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**“FRESH IDEAS & SIMPLE TRUTHS FOR FINDING GREAT
TALENT...THAT FIT”**





BACKGROUND

- Average tenure for a CMO currently is 28 months
 - Will this ever approach levels of other C-Suite roles?
- Marketing has lost luster and influence in executive quarters
 - 7% of most highly compensated executives have marketing in their title
- Client budget levels reduced 20+%
 - Will they return to historical levels?
- Agency client relationships average 2 years
 - AOR?
- Big reviews for new business (except media) dramatically reduced
 - New business has gone underground and organic
- Agency staffing levels reduced to historical lows
 - Will they return to historical levels?





WHY?

- Profitability maintenance at reduced revenue levels
- Uneven abilities of CMO's and agencies to apply accountability metrics to support and track marketing recommendations/programs
- Uneven abilities of CMO's and agencies to solve business problems in new ways in expanding communications channels – with a back drop of elevated expectations for new approaches
- Expectations misalignment
- Cultural fit misalignment





WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- No need to wait - we are not returning to historical levels of anything
- Great work = ideas that works
- The ground is leveled between assorted sized agencies
- Agencies will focus on 3 things:
 - Ideas
 - Clients
 - Their people
- Additions to agency staff will be more stringently viewed, created and vetted by:
 - Relationship to revenue
 - Creating new/changing capability
 - Cultural fit
 - Transformational players
- One person with great talent who fits will make more of a difference in an agency





PURPOSE FOR THIS DISCUSSION

OVERALL TALENT LEVEL FOR AGENCIES WILL BE RAISED. THE QUESTION IS WHO WILL GET A GREATER SHARE OF THIS TALENT?

- Fresh ideas
- Simple truths
- Fit





TALENT IS TABLE STAKES. THE REAL DIFFERENCE IS THE QUALITY OF THE PERSON AND THEIR FIT WITH YOUR AGENCY.

- There is no search so narrow that only one person has the right experience
- Marketing/advertising is about problem solving and problems...quality people rise to the challenge differently in a consistent manner
- Fit allows people to activate the company resources effectively





FIT IS EVERYTHING. PROJECT CANDIDATES INTO YOUR AGENCY & OPPORTUNITY.

- Into your company's culture
 - Explicitly agree & articulate your values required with your interview team & then vet for alignment
- Into the responsibilities
- Into the group they would lead
- Into their collaborative peer group
- Into the processes and protocols they need to succeed in/with
- Into your clients
 - Personal value system, work & pacing style, view of partnership, client view of agency highest value and space for improvement
- Future circumstances





THE BEST EXPERIENCE IS CIRCUMSTANTIAL. FINDING PEOPLE THAT HAVE BEEN THROUGH WHAT LIES AHEAD OF YOUR BUSINESS IS MOST IMPORTANT.

- Category experience is over worked
- Look harder at the relevance in people's careers
- Hire people for what's ahead versus the issue of now
- Metrics accountability and progressive thinking in digital marketing are premium





COURAGE, CURIOSITY, THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND PERSUASIVENESS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS.

- Marketing and advertising agency work is lonely, early adopter, leadership work that takes courage
- Many opportunities for personal standards degradation
- Curiosity and thought leadership are entwined and represent the intersection of intelligence and passion
- Thought leadership requires persuasive selling





DEVELOP A SET OF STRATEGIES FOR TALENT ACQUISITION.

- Consistent selling points
 - Company & culture
 - People
 - Location
- Consistent articulation of growth vision
- Protocol/process for doing a search
 - May vary by level of function
 - Interviewing and decision making
 - Team, approach, roles, prep/briefing ahead of time, feedback, decision method
 - Timing expectations
- Define the type of search firm(s) that would be a good fit for your agency





DIFFERENT STAFF SOLUTIONS ARE GOOD AT DIFFERENT TIMES. PAUSE EVERY TIME A ROLE IS OPEN AND EVALUATE WHETHER IT'S A GOOD TIME FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

- Eliminate inertia-based replacement
- People are what really change company direction not strategy articulation
- Review and update job descriptions of an open position and within their group





TALENT IS ATTRACTED TO TALENT. YOUR CURRENT TEAM DEFINES THE TALENT YOU CAN ATTRACT, SO SHOW CANDIDATES YOUR BEST PLAYERS.

