

A man with short dark hair, wearing a blue and white striped button-down shirt, is seated at a wooden table in what appears to be a cafe or office setting. He is looking down at a laptop, with his right hand on the keyboard and his left hand holding a pen over some papers. The background is softly blurred, showing other people and hanging birdcage-style light fixtures.

The Works Search

How to Secure Rainmakers of Envy

Hiring a successful rainmaker for your business is a two-way street. Streamline your process and discover how to attract and secure a rainmaker of envy, adding £2m to your revenue



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INTRODUCTION

Do you wish you could find the perfect £2m rainmaker to help build your business without meeting 20 potentials?

This book is all about helping you attract and secure that enviable rainmaker. I cannot count the number of times I have heard agency CEOs complain that they have wasted valuable time meeting over 20 Directors, Partners and/or Heads of Communications only to find that they weren't right, or they weren't able to secure the one they wanted. After reading this, you will not only be saving time and money, but you will also have a more streamlined process in place – one that will zero in on those rainmakers.

As a PR search consultant and long-time head-hunter, I always strived to please my agency CEOs by giving them a range of rainmakers to help them decide. However, I already knew which one was the perfect fit from the outset.

I reached a turning point when I bought my business and realised that my time and that of the agency CEOs was far too precious – and that we should both trust my expertise. So now, I just give them the one – the right one! It sounds like a marriage and, in many ways, it is! There are numerous points I could make on how to attract and secure that £2m revenue-generating rainmaker but I have drilled it down to just 7 steps.

CHAPTER ONE

GET CRYSTAL CLEAR ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU WITH THIS HIRE

It's important to understand what criteria works for you, your business and your teams as getting the wrong fit can be a nightmare. It will lead to a huge amount of frustration and stress, not to mention the sleepless nights.

Write a job spec and get crystal clear on your criteria of what good looks like – this will also help your search consultant.

And it will save you meeting a sea of 'nearlys'.

Questions to ask to help you write a stellar job spec –

- What's important to you about this hire?
- What's important to your team about this hire?
- What are the must-see deliverables?
- What are the essential traits of a high performing Partner?
- Think about the successful rainmakers you have worked with – what did they consistently do that others did not do?

“It really is worth your weight in gold to invest time in creating a clear understanding of what's important to you, rather than meeting lots of people and seeing if you like them.”

CHAPTER TWO

BE CLEAR ON YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF DELIVERY FROM THE OUTSET

This is vital, as mismatched expectations on either side leads to frustration and anger quicker than you think. The last thing you want six months down the line is your Partner to be avoiding you because you are not on the same page. So here is the bottom line, and while it may sound obvious, it's worth saying all the same – before you offer someone the job, get them back in and discuss expectations of delivery.

Keep it simple and ask them –

What they think is expected of them to return on your investment

What they need from you to deliver this

The key is to make a note of everything you agree on, signposting deliverables at 3, 6 and 12 months. Remember – it's a two-way street and you need to support a rainmaker to deliver, and you will need to stand by your commitments if you expect a high return.

CHAPTER THREE

STOP HIRING PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY HAVE COME FROM 'A GREAT AGENCY' AND YOU KNOW THE SAME PEOPLE

People hire people like them. It's a natural instinct. However, look past the 'glow', the likeability and the friends you have in common. These things will not bring forth the rainmaker who delivers. You need to be objective – hear hard evidence and remove any subjectivity. Stop talking about the same contacts and get serious. That means writing down their answers, and grading them. Yes, grade them!

Evidence-backed questions reveal so much and will demonstrate what they have actually delivered and how.

Start your questions with –

"Please can you give me a recent example of when ..."

"Please tell me about a time when ..."

Drill down –

Ask what the aim was; how did they go about it? What was the result? What did they learn?

Remember, after the meeting, review your notes and grade the answers.

Are you impressed? No? Then the process stops, even if you really like them.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTAND THEIR PURPOSE AND WHAT GETS THEM OUT OF BED EVERY DAY

This is important as you need to know if they still have the drive, energy and motivation to build business for you. Just because they have done it before doesn't mean they want to do it again – the challenge may no longer be there for them. Don't hire a has-been!

Great questions to ask are simple ones

- What's important to you in your career?
- What's important to you as a Director/Partner?
- What else?
- What do you like about success?
- What don't you like about failure?

Don't stop probing until you know what gets them out of bed, and you know whether you can deliver on what they really want.

CHAPTER FIVE

DIG DEEP ON CONTACT GENERATION

“Keep digging until you have enough information – and decide if they fit with your criteria.”

This is another important one as any decent Partner can win a pitch, but who generated the contact? A rainmaker is a hunter and will have an impressive contact book – and be brilliant at building up relationships.

Go through each of their clients and ask the following

- How they generated the business for each of their clients
- How they go about building relationships with clients/ analysts/ bankers/ journalists
- How they ensure they consistently bring in business
- What they do compared to other Partners in the business that makes them stand out

CHAPTER SIX

ASK FOR CLIENT REFERENCES

Assuming they have brought in business, you need to hear it from the horse's mouth otherwise you are relying on just one story, and this is an investment hire, an important one – getting it wrong isn't worth it.

Stop taking 'under the radar' references from the friend who happened to work with them 10 years ago as this does not solve the problem.

Absolute certainty is what you need.

Ask for references from previous clients that they have brought in. If they are good, and telling the truth, they will give you three or four without blinking. Worry if they refuse. In fact, stop the process.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TREAT THE PRESENTATION OF YOUR COMPANY LIKE A PITCH

“Put a foolproof presentation together which sells your company, culture, career path and benefits.”

While a bit of waffle about your company and its greatness is fine for most, this person will add £2m to your bottom line over the next few years, so don't they deserve a well thought-out presentation?

Not giving your company the slick introduction it deserves will more often than not have you falling at the final furlong – I know this from the countless number of CEOs who have bemoaned not securing the candidate they wanted. This part of the hiring process should be taken more seriously.

It's a two-way meeting and a two-way sell.

You don't want to lose that exciting Partner because they weren't impressed fast enough.

Take them through the presentation at the end of their first interview. If it is too long, split it over two meetings.

Great visuals and a few bullets will give you structure and stop you forgetting the essentials. And it will leave a more powerful and lasting impression.

CONCLUSION

By now, I hope that you can see how implementing these steps will ensure you make the right decisions with your hire, and bring an end to your precious time going to waste.

I trust that you will be feeling optimistic about securing that £2m rainmaker who will support you as you build your empire.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I work with a select number of CEOs of corporate and financial agencies in London and have done so for over 15 years. I have built teams for them and am proud to have found some absolute stars for them. What sets me apart from other executive search consultants is my knowledge – I know where the rainmakers are and when they will consider a move as I spend my time keeping in touch with them. Many are signed up with me exclusively as we have ‘grown up’ together. I don’t think many CEOs realise that 60% of industry Partners don’t have the time to look for a role and that they will wait for my call. When I partner with my clients, they get £2m on their bottom line.

My clients would frequently come to me, complain about having to meet 20 Directors and Partners and still not secure the star they wanted. My CEOs’ lives changed when I brought in their star revenue generators who helped build their business significantly – and that was without having to meet many people at all.

In most cases, they would meet just one or two Partners before hiring. The ‘a-ha moment’ for me was seeing that I could really help CEOs get it right, save them an extraordinary amount of time as numerous meetings became a thing of the past, and work at a pace that suited us both. My success can be seen in the number of grey hairs I have, although I’m told I should attribute my achievements to my unrivalled network, expert knowledge and a very thorough approach.

**“When I partner with my clients,
they get £2m on their bottom line.”**



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