

Ten Signs You're Headhunter Material -- And Ten Signs You're Not

Ten Signs You're Recruiter Material

1. You're still working in the same industry you entered at the beginning of your career.
2. You have moved up (not necessarily into a management role) during your career.
3. You have many or most of the technical and/or functional skills a person in your profession needs at your level.
4. You have held primarily long-term jobs.
5. You don't show any obvious employment gaps in your resume.
6. You have priced yourself in the middle of the market for the kind of work you do.
7. You work in a metro area where there are at least a handful of large employers, lots of small and medium-sized employers and a sturdy business ecosystem.
8. Anyone would glance at your resume and say "Okay, this person has been pursuing their career and thriving at it." Your talent is obvious from your career progression.
9. You are looking for job titles that many employers are hiring for at any given time.
10. You went to a recognized college, trade or professional school or university and graduated on schedule.

Ten Signs You're Not Recruiter Material

1. It's taken you some years to settle on a career direction, or perhaps you're not sure what your best career direction might be. Perhaps you're happy changing careers every few years. Maybe you're changing careers against your will right now, because your old career disappeared. Recruiters may have a hard time getting their clients to interview career-changers, whatever the reason for the shift.
2. You've moved in and out of the corporate structure numerous times. Maybe you've started businesses, sold them or closed them down.

3. Your career path is non-linear and requires explanation.
4. Your education is in a completely different area from your employment (or so it appears on paper, anyway)! Perhaps you don't have a degree.
5. You accumulated a significant portion of your professional training, experience and recognition in a field that recruiters and/or hiring managers might not understand. For instance, you may have recently left military service to find that civilian managers and recruiters can't understand your resume for beans. They don't understand the words. You may have left academia to find that no one comprehends your accomplishments there.
6. You have been involved in multiple start-ups, consulting ventures or other non-traditional employment situations. Your resume could freak a hiring manager out - and recruiters know that.
7. Your resume is written in a friendly, conversational way instead of the cookie-cutter "Results-oriented professional" mode. Some recruiters won't pass on your resume to their clients unless it's written in Corporate Zombie Speak. They're afraid to give their clients something the client has never seen before. That's okay!
8. You have the talents and experiences the job requires, but you don't have the job titles a fearful client might be looking for. The more fearful-of-change a hiring manager or their appointed resume-screener is, the less likely they will be to see how orchestrating your city's largest arts festival every summer qualifies you to project-manage one of their initiatives. Take heart: people who can't make logical leaps don't deserve you anyway!
9. You have a non-standard working situation — for instance, you work from home three days a week. You may have found awesome managers over the years who loved your schedule, but many recruiters will shy away from putting forward a resume if a candidate has any unusual requirements.
10. Finally, you may have a recruiter-unfriendly resume if you are new to the area you're job-hunting in or haven't moved there yet.

More and more smart leaders are realizing that they need fresh ideas, new perspectives and an outsider's view on their work more than they care to admit. Those are the managers you deserve to work for.

If you spruce up your LinkedIn profile and recruiters still don't bite, that's okay. There are plenty of other ways to get a job!