

# THE GRADUATE RECRUITMENT CAREERS TOOLKIT

A Definitive Guide to Becoming a  
Recruitment Consultant

## A Definitive Guide to Becoming a Recruitment Consultant

So, you're looking for a career in recruitment. Are you a people person? Do you love the idea of helping people find their dream jobs and make the most of their careers? If the answer is yes, then you might be a great fit as a recruitment consultant.

We're going to give you the inside scoop on everything you need to know to get your recruitment career off to a flying start. You'll learn about:

- [The role of the recruitment consultant](#)
- [What makes the BEST recruitment consultants?](#)
- [Deciding which sector and which area of recruitment is right for you](#)
- [How to find a recruitment consultant job](#)
- [How to ace your interview](#)
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### The role of the recruitment consultant

Recruitment consultants help companies find the right people to fill their open positions, and you help job seekers find their dream jobs. You'll be working in a fast-paced environment that demands a lot from you.

You'll need to be able to juggle multiple clients at once, so it's important that you're organized and able to multitask. There are also plenty of opportunities for growth and personal development here - we encourage our employees to take on new roles and responsibilities as they grow into them.

You understand that every client has different needs, so you tailor your services to suit their requirements. Recruiters take a proactive approach, visiting clients to build and develop positive relationships with them.

As a recruiter, you also develop a good understanding of the client company and their industry, what they do and their work culture and environment.

Part of the role is to advertise jobs by writing and placing adverts to attract new candidates (and using the network of candidates which you'll build during your career), creating a shortlist of candidates for the client, and preparing CVs and correspondence to forward to clients regarding suitable applicants as requested.

If this sounds like something that would excite you, then keep reading!

## What makes the BEST recruitment consultants?

Recruitment consultants are great negotiators. They act as mediators between companies and candidates, ensuring that everyone gets what they need out of the recruitment process. This means that they often help to find the best possible package between each party's goals, for example, by suggesting a higher salary or benefits package than the company initially planned on offering to attract a candidate who is on the fence about working there. Equally, you want to aim to keep that offer within the client's budget, so you keep them happy, too.

Tenacity helps consultants to continue making calls to candidates when selling a job, as well as cold-calling new clients when they hit a high number of rejections. Tenacious consultants can stay motivated and engaged in their overall aim. Their perseverance often pays off when they acquire a job position as an individual and you receive the rewards

In order to present the responsibilities and requirements of a role, recruitment consultants should also have strong communication skills. They represent their company and clients' businesses, so it's critical that they give potential employees a great impression during their talks. To reach potential candidates, recruitment consultants frequently make phone calls and communicate via email and face-to-face meetings. However, due to COVID-19, this seems to have taken a digital turn, and recruiters often speak with candidates online via platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, but the same skills are required.

## Deciding which sector and which area of recruitment is right for you

So now you know what the role involves. But are you aware that there are many different sectors you could work in, and specialise in? Most recruitment agencies have a speciality sector, such as construction, IT, finance, public sector, or healthcare.

### Sectors

There are many sectors to choose from and graduates should think about which sectors they are interested in and are relevant to their experiences. Choosing a sector that you have experience and knowledge in can make your job easier. You'll already have a good understanding of the needs of your clients, candidates, and the challenges that might come within your chosen sector. Below, we explore five of the top sectors that have seen growth in the past few years.

## Construction

2020 saw this sector grow exponentially. The government also pledged that they will invest in the construction sector, as they committed to building [over 1m new homes over 5 years \(300,000 per year\)](#).

The downside to the industry is that most companies are looking for skilled workers, and most construction workers in the UK are aged [over 50](#). Many of these workers will soon retire, which means more jobs to advertise, however, there has been a decrease in younger talent over the years, which gives an excellent opportunity for new candidates in the industry.

## IT

IT and technology is a growing sector and will be dominant for the foreseeable future due to Industry Revolution 4.0. Technology is still advancing at a higher rate, and tech specialists are needed everywhere – take Data Scientists, for example. Data is a new power force that drives many industries and provides greater productivity gains. A survey by the [Royal Society](#) has found that 10% of jobs required data expertise (based on 9.2m job adverts in a twelve-month period).

The main challenges of the IT industry include sourcing talent and retaining talent. Due to COVID-19, many companies are open to the idea of having employees work remotely, which is a positive factor, however, many are still looking for talent locally.

## Finance

The [finance recruitment](#) sector hit a record high in 2021, as we saw [nearly 80,000 jobs posted](#). The rise in the sector is promising and certainly set the sector up to a good start in 2022.

One of the main challenges of recruiting in this sector is that your perfect candidate's current employer or even another potential employer might present a counteroffer, which might put the recruitment process back to square one.

## Public sector

Jobs in the public sector often come with job stability, which is a great selling point when contacting candidates, and these jobs are created to serve the community instead of making a profit.

However, recruiting for the public sector comes with its challenges. One of them is a capped earning potential for your candidates, which may deter them from going into this sector.

## Healthcare

It is currently a very exciting time to enter the [healthcare recruitment industry](#). The new government's pledge to invest an additional [£33.9 billion in the NHS by 2023/24](#), as well as the ambition to fund [50% more clinical placements per year](#), presents yet another significant opportunity for our recruitment agency industry. Therefore, choosing a healthcare specialised agency can be a good option.

## Permanent vs Contract

Contract and permanent recruitment both entail searching for people, networking and locating new clients. However, the two employment types differ slightly based on the needs of the client and will largely affect how your commission works too.

### Permanent

When your client is looking to fill a permanent position, your goal is to identify the most suitable candidate for the position who will fit in well with the business, and its culture and is expected to grow with the company. Once your candidate is interviewed and is successful, they'll sign a permanent contract, which has no end date.

