able to offer a UK wide service to anyone in the industry, from major blue chip multinationals through to independent builders' merchants.

We were finding that our clients were asking for a UK-wide service. Previously we only covered London and the South East, and would find that a manufacturer would approach us with vacancies in both the South and the North, but because we only dealt with the South East, we would have to walk away from the contract. Now we can provide a service for the whole of England.

We have also recently invested in a website, which now displays the latest vacancies, so that clients can browse the listed jobs themselves before making the decision to contact the company direct.

Further information

As well as helping to fill vacancies within the industry, Courtney Smith also runs seminars on interviewing techniques and the recruitment process. For more information, visit www.courtneysmithgroup.co.uk.