



## Skills and Strategies for Job Developers

### Working with Larger Employer Accounts

In order to do this, consider some established truths:

- **Axiom 1:** *Managing larger employer accounts is a top-down, team-based responsibility. No single job developer (or even small team) can handle large accounts. In order to provide the kind of customer service that guarantees that the relationship will grow beyond the simple exchange of human capital, everyone must work together.*
- **Axiom 2:** *You do not have a relationship with an office, store, or human service professional. You have a relationship with a company. Individual contacts will come and go, and in large businesses, human resources are managed by districts or regions, not by individual stores. Be sure you are at the right table and at the right level of authority in order to begin business together.*
- **Axiom 3:** *Employers rely upon workforce development organizations and intermediaries to help them understand local markets. Bring the knowledge of your labor market pool to the table.*
- **Axiom 4:** *It is the service(s) you provide - not the job seekers you have available – that are the selling point for any business. Focus on the services that can help the business – such as taking on some of the necessary functions of human resources – (refining job descriptions for postings, etc.) in order to demonstrate value-add to an larger employer.*
- **Axiom 5:** *Large businesses are not in a vacuum. They are players in a particular sector. Before you begin your approach, think about the sector within which the business is presently situated. What is the competition? What are the trends impacting the sector? How healthy is the business? Where does it want to go next? Research – from a team-based perspective – is key.*
- **Axiom 6:** *Building larger employer accounts is a process. It will take time, effort, and creative thinking/problem solving to move a relationship from that of “sending a few candidates every now and then” to “we always call workforce development company X when we are thinking about our next hiring initiative.”*

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With these in mind, think about these key techniques:

- **Understand the process by asking key questions.** Who does the interviews? With which department will I work? Who else will need to be in the loop to make this happen? Who else will need to sign off on this decision?
- **Large organizations take time to cultivate—it can be worth the investment, but consider your available resources, and be sure management is behind you in your efforts.** You may spend many months getting to know the players and building trust with them, but your investment could lead to a steady stream of bulk hires down the line.
- **Meet with all the important players.** While you may first get an “in” at the company through one particular individual, (for example, a department head), aim to develop a relationship with as many key players as will need to be in the loop to make your deal happen. If possible, meet with department heads and the HR director together. If that’s not possible, if you meet with the senior person in the department, ask, “may I meet with your HR person”. Or if you meet with HR first, ask “may I stop in to meet with the head of X department, since she’ll be doing the interviewing.” After hiring successfully within one department, you might branch out to a new department within the company. Ask your existing contacts whom to speak with in the other departments. Meet with them. Cultivate a relationship with them.

At a large company, many players will need to be on board in order for the company to come to you for their regular hiring needs. Developing and maintaining a relationship with each of these actors is crucial and time-consuming, but can lead to a steady stream of high-quantity job orders.

- **Keep players in the loop.** As you maintain relationships with various actors in the company, keep everyone in the loop. Cc the various actors on communications, so everyone is on board with what you are doing. Make follow up calls to keep people apprised of your conversations with other players in the company.
- **Serving big customers usually means collaborating with colleagues to meet the customer’s needs.** It is almost impossible for one person to meet the needs of a large company. Most likely, you will need broad coordination within your organization, and possibly collaboration with other organizations, in order to respond to a large employer’s needs. Within your organization, you may need special training for a particular employer, you might need customized job preparation or customized job matching. Coordinating closely with your colleagues to ensure that high- quality services are delivered to the top-priority large company is important. If your organization is unable to meet the hiring needs of a big company on its one, you may need to get referrals from other organizations. This is often worth the investment, because you will be able to show the large employer that you can in fact meet their bulk hiring needs.
- **Be aware of the pitfalls.** Large companies offer great promise to a job developer. Cultivating them will take lots of time, and can pay off handsomely. However, be aware that if the deal falls through, you may be left with nothing if you have not continued to cultivate other options simultaneously.

*Created by Kim Berman of Working Ventures, and Lou Miceli of Workforce Professionals Training Institute, 2005*

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