



THE RIGHT WAY TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO AN EXECUTIVE RECRUITER

Boyden's Lindsay Landsberg shares top tips on how to approach and establish communications with executive recruiters

I'm not sure if I'm a typical executive recruiter in saying this but I receive thousands of unsolicited resumes. Thousands. What does that mean for you? How can you stand out? Retained executive recruiters work for companies to help find great talent for senior roles. At any given time, I am unlikely to be working on the exact role that you are looking for. Given those realities, what part should executive recruiters play in your search for your next career chapter? Here's how to think about it:

First of all, consider a relationship with a recruiter as one that should play out over the course of your career, not just when you are in transition. Secondly, know that direct networking is often the most productive route in looking for a job. Knowing a recruiter is important for the following reasons: 1) Once acquainted with your story and your background, I'll keep you in mind for searches that come up; 2) I can serve as a sounding board when you are in transition; and 3) I'd be happy to help you find senior talent when you need it.

Here are some tips on how to establish communication and build a relationship:

- 1. Find the right recruiter to contact:** We generally line up by geography and industry verticals: Industrial, Financial, Consumer, Retail, etc. and it is usually spelled out on our websites. Reach out to the recruiter who specializes in your field. Better yet, get introduced via someone in your network. Mass e-mails to everyone at a particular firm are likely to go unanswered. Sorry, I'm only human and don't warm up to "Dear Recruiter."
- 2. Personalize your email:** There seem to be a number of form letter emails with lines like: "I am confidentially testing the job market for a new opportunity" and "I am interested in speaking with you regarding your firm's services. I have a few questions about the industries, companies, and individuals for which you source job opportunities and candidates." How do I know there must be form letters? I receive hundreds of emails with identical wording. Make your email short, to the point, personalized to you, and please spell my name correctly and tell me how I can help you.
- 3. Please tell me what you are looking for:** What do you want to be when you grow up? Where would you love to work? That's your job to decide and to articulate well in a few short paragraphs. Please no open-ended emails to "get in touch when there's a fit." Spell out your target role, geography, size of company, industry vertical and I'll be able to help you much more effectively.
- 4. Make your resume compelling:** Don't just update it by adding bullet points to describe your most recent accomplishments. Take the time to get a professional to help you with your resume. Your two pages (no longer) need to make a clear, coherent case for your qualifications, not include everything

you did early in your career. In the same way wearing a new interview outfit can give you a boost of confidence, having your story straight and well-articulated in your "marketing material" (i.e. resume and LinkedIn) can make all the difference.

5. **Please send a PDF of your resume:** I'm personally reluctant to click on any link sent from someone I don't know, aren't you? A word document (.doc) is fine but the extra step of converting to a .pdf makes you look tech-savvy. It's a small thing but it speaks volumes.
6. **Send it to my work email, not LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is a terrible interface for downloading resumes. Most recruiters' work email interacts with candidate databases. Please make it easy on me and send it there.
7. **Ask for time judiciously:** If I accepted every offer to "buy me a quick cup of coffee in order to pick my brain," I'd be drowning in coffee and without brain cells. Please don't be offended when I can't respond; I'm simply inundated and can't help everyone who asks.
8. **Make it easy to find you again:** On every email -- every one -- please include your contact information (email, cellphone and LinkedIn profile link). If you are following up on your prior email, of course, I can search back through my emails, but why not make it easy?
9. **Want to introduce me to fellow job seekers? Please ask first:** Again, we receive thousands of requests for time, help, advice. If a recruiter has taken their time to speak with you, it's because they're looking to build a relationship. It is a faux pas to repay that kindness with an unsolicited email introducing your job seeker friend with a "you two should get to know each other." Please kindly ask first.
10. **Don't expect a job from a first introduction:** We're aware of the searches our firm is working on, most of which won't be the right fit for your skills and background right at the time that you are looking. Rather, think of the interaction as a conversation that will continue over time. I'm glad to get to know you and your story and include your resume in our database but chances are I don't have a relevant search right away. I'll call when we do.