

TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF:
CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LIFE, LOVE AND
WORK™

RECRUITERS ON RECRUITING

Marcia Stein, PHR

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered about the people whose job it is to fill openings at companies? I work in Human Resources in the Silicon Valley, and when presenting career workshops, I discovered that few people knew there were various types of recruiters. There are a wide variety of recruiting skills and specialties, and some job seekers believe all they need to do is contact a recruiter and that person will find them a job. It doesn't work that way!

Discussing careers with friends and colleagues in the field revealed that many entered recruiting in a circuitous way – it was not their first choice of a profession. Recruiting seems to be one of those wonderful “accidental” careers.

The recruiters interviewed for this book discussed their career paths, some of their techniques, tips for potential recruiters and useful information for job seekers in general. It was exciting and interesting to interview my colleagues and provide the opportunity for them to share their stories with you.

My website provides articles and books regarding life, love and work. If there is an occupation you'd like to read about or a person you feel would be of interest to others, please contact me at mstein@ourhrsite.com or visit me on the web at www.ourhrsite.com. I'm just a click away.

Marcia

SHARE YOUR STORY

I'd enjoy hearing from you about this book. What did you enjoy most? How did these stories affect you? Did you gain information for your career path or did you learn how to work with recruiters in a different way?

You're also invited to share your stories with me. If accepted, your story or suggestion may be published either as an individual article or as part of a new book. You can send your suggestion along with your complete contact information to mstein@ourhrsite.com, or you can see my form on the website at www.ourhrsite.com.

It's been a real pleasure interviewing these professionals and I hope you enjoy reading about their paths.

I'm grateful for my colleagues who shared their time and their stories, the professionals who helped me by transcribing, editing, and creating some beautiful artwork.

Most of all, I appreciate my family and am thankful they believe in me and support this project. My husband, Bill, listened to endless conversation and brainstormed with me, tolerating my long hours on the computer. I have a special thank-you for my dear Aunt Polly, the Editor-in-Chief, who oversaw the final product and ensured a better understanding of the field by expanding the Glossary.

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N oelle Tardieu

Noelle has experience in software quality assurance and has worked at an employment agency. Her technical background, curiosity and interest in people have led to a dynamic position as a sourcer and recruiter at Yahoo! in Sunnyvale, California.

Noelle: I've been at Yahoo! over four years working as a Specialist Talent Scout, often referred to as a sourcer. I'm great at finding talent and I've worked at almost every part of Yahoo!: Finance, G&A [General and Administration], Marketing, Sales, Executive, Exec Admin and now I'm in Engineering. Basically they put me on when they have a fire – meaning that there's a problem area or something's happened and they need help. Right now I'm doing a full recruiter job and sourcing because what they need is candidates. So many recruiters have gotten to the point where all they want to do is the process and maybe a little bit of account management, but they forget the whole thing is about flow – it's about getting good candidates into the process. That's what I do; I try to find candidates that are not on job boards. My thing is teaching – I did a training yesterday – and it's all about the different tools that sourcers have and this continues to evolve. Now we can actually create customized search engines for ourselves – sourcers here do this and it is evolving into new areas. It's just amazing. You never know it all when it comes to sourcing. You continually learn more and more and I love that.

Marcia: Tell me how you got into recruiting.

Noelle: I started out in Tech Support and went into QA [quality assurance]. I was in QA for almost 15 years. I was at Apple for 10 years and I was at Symantec where I specialized in graphic applications. I loved talking to the beta test sites and I loved all that stuff. For years people would say, "Oh, you should be in sales, you should be in marketing with your

personality." But I was a single mom and my son has special needs and I needed a job where I was mostly working 9 to 5. Once in a while there was some overtime, but usually it was a very straight kind of thing. It wasn't until my son moved out where I said I'm ready for something new. I'd taken a Myers-Briggs test at a career evaluation at Claris. The person doing the training kind of whispered in my ear, "Have you ever thought about recruiting?" I'd never even thought about it. "You're an ENFP; you'd be a great recruiter." ["ENFP" refers to a personality type revealed through the Myers-Briggs Indicator.]

I thought, wow, I should look into this and I did. I had just started a project; it was Claris Works for kids and it ended up being education product of the year. It was going to be probably about a two-year project and I really wanted to finish it and I liked my team. There's a thing about engineering – you're part of a team, you have a commitment and you want to finish the project.

I started volunteering at recruiting events and reaching out and they used to say, "Why do you want to do this?" I said I just wanted to check it out. The more I looked into it, the more I liked it. The part that was great about QA was the investigative, finding the tools and getting that gem, that bug or that great candidate. So, it sort of did fit in my profile. I quit my job in '97 and took a \$30,000 a year recruiting job. I had just gotten married and I said this is my chance to do a career I really want to do. My son was in a good situation and I did it and never looked back.

Marcia: What kind of recruiting job was it?

Noelle: It was an agency recruiting job. I went to work for this woman, Lisa Pisacane; she's absolutely brilliant. She took a chance on me and I learned everything from her. The first year I doubled my salary from what I made as a QA person. But it wasn't about the money - I took to it like a duck to water.

Marcia: Did she teach you about finding candidates or finding job orders, or everything simultaneously?

Noelle: Yes, Lisa showed me how she successfully sourced. I also used some of my QA bug finding skills. I brought in Adobe, 3Com and others. I also had several contractors on the books. I made a half million dollars for them the first year, which is not too bad in 1997. After Lisa left the company, the new leadership kept saying, "Every year we want you to double your numbers." I was already working long hours the second year– really pretty hard – and I said, I can't double my output. I had some great people on contract and high fill rates. I worked for Lisa again when I went to an Internet startup.

Marcia: What do you think was the key to your success?

Noelle: I had a really great leader/mentor in Lisa. She's absolutely one of those people that are genuinely great and ethical, too. She is nice from the first call to the last call of the day. I learned a lot from her. I had that whole sourcing piece –I just developed that part. Then I went to work for a startup and I was there for a couple of years and my goal was to get into an IPO [Initial Public Offering] and I did. I helped them hire 250 really good people.

What I realized is in recruiting you have all this process stuff that takes you away from the fun stuff and for me that was the sourcing – that became clear. I went back to Apple as a recruiter but I realized sourcing was beginning to become a different area. In some companies it was still a coordinator; it hadn't come to the level that it is now at Yahoo! where recruiters and sourcers are on the same level playing field. I just really keyed in on that and it became a focus for me. When I came here they said, "We want you to come and help us with the sourcing – this is a new thing for us." Another guy and I were hired at