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Best practices for working with recruiters

Nine ways to maximize their value to you

By Stacy Pursell

Recruiters can be valuable assets during your veterinary career. They can help you find the right opportunities, navigate the hiring process and negotiate offers. Here are nine best practices to fully leverage their value to you.

No. 1: Treat the recruiter as a hiring authority

A recruiter's impression of you can influence the opportunities they present to you, so treat them with the same respect and professionalism you would a potential employer. Every interaction should be positive and constructive. Be courteous, responsive and mindful of their time. Remember that recruiters work with many candidates, so standing out as someone who is professional and respectful can make a big difference.

No. 2: Present yourself credibly and brand yourself well

When working with a recruiter, present yourself as reliable and dependable. Be punctual, prepared and articulate in all communications. Your credibility will impress the recruiter and will also make them more confident in recommending you to clients.

Ensure your resume and LinkedIn profile are up-to-date and accurately reflect your experience

and achievements. Pay attention to details; spelling and grammar mistakes can detract from your credibility. Be prepared to discuss your career goals, strengths and areas for improvement.

No. 3: Practice full disclosure

Be specific about what you're looking for in a job. Communicate your career goals, preferred work environment, desired salary and any other factors important to you. Consider your long-term career goals and be honest about what you need in your next position. Let your recruiter know if you prefer a certain type of practice, have specific salary expectations or need flexible hours. This transparency helps them find roles that align with your needs and increases the likelihood of a successful placement, and it prevents frustration on both sides from pursuing roles that don't fit your criteria.

No. 4: Tell the truth

Honesty is critical when working with a recruiter. If you have gaps in your employment history, explain them truthfully. Whether they were due to personal reasons, further education or another factor, be upfront about it. Recruiters appreciate candidates who are forthright about their backgrounds, as it allows them to present you accurately to potential employers.

Highlights:

- Recruiters can help you find the right opportunities, navigate the hiring process and negotiate offers. Read about the nine best practices to fully leverage their value to you, including:
- Treat your recruiter with the same respect and professionalism you would a potential employer.
- Pay attention to details on your resume, as spelling and grammar mistakes can detract from your credibility.
- If a recruiter contacts you about a position that does not interest you, handle the situation with professionalism and kindness.
- If you receive a job offer or multiple offers, handle the situation transparently and professionally.

No. 5: Follow through on promises

If you promise to send a resume, call after an interview or provide feedback, ensure that you do so promptly. If you agree to a deadline, meet it. Reliable candidates are more likely to receive attention and support from recruiters, who will view them as dependable partners in the job search process.

No. 6: Respond to unwanted job offers

If a recruiter contacts you about a position that does not interest you, handle the situation with professionalism and kindness. Maintaining a network of colleagues and industry contacts can be beneficial in these situations. If you

can't take a job but know someone who might be a good fit, pass along their information. This approach supports your network and keeps you in good standing with the recruiter.

No. 7: Engage in the interview process

When you express interest in a position and enter the interview process, listen to your recruiter's advice and follow their instructions. Recruiters often have insights into an employer's preferences and the interview process. After an interview, promptly provide feedback to your recruiter. This allows them to present the most accurate information to their client and demonstrates your professionalism.

No. 8: Handle rejection professionally

Rejection is a common part of job searches. The recruitment process is highly selective, and often, only one candidate out of many is chosen.

Viewing rejection as a step toward finding the right fit can help maintain a positive outlook. Seek feedback from the recruiter about why you weren't selected and use this feedback to improve your interview skills, resume or overall presentation. Remember, each rejection is a learning opportunity that brings you closer to the right job.

No. 9: Manage job offers professionally

If you receive a job offer or multiple offers, handle the situation transparently and professionally. Inform your recruiter and potential employers of your situation. Your honesty reinforces your desirability as a candidate. When deciding on a job offer, avoid taking too long. Prolonged deliberation can signal a lack of commitment to the employer, potentially leading them to reconsider their decision. Discuss the details of the offer with your

recruiter, including salary, benefits, and job expectations. They can provide valuable advice on how to negotiate terms and ensure that the offer aligns with your career goals.

Working with a recruiter can help you grow your veterinary career more quickly than you would be able to on your own. Work with them in the best way possible so that you can maximize the relationship and fully leverage their value.



Stacy Pursell is a workforce expert and executive recruiter for the animal health industry and veterinary profession, with a focus on executive search

and recruitment, hiring and retention in the fields of animal health, animal nutrition, pet technology and veterinary medicine. She is founder and CEO of The VET Recruiter and TVR Executive Search, and hosts "The People of Animal Health" podcast. Stacy is a certified personnel consultant (CPC) and certified employee retention specialist (CERS).