

Alan Davis & Associates Inc.



Treat your Candidates with Respect!

By Diane Bates

You may have not done much hiring in the last while but, according to recent surveys, an increase in hiring is anticipated in the 4th Quarter of 2009. If you want to be successful in your hiring (success being rated by the quality not the quantity of the hires) then a structured selection process that is fair, reasonable and treats candidates with respect is essential.

This article will focus on the interview stage where most companies lose their candidates due to avoidable errors and mistakes. It takes a lot of effort to get candidates to the interviewing table, so don't lose them at this late stage.

Candidates should be shown the same respect as your most important customer. Not only could they be the talent you desperately need, but they are your mouthpiece in the labor market and can sully your reputation.

Regardless of the efficiency of your selection process, it is all wasted if the candidate is not treated properly (and we're not talking kid gloves – just basic common sense and consideration).

The interview feedback we get from candidates is, frequently, unbelievable. Don't lose good candidates through poorly prepared interviews that make the candidate question the professionalism of your company or worse, to question the manner in which employees are treated. You, and everyone the candidate meets in your company, are ambassadors for your company. Your actions and attitude influence the candidate's decision.

Some of the unfortunate situations candidates have experienced and shared with us are:

- The candidate felt the company was doing them a favor in granting them an interview.
- The interviewer appeared disorganized and the interview questions were all over the place.
- The interviewer kept the candidate waiting an unreasonable amount of time and then rushed the interview.



- Prior to the interview, the candidate was repeatedly assured that his extensive experience and technical certifications compensated for his lack of a degree. Frequently, during the panel interview, it was brought up that he did not have a degree. (Anecdote: Many unsuccessful attempts have been made to get this candidate back to the table as his skill set is scarce and the company desperately needs these competencies.)
- The interviewer interviewed for the wrong position (a lower level) and asked the candidate why he had applied for a position that was below his level. (Anecdote: The CEO attempted damage control but the candidate decided the company was not for him.)
- A potential senior executive for a business critical position was interviewed by a very junior person who had minimal knowledge of the position requirements.
- An interview was scheduled and cancelled at the last minute after the interviewer solicited and received negative information about the candidate from former colleagues (this is illegal and a breach of Canada's Privacy Laws). Candidate discovered an informal background check with all his former colleagues, and wanted to know real reason company cancelled the interview)
- The candidate was expected to be available for an interview without reasonable notice (West Coast candidate expected to be in an East Coast interview the following day at 8am).
- The company cancelled the interview at short notice (same day), more than once.
- The candidate was not given clear information about travel arrangements and the messages left at the company were not returned.
- The company booked the candidate (and family) on a different flight and different day to the information given to the candidate.
- The company forgot to tell the candidate that they were booked into a hotel the night before the interview.
- The company did not reimburse travel expenses within a reasonable amount of time and only after many reminders.
- The company promised to get back to the candidate within a specified period of time but did not (this is the most common recruiting sin!).

Learn from the mistakes of others! Tighten up your interview process from start to finish and you will have candidates who believe in your company and who want to work for you.



Alan Davis & Associates Inc. has developed and refined its selection process through nearly 27 years in the recruiting business. Our consultants are trained to guide our clients through the full cycle sourcing and selection process so that the best candidates are hired. If you need help in defining or refining your selection process, call us. We're here to help!

The Author:

Diane Bates is Vice-President and co-owner of Alan Davis & Associates Inc. She has over 20 years experience in the private sector in senior financial positions. Diane has 15 years experience at Alan Davis & Associates Inc. principally in Operations. She has been actively involved in many international search assignments, bringing high caliber people from overseas to work for our Canadian clients.

Alan Davis & Associates Inc provides specialized services in executive search, strategic recruitment & selection, succession management, and competitor talent mapping. It is based in Quebec, Canada.

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