- It's like college football recruiting
- How you treat them and their capability are key
- It doesn't happen over night...start with a few pillars





TALENT IS ATTRACTED TO AUTHENTICITY. GREAT TALENT WANTS TO UNDERSTAND AND INTERNALIZE YOUR VALUES, HUMANNESS AND REALNESS. SO LET IT SHOW.

- Changing jobs is risky, you need to create trust
- This creates emotional commitment and that helps negate issues that arise





PROBLEMS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES... DRILL DEEP TO FIND CANDIDATES' LITTLE DEAL BREAKERS.

- Understand how and what candidate's are emotionally wired to
- Just like marketing...understand influencers
- Where are they with other opportunities?
- Heavy travel has become an issue for candidates
- Relocation has become an issue for candidates





REFERENCES SHOULD WORK HARDER. MAKE REFERENCES MORE THAN A ROUTINE — THEY CAN BE A KEY TO HELPING YOU DETERMINE FIT.

- Early phase if needed for additional candidate perspective
- Ask references to rate a candidate on key dimensions and derive strengths/weaknesses and issues from this
- Ask references to project a candidate into your opportunity





PRE-QUALIFY YOUR OFFER.

- Avoid a yes-no response situation to an unknown offer letter
- Create a “mutually acceptable” tone to the negotiation process
- Discover the must haves and bendable issues in the compensation package
- Increase your success rate
- Give yourself better warning to engage back-up candidate(s) or sourcing continuation





IT'S ABOUT SELLING. TO GET THE BEST TALENT YOU NEED AN IMPACTFUL, WELL-ROUNDED SELLING STRATEGY FOR EVERY SEARCH.

- No such thing as a buyers market for the best talent
- Share a vision
- Issue a challenge
- Develop a POV on what your selling points are. What's special about:
 - The company
 - The people
 - The role
 - The location
- Selling and treating candidates right are the same thing





SELLING AND TREATING CANDIDATES RIGHT ARE THE SAME THING.

- Do a brief, not a job description
- Be even toned
- Work to gain trust
- Be authentic
- Be straight. Be realistic.
- Give'em a good workout
- See the person
- DWYSYD
- Move quickly





MOVE QUICKLY.

- Tune your responsiveness setting to the same speed as client responsiveness
- The time transpired curve works just like new business development
 - Time transpired reduces success rate
- Search process decision making = candidate projected decision making process for the agency
- Update, update, update
 - Candidates get frustrated with the process
 - Candidates create imagined scenarios
 - Candidates need to juggle effectively to stay engaged in a search





CANDIDATES WHO DON'T MAKE IT.

- If you are not going to go forward with them, tell them quickly
 - Do it live
 - Tell them why
- Give them a perspective for the long-term with your agency
- Treat them like you would like to be treated
- Help them be better
- Help them connect





SOME DIFFERENT TACTICAL IDEAS TO CONSIDER.

- Develop a compelling portion of your website devoted to talent acquisition
- Create a signature take away for candidate visits
- Do thank you notes for visiting which include:
 - Why we like you
 - Why you fit
 - Why this would be good for you
 - What are next steps and the process timing
- Put “great talent conversations” onto your leadership meeting agenda
- Build “acquires great talent” into your performance evaluation system





WRAP-UP - TO CONSIDER.

- The bar is low - it's easy to stand out
- Doing well in finding great talent is largely about vigorously practicing simple truths and then folding in fresh ideas
- Is the right person(s) on point at your agency to find great talent?
- CEO involvement (especially in mid to small agencies) in acquiring talent should be active and part of the process
 - Can be a powerful part of selling
 - Who to hire directive will be problematic
 - Veto power on who we are about to hire sets the tone occasionally
- WOM is very powerful in attracting talent...and it crosses back and forth with new business development
- Tell clients about what you are doing to elevate your team and find great talent





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