



Case study: How to successfully hire 462 people in 4 months?

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The Dynamic - You're an organization that has been in business for 7 years, are profitable, and currently have about 300 employees. The business is being managed well, and the system of operations is functioning at a high level. Then, the perfect storm hits, and you have a "be careful what you wish for moment".

The call – The client company is AHM (Advanced Health Media). They are a services firm based in NJ that provides meeting planning services and other ancillary services to the Pharmaceuticals industry. Within a 30 day time span last spring, they were able to close 3 very large national deals with 3 of the top 10 global Pharmaceuticals companies. Great right? Right, but those 3 deals led to an acute need to hire over 450 people within 4 months, to be able to service and manage those new clients. AHM at that time had 1 part time recruiter, and 1 HR Business partner? What was the plan? Bring in an RPO firm. Lee & Pierson Associates was brought in to take over all strategic and tactical talent functions for the firm.

The plan – When the call was received by Lee & Pierson to hire over 450 people, it was a second "be careful what you wish for" phone call. Great company, large project, but "uh oh, here we go". That said, we immediately mobilized a "SWAT" like management team, and created the following success plan;

- **Step 1:** The 2 partners of LPA worked on site as consultants to the SVP HR for AHM for a 2 week period. We needed to understand the AHM company and culture, establish project roles, responsibilities, and expectations, develop and confirm the success profiles and search parameters, and do a thorough information transfer/exchange (i.e. obtain the job profiles, the salary information, the contact list for all of the hiring managers, establish the rules of engagement and process roll out)
- **Step 2:** LPA mobilize their talent project team. It was determined based on the number of roles that needed to be filled (450+) and the acute time metric in which to fill them, (120 days), that we needed a team of 17 people to complete this task on time and under budget. The team consisted of 2 Project Managers (1 Project Manager that managed reporting metrics and statistics and was aligned with the SVP HR), and another Project Manager to manage the recruitment team and all of the tactical operations of the project. This 2nd project manager was

aligned to the Director of HR who was also tasked with tactical operational responsibilities). We rounded out the team with 10 full life cycle recruiters, and 5 sourcers (1 sourcer was aligned with 2 recruiters)

The execution – Once the team of 17 was mobilized, each recruiter was aligned towards a position function and or a geographic location. We proactively scheduled 12 mass interview days to occur each Friday (1 per week over the course of the 12 week project) in which the AHM leadership team would see up to 30 people per day, and we attended 4 career fairs and held 4 career open houses. We utilized a strategy of direct sourcing, internet sourcing, employee referrals, and print and electronic job advertising.

The result – We were able to hire 462 people 14 days ahead of schedule, and we were able to achieve a cost per hire of \$2,004 for the totality of the project:

Keys to success - The upfront planning is the #1 key to success. The plan has to be collaborative in nature between the RPO vendor and the client, transparent to everyone involved, and it needs to receive 100% approval/”buy in” from the senior executive team. Each side (client & RPO vendor) has individual commitments, responsibilities, and production metrics that they need to hit on a pre-planned time schedule, that are only achieved if they are working as 1 unified team representing 1 unified cause. The results are almost limitless when capable professionals working as one have a goal to hit and work with the mindset that anything short of achieving that goal is a complete failure.

RPO (recruitment process outsourcing) as a talent strategy is not for everyone and every situation, but when there are large sustained hiring needs, and specific tie back to the business time metrics, an RPO is more often than not the right solution and the best solution.