

The Training Room

Challenge: Equatorial Recruitment, the market leader in the provision of recruitment services to the design and creative industries purchased Huntley Recruitment, a small office support agency in early 2002. Margaret Kirby, the Managing Director saw the purchase as a way to break into the competitive but lucrative office support market. The existing client base was loyal yet very small and Margaret knew that an injection of sales was necessary. The Recruitment Training Company was initially approached to conduct training on the preparation of major sales strategies and proposal and tender writing, as Margaret was keen to pitch for the upcoming NSW Government Tender.

Process

The Recruitment Training Company was initially briefed by Helen O'Brien, the General Manager of Huntley. We requested background information on the company and each individual consultant that we would be working with. This is an essential first step in providing a tailored solution to the business.

As a result of the meeting, The Recruitment Training Company recognised the first step was a group training session on Preparation of Proposals and Tenders. This workshop is designed as an introduction to the preferred supplier process for small and medium sized recruitment companies and provides useful tips for preparing a response. We delivered this initial three hour session to the group on a Saturday as it was decided that we couldn't take the consultants off the desk for three hours during the working week.

Huntley prepared their response to the tender and submitted it a week before it was due. They along with most office support agencies in Sydney waited with baited breath for months whilst the responses were assessed. Huntley then received word that DPWS committee would

be conducting a site visit which was the next step in the process. The recruitment Training Company was then contracted to coach the team on what to expect during the site visit. This was again undertaken in a group session and role-plays were practiced to ensure that the key stakeholders were prepared for the site visit. The Recruitment Training Company developed a tailored session, encompassing objection handling and closing for the Huntley team to give them the confidence required for this important step in the sales process.

Here was a very successful small and specialised agency that was suddenly breaking into mainstream recruitment via one of the largest clients in NSW – the NSW State Government! This was the first tender response they had ever prepared and they were ecstatic to discover that their document had got them through to the next stage in the process. We worked with the team and role-played some of the questions that may be asked during the site visit.

The Result

Although an extremely successful business, Margaret and her team had never been subjected to the preferred supplier process but recognised that it was the way of the future and that skills were needed to ensure that her team was well placed to compete against other suppliers. Huntley now actively source clients that have preferred suppliers in place, which complements their existing boutique operation.

As a result, Huntley have become an ongoing client for The Recruitment Training Company and we have worked with

the individual consultants one on one to develop their specific skill set. From attending client visits with the consultant to developing specific sales strategies for their prospects, The Recruitment Training Company has providing coaching and training on the job.

Since June, Huntley have successfully won two sole supply arrangements as a result of putting into practice the techniques learned.

We asked Margaret Kirby, founder and Director of Equatorial & Huntley to comment:

RE: Employing a training company for the purpose of pitching for PSA's is fairly unusual, why did you take this approach?

MK: As the PSA process is fairly new to the space that Equatorial usually works in we had not been exposed to pitching for business before. This was a way to get our guys to brush up on sales skills whilst incorporating a new string to their bow

RE: What do you feel was key to the training given to you and your staff in order for it to be successful?

MK: It provided some very useful tools, by that I mean it equipped us to understand the process of tendering for business and the language required to broach it, subject sell it and close.

RE: What difference has the training made to the business and the individuals within it?

MK: Increased revenue, but most importantly the long term gains to be had from having enthused consultants who now have a greater skill level. They were unsure initially as to how it was going to work the training gave them the confidence put it together and pull it off!

Send your training issues to The Recruitment Training Company and Recruitment EXTRA to benefit from a complimentary assessment and case study in "The Training Room".

Gaynor Lowndes

