

The Magic of Metrics

By Jon Bartos

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I hear it all the time. Recruiters ask, “What is the one thing I can do to hit it big?”

Managers say, “Can a hopeless wannabe transform into a superstar?”

Like rubbing the jeweled bottle and waiting for a genie to pop out we hope someone, or something, will grant our wishes. But recruiters are lucky. Because in our industry, there is a magic answer. It is metrics.

Hitting your metrics’ targets is the single most important success factor in executive recruiting. It doesn’t matter if you’re a new recruiter struggling to make your first placement, or a million-dollar producer striving to become a multi-million dollar record breaker: *metrics work career magic.*

When I look at a recruiter’s numbers, whether one of my employees, a peer, or a client in my executive coaching program, I can tell if they are going to win big or fail miserably. There are many measurements out there, but 20 percent of the metrics get 80 percent of the results.

Quantity and Quality Metrics are the primary indicators I can utilize to help recruiters improve overnight. Quantity Metrics are the raw numbers you must hit on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. By keeping a close eye on your quantity, you will never have an unpleasant surprise at the end of the month. You will know if you have the sustained volume of activity to meet your goals. Quality Metrics are ratios, numbers that don’t lie. They tell us how good we are at what we do.

Quantity Metrics.

Time is money. In our industry it is the absolute. A successful recruiter has got to have quantity, the hours on the phone, to earn. Four is the lucky number. If you have four hours per day of phone connect time, you have enough time in the marketplace to be successful. If you don’t, chances are you won’t meet your goals.

I know there are recruiters reading this thinking, “I bring in \$500,000 annually and I am only on the phone two hours a day. I don’t need to make any more calls.”

Admittedly, with high numbers and low phone time, there is strong quality in the work being done. But if a recruiter has been getting by on two hours a day, imagine what could be gained with four hours of daily connect time. Doubled productivity and income? If you don’t have the discipline of strict time management, you simply aren’t realizing your potential. What are you doing the other six hours per day?

In a strong market, recruiters may be able to get away with limited phone time. We call it a false positive—the ability to get significant results in under four hours a day. Because while it may work when the economy is humming, it will not when the market turns, or a recession occurs.

Develop a four-hour-a-day habit now, so you won't go out of business like half the industry did in 2002.

As Kathy Lonneman, a long-time manager with the MRI Network said, "Imagine you own a retail store in a prime location. Obviously you want your store open as many hours as possible to get customers to come in and buy from you. Recruiting is no different. When you are on the phone, you are open for business. When you are off the phone, your store is closed."

Does your store have the operating hours to be successful? Are you open long enough to serve your customers?

I've employed and coached hundreds of recruiters. I've seen too many people try to hide behind sheer call volume. It is the measured Market Connect Hours – the time on the phone with the people who have the power to get you closer to a placement—that count. Hours worked, number of phone calls made, time spent chatting with your buddies, repeatedly checking your voicemail, these aren't the meaningful connections with professionals who matter. For real success, limit the \$5 activities like data entry, and increase the revenue-generating phone time with customers and candidates.

Planning is critical to productive phone time. To hit four hours, most people need to make in excess of 100 calls over the course of the workday. It's about focus. Stay on the phones. Don't sift through emails or get distracted by office chatter. It takes hard work, but those who plan well and stick to high-value activities will reap the rewards.

Although there are other key quantity metrics including New Market and Candidate Presentations, Job Orders, Job Orders converted to Search Assignments, Employer Presentations, Send Outs and Placements, Market Connect Hours is the single, most crucial metric to recruiting success.

If you don't have call-accounting software – get it now. Measuring connect hours is the most critical metric of them all. Not knowing these numbers is like a professional ball player not keeping his stats, a no-win situation.

Quality Metrics.

The time spent in the marketplace paying your dues and building relationships is vital. Quality grows from experience and quantity. The key quality measurements are: Dollars Earned per Market Connect Hour, Job Order to Placement Ratio, Employer Presentation to Send Out Ratio, and New Market Presentation to Employer Presentation Ratio, and most importantly, First Time Send-Out to Placement Ratio

Your FTSP Ratio reveals the quality of your search assignment or job order, and the quality of your candidates. There is not a more important ratio in recruiting. The lower your ratio, the higher your earnings.

High ratios can be due to a poor understanding of your client's needs (bad job order) or unsuitable candidates. For beginning recruiters, it can be both. I have seen ratios as high as 50:1... 50 first-time send outs to one placement! Those are odds I wouldn't accept. On the

reverse side I have seen 2:1 ratios. These are the rare individuals who have developed a true understanding of their clients' corporate culture and hiring needs. They only present the right talent to the right people... quality built on time in the marketplace.

To improve your ratios, define the search. Only work with well-developed job orders. If they aren't that way, get them that way. Every search assignment should have a high sense of urgency, clear specifications, and realistic client expectations. When evaluating a potential send out, determine if the candidate matches the client's specification exactly? 90%? 80%?

If you've done your homework and you're still failing with a high ratio, call the client and re-qualify the search. Take a second look at your candidate's skills and personality. If you have a client who demands to interview more than three candidates per search, you need to reset expectations. You may want to try something like this, "I've sent you the best three out of hundreds of candidates we qualified. You've seen the A players, which of the B and C players do you want to see next?"

The value a recruiter brings to a client is only as strong as the talent he brings on board. That is why understanding and applying metrics, objective evaluations of professional time and skills, is so important.

If your company measures the critical Quantity and Quality Metrics, success is yours for the taking. The most comprehensive system for helping to manage yourself and your team by the numbers is the www.rpm-usa.com dashboard system. It's a phd in the science of recruiting. It is simple to use and provide huge benefits to the manager, rookie or million dollar producer. It is time tested and an excellent resource for any recruiter or recruiting manager.

Essentially, our profession is a science. Those who have the phone time and the excellent ratios, earn the money. But market-connect hours and FTSP ratio metrics can work real recruiting magic. Minding your metrics will help you meet your career goals, and master the science of recruiting.

Jon Bartos is a premier speaker and consultant on all aspects of human capital. As president and CEO of Jonathan Scott International in Mason, Ohio, he has achieved industry-leading success. He is one of an elite group of executive recruiters who bill over \$1 million annually. Jon has established JSI as a top 10% executive search and contract staffing firm. The office has won over 17 international awards in the MRI Network, including International Billing Manager of the Year and Top 10 SC Office. Jon recently launched Magnum, a personal coaching program based on his own recruiting success. Jon also has also launched www.jonbartos.com to help recruiters in the industry achieve their best. Jon can be reached at 513-701-5910 or jon@jonathanscott.com