

A day in the life *of a recruitment consultant*

Caroline O'Reilly, Team Leader of Brightwater's Engineering Division provides an insight into "A Day In The Life Of A Recruitment Consultant".

Brightwater
recruitment specialists

Being a recruitment consultant conjures up all sorts of visions and preconceptions, some of which are true, but recruitment is unrivalled in its rewarding of effort.

My day begins at about 8.15am, with a mug of coffee & a check of my emails. Generally speaking, I receive up to 25 applications overnight, as well as the usual networking & lead generation mails e.g. from job boards, LinkedIn groups etc. The first port of call is a quick scan of the applicants – is anyone there with the profile I need for my current clients? Any shining stars? The world of work is a tough place at the moment, and I try to deal sensitively with applicants I can't help, making contact & offering advice, if I can.

We sit together as a team at 8.30am. Recruitment can be a solitary profession, in that you are dealing with your own work and are very autonomous. These brief team meetings allow us to exchange ideas & cross reference clients. Since we are all specialists in our individual technical areas, many of us might be working with a single client, supplying varying skill-sets to their businesses. In this case it is vital to understand who is dealing with what client and how their processes are developing.

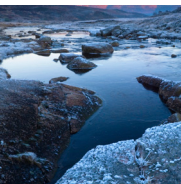
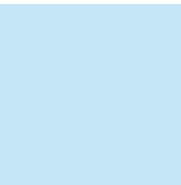
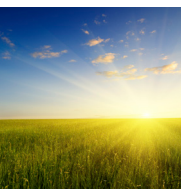
The phone starts to ring here at about 9am, with clients and candidates vying for our attention. Time management is a key challenge and I structure my day in order to maximise the quality of contact I have with my clients & candidates. I usually start by touching base with those candidates I am currently representing for interview,

confirming availability or getting feedback. Being the facilitator between client and candidate means that I am the only one privy to everyone's thoughts in the hiring process. For this reason it is important to build solid relationships with both candidates and clients, so that they will be open and honest with me.

From about 10am, the noise levels in the office rise, as we all "get on the phone", making contact with clients, trying to source new roles, or speculatively profiling candidates to organisations where they can add value. I maintain a list of candidates I am determined to place in a job, so my challenge is always to find suitable companies to profile these candidates to. These calls also allow me strengthen existing relationships, or to forge new ones. I task myself daily with making at least one arrangement to meet new or existing clients. This allows me to get to know their business better and to strengthen our rapport. People buy from people, so it is important to build profile and maintain contact.

The great thing about these calls is that they are not conventional "cold-calls". Brightwater has a high profile and is well known in the recruitment market. Since we work across such a broad client base, I often only need to introduce myself and my business area, rather than introducing Brightwater as a whole. This makes life a lot easier & calls a lot less time consuming!

Market conditions are tough at the moment, so I cannot guarantee that I will always find a job to work on from making these calls. However, when I do get a new role to work



on, my adrenalin starts to flow and names flood to mind. Our database here is great, allowing us to maintain all contact to each candidate and to search for candidates depending on the criteria required. So within 5 minutes, I am on the phone, leaving messages and speaking to candidates, explaining about the role, the company and the opportunity. My aim is to spend about 1 hour initially sourcing, before returning to the rest of the day's work!

Lunch can be at my desk, or out with colleagues, candidates or clients. Being on Merrion Square, we are close to Grafton St and the delights of retail therapy, so occasionally I will head over there and pick up a few things or run errands. Alternatively, I can use this time to meet candidates, as lunchtimes mean that candidates can get away from the office for half an hour. Meeting candidates is key. If we have met the person we can more effectively represent them to clients – getting to know the personality behind the CV. It also makes for better relationships in the long run with both candidates and clients.

In the afternoon, I try to arrange to meet a client. If I have a new role on, I always try to meet the Hiring Manager in order to fully understand the current business need as well as the technical and cultural priorities of the role. Finding the right person is 50% technical and 50% cultural, so it is important to understand the business fully. I also aim to meet new clients or existing clients for a catch-up, as businesses are changing at the moment and we need to understand their requirements. This also gives us an opportunity to fully introduce our services and technical divisions, ensuring that a client will call on us when they next need to recruit.

Back at my desk, I will make contact with new applicants, catch up with clients and continue to source for new roles. We advertise our current vacancies on our own website, job boards and across social media sites. It is important to get the job description right, so that it attracts suitable

candidates. I also devote time every day to calling existing candidates. They really appreciate this, even if I don't have a role to discuss with them.

When candidates are called for interview, I take some time to prepare them properly for the interview. I advise them on who they are meeting, what they can expect from the interview and how to best present themselves. Preparation is key to success at interview and this time spent preparing the candidate is crucial. I try to be very realistic about the role and the company, in particular any expectations or challenges they might face. This also allows the candidate to tailor their examples and answers to the actual business need. Following the interview, I debrief both the candidate and the client, hopefully making arrangements for 2nd round interviews or even offers!

I love my job. Yes this sounds like a total cliché, but it is true. There is a proverb that states that you cannot step into the same river twice – which is absolutely true of recruitment! Every day is different and presents different challenges & wins. By the time I leave the office (at 5.30pm or 6.30pm, depending on the day) I can look back on a productive day of activity – chasing new jobs, sourcing candidates for existing jobs, managing interview preparation and feedback, meeting clients and candidates and making job offers. This is a sales role and we work hard to achieve our monthly targets. How we achieve them changes every day, depending on how we manage the roles we are working on. What is often forgotten about recruitment is that we make people happy for a living – finding someone their dream job and hearing their delight at being offered a new role is such a fantastic feeling! Even on days when things go wrong, we know that tomorrow will offer us the scope to build new pipeline and new relationships and new successes. We work hard but the sense of achievement is great, as are the rewards.

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