

Case Study – Logistics Sector – Challenging Recruitment

Office: Pune – India

Contact: Jyoti Puranik Joshi

Industry: Logistics

The process:

We worked through a very challenging vacancy in December 2020. The lead was generated through a generic candidate call, and was subsequently converted into the client (International Logistics company). We had several meetings with the client and eventually completed a detailed qualifier with the HR.

After a thorough search and selection process, from our extensive Logistics database and extended network, we presented 3 profiles for the first shortlist which were a perfect match to the role. 2 candidates were selected for interview. One candidate was taken ahead to the 2nd round and this person was finally offered the job.

This candidate's notice period was 3 months, their resignation was accepted and reference check was done. As part of our process, we also speak with the spouse and we meet the candidate to have good rapport with them. Every was going smoothly and we kept in regular contact with the candidate.

Then, after serving the notice period of 90 days the candidate called me unexpectedly on the date of joining (2nd April 2021) that there was some family medical emergency and they wouldn't be able to start work.

We spoke to the HR and agreed a buffer of a week for the candidate to join then. During this time, the candidate kept showing more red flags and the communication with us ground to a halt. We tried reaching them through all the ways to understand their real reason for the delay. However there was no positive outcome. They simply dropped off the grid and we were completely ghosted!

The Client was very upset to know about this and there was a pressure to look for a replacement quickly. As recruiters, this is incredibly frustrating, especially as we were so careful to keep a high level of communication with the candidate throughout the process. Break downs in communication do unfortunately happen, such is the reality of the fast moving job market at the moment.

Plan B:

Fortunately, we had a replacement on standby, since 2 candidates were shortlisted from the initial lot and were equally relevant to this role. I reached out to the second candidate to understand if they were still interested in this opportunity, they agreed and we represented the CV.

Overcoming personal challenges:

The challenge with this 2nd candidate was, the ill health of their 18 months old son, diagnosed with rare type of cancer and was undergoing treatment. It was also during the Covid 19 lockdown period with restrictions on travelling. Since they were, understandably, very occupied with their child's treatment, it was really difficult to match up their availability with the clients to line up the discussions. We had to work closely with the client and candidate to find times which suited both to talk.



Due to the lock down restriction on travel and their limited time, all the interview rounds for this candidate were virtual. There was no chance to meet them, we had to put a lot of faith in our gut instincts, screening processes and trust in the candidate.

We were in the regular touch with the candidate throughout, also following closely the health of their child. They were fully committed to the process, it was their wish to continue when possible with the interview process. We respected that and were able to align the interviews with the medical appointments. The interview was a success, the client was in agreement with us, this candidate was a great fit. They were shortlisted, and subsequently offered the job.

The notice period was 90 days but it was negotiable. There were multiple discussion between myself, candidate and HR on the timing of their start. We also needed to ensure there was continuous medical cover and medical insurance policy in place for child's ongoing treatment.

We had to time the resignation carefully, after the child's surgery, when the candidate was more at ease, and ready to tender their resignation. This candidate was very brave and sincere, they remained professional throughout and managed to attend all our calls and meetings, despite having a very sick child with a serious medical condition, undergoing intense treatment.

Finally the date of joining the company was agreed to be 16th August 2021. We again followed our process of Reference check, Spouse call etc.

Final twist:

After putting in so much of effort and convincing both the stakeholder and candidate at get to this point, we thought this position was near to closure. However, two weeks before the joining date on 2nd August 2021 the HR manager called me and said, "Jyoti, please ask your candidate not to join our company". I was shocked on hearing these words, on asking for the reason, I was told, "There are many internal changes and some cultural imbalances within the organisation at the moment." The HR manager explained they had concern that the candidate won't be comfortable until the changes had been implemented and the business settled.

Now this was a painful situation, after putting in all our efforts to make this candidate join, the client was throwing up surprises!

We helped our client understand that after all these hurdles, they should honour their agreement and ethically follow the process through, especially as the candidate was already serving their notice and was ready to join. The client understood this and after more discussions with the candidate about the internal changes, they all agreed to continue.

The outcome:

Finally the candidate joined on 16th of August 2021, making this as the toughest closures for me from both candidate and Client perspectives.

We are still in connect with this candidate, they are doing very well within the company and are on track to be one of the top performing employees.

Written by: Jyoti Puranik Joshi, Team Leader, Antal Pune, India

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