

MODERN SETTING- OLD VALUES

This is a story of old values in a very modern setting: a dot-com post-IPO...featured on ABC TV...very hip...open warehouse offices...lots of stock options.

With strong, dynamic personalities, the senior managers are start-up drivers. They have a common vision for the goals of the business, but sometimes do not share a common vision for who should be hired. Consensus can be hard to achieve. Consensus mattered because this client wanted us to help them fill three senior management positions. Without consensus about what they were looking for, no candidate would ever be approved by all of the members of senior management. They all had a vote.

Onrushing events continuously overtook them. They were too busy to sit down and give us details about what they were looking for. There was no time. For the creative director opening, the direction was, "Find somebody who is bright."

Our consultant intuitively knew this meant, "Find someone from our industry." There are only 20 companies like our client, so she called them. She talked to their creative directors, found out how the companies worked and what the creative directors did.

Our consultant wrote a qualifications statement from what she had learned and showed it to the chief technology manager. After a few changes, he agreed, happy and a little surprised that she knew the industry and the language so well. She then repeated the process with the president and the CEO. Through good research and diplomacy, she had forged consensus and a recruiting target!

Three candidates were found, interviewed and referenced. Our consultant had won the trust of the senior managers. Her opinions about the candidates were solicited. The senior managers used her assessments as they attempted to reach consensus with each other. They succeeded. The creative director was hired. The cost was 8.37% of salary.

Hard work and trust were the bedrock. Communication and consensus were the foundation. Three senior positions successfully filled was the result. Old values work even in very modern companies.