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## The Role Of The Recruitment Agency

A recruitment agency acts as a bridge between job seekers and their potential employers. Organizations outsource the functions of recruiting employees to recruitment agencies so as to focus on their core business. A recruitment agency on the other hand specializes in finding and recruiting the best people for a job opening. Recruitment agencies may perform a small part of or a large proportion of the entire recruitment cycle. The tasks assigned to recruitment agencies may include advertising for a job opportunity, receiving the applications, short listing, conducting interviews, identifying the successful candidate and then forwarding them to the contracting organization's hiring team.

But apart from recruiting, a recruiting agency may also offer other services including payroll administration and training job seekers and employers on techniques to use when applying for jobs and short listing candidates respectively. The size of recruitment companies differs with some only servicing single neighborhoods to those with a global reach. The ones with a global reach will be preferred by organizations that also have a global reach thus allowing them to use one recruitment firm to handle all their hiring needs. The ones serving a small area can boast the benefit of having a deeper understanding of the **local job market**.

After being engaged by a client, a recruitment agency will advertise for an open position using the most appropriate channels whether it be through a newspaper ad, an advertisement in a professional magazine or through the internet job boards or on their own site. The agency can also opt to use applications they already have in their existing resume bank where the skills match the job.

One of the key characteristics of established recruiting agencies is head hunting. Instead of waiting for people to apply, the agency will scour the market for people who have the potential to fill the role. They will then approach the person and make them an offer. Once a candidate confirms their interest, the recruitment agency will on behalf of their client negotiate salary and benefits that would be required to make the person switch jobs. Head hunting is a particularly appropriate agency recruitment technique when recruiting for senior management and top **executive positions**. Depending on the agency recruitment model used, the agency may also incorporate psychometric tests make sure the persons shortlisted is appropriate for the job.

As far as actual interviews go, the style used will differ based on the needs of each client. A common practice is to have the recruiting agency perform a first level interview for the person's with impressive resumes. The second level interviews for the remaining candidates are then conducted



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by the agency as well as representatives from the employer. The third level interview where applicable and especially for senior executive positions, may be conducted by the client alone. There are of course many variations to this model ranging from the recruitment agent doing all the interviews to the client handling all the interviews.

After the interviews and the final identification of the person who is the best fit, the hiring process is then invoked. The hiring process will usually be handled almost exclusively by the employer but there are times where even this paperwork is left to the agency to manage. The agency will usually be expected to do this when hiring temporary or contract staff.

So how do the recruitment agencies make their money? The conventional model is to charge the employer. Depending on the level of engagement, frequency of hiring and number of people being hired on average, the agency recruitment fee may either be a fixed standing charge paid per month or quarter or could be tied to each successfully recruited employee. Companies that have heavy recruitment need hiring many employees prefer paying a flat rate while those that only recruit once in a while will opt for paying a fee only when they need to hire.

Some recruiting agencies choose to also charge a fee to **job seekers**. This is quite rare and is a risky bet since the rule of thumb in the public's psyche is that anyone that charges you to get you a job is quite possibly a swindler. It is often viewed as a get rich scheme since there is ever a guarantee that the job will be secured. If a recruitment agency intends to charge the job applicants, it is better not to do it directly but rather to negotiate with the employer such that, for instance, the commission will be deducted from the successful applicant's first salary.