Recruiting for permanent positions is very rewarding. It's fulfilling to match ideal candidates and clients together. The commission is based on the candidate's salary and the rates you have agreed with your client.

You'll be looking for people who meet certain client needs, such as location, skills, and budget, and who is available to start as soon as possible. Understanding the motives and needs of the candidates is critical to understanding their expectations. Because of this, it can often be a long process to find a good fit for both parties, so you'll need to be especially resilient and patient.

You'll manage the customer and help them connect their expectations with the budget. You'll find incredible candidates and present them to your clients ahead of the competition. Candidates, on the other hand, maybe evaluate a variety of career opportunities so finding the ideal fit for them can be difficult.

### Contract

Contract recruitment generally indicates that the job is just for a limited duration. For example, when larger companies develop, upgrade, or update their security systems, they frequently hire specialists on a project-by-project basis.

These 'contractors' are often skilled professionals who are employed for certain periods at a time and are paid hourly, or often daily. Contractors working on huge projects may have their placement extended, and contractors may even work on-site for a year or more.

You receive a commission, which is usually based on the rate of the contractors you place with clients when you operate in contract recruitment. The more contractors you recruit, the more your monthly commission is.

Time is of the essence when it comes to recruiting for contract positions. Therefore, you'll be looking through your databases to find a candidate as quickly as possible, or asking for referrals from your contractors to find people who are highly skilled and readily available. There will be times when unique or specific skills are needed, so you'll need to network in order to branch out.

## **How to find a recruitment consultant job**

### **Job Boards**

To find a job, your best option is to start your job search on job boards. You should be aware, that whether you're a graduate or are employed already and you're considering a change, looking for the job of your dreams can take time, so it's essential you focus on what's important and what you're looking to achieve within your role. When using job boards you can filter your results, so you can tailor the search to your specific requirements, such as salary expectations, location, etc.

Alternatively, you can attend graduate fairs. Graduate fairs are a fantastic opportunity to be informed about current and future employment prospects. Even if you're simply looking to see what's out there before committing to something.

### **Grad Fairs**

Graduate fairs are typically held on university campuses to assist students in understanding their professional prospects following graduation. They also allow businesses to advertise their brands and recruit new employees immediately or in the future.

Graduate recruitment fairs are an excellent opportunity to meet many different people; including people at your potential new employer.

At these fairs, you can often access different services, such as CV writing, mock interviews, and professional career advice.

## Recruitment to Recruitment Agencies (Rec to Recs)

Furthermore, you can reach out to recruitment agencies. They are there to fill positions and to help candidates find the most suitable role for their needs. It can save you time as you won't be searching for jobs yourself, but instead have jobs sent to you that the recruitment consultant thought would be a suitable position.

As you'll soon find out, recruitment consultants are experts at finding jobs suitable for their candidates. They are more likely to know hiring trends, and market trends in your chosen sector. They can give you feedback from interviews, so you can improve your interview skills, and provide feedback on what the clients thought about you. This is a great way to self-improve, especially since if you look for a job yourself, feedback direct from employers is often limited when they're hiring on a large scale.

## How to ace your interview

Preparing for an interview can greatly increase your chances of being hired. Once you've had confirmation of your interview, it's time to start researching the employer. Finding out as much as possible about the employer, how they operate and what they do will help you answer the typical questions of 'Why do you want to work for us?' and 'What do you know about the company?'. They won't expect you to be the expert on their company history, but being able to give a short but sweet description will show the employer you're dedicated, happy to put the extra work in and give them affirmation that you really are interested in joining them.

Make sure you review the job description, as this gives you an idea of what the employers are expecting from you. Job descriptions have responsibilities listed, therefore, when asked 'What can you bring to this job?', you'll be able to tailor your answer to suit their needs.

Most interviewers ask common questions, so it's important you practice answering these questions. You'll also need to remember that one question can be asked in many different forms. Most common questions include 'Tell me more about yourself' and 'What are your strengths?'.

These questions are asked so interviewers can start by finding out about you personally and professionally to get a sense of your background. The best way to approach these questions - if you don't have relevant experience - is to start off with what you're doing currently (such as finishing a degree), and what your course entailed. This gives them a bit of your history, which then leads to the next question about your strength and weaknesses.



Why do interviewers ask about your strength and weaknesses? They want to see where you may need improvement, and what expertise you can bring to the table. For example, as a recruitment graduate, you may not have had a lot of experience in writing job adverts, which is a weakness, but you may have had plenty of opportunities to network and to develop your communication skills effectively, which is a strength.

Lastly, another common question is often 'Why do you want to work for us?'. This question is used to determine how well you read the job description, and how well you understand the role and the business. This is a prime opportunity to show off your knowledge and demonstrate your research. What were the key things about the company that stood out to you? It might be how they invest into their employees' personal development, or perhaps they have an inspiring start-up story.

Researching and practising common questions prepares you for the interview, and if you construct a powerful answer, you could impress the potential employer. Preparation is the key to successful interviews.

Now that you know you need to prepare for interview questions, you should also prepare questions to ask your interviewer. It's a crucial element of any interview because it makes you seem engaged and enthusiastic to the interviewer. Most commonly asked questions are 'What are the progression opportunities within the company?' and even asking your interviewer 'What do you enjoy most about working for this company?'. This is a great opportunity to find out more about the company which you might not have found from your initial research.

## You've got the job, now what?

Being the best recruitment consultant comes from providing the best service possible to your clients and your candidates. There are valuable traits and skills you can improve on, such as building trust with your candidates and clients, mentoring your candidates, networking, and accurately describing jobs.

### Building trust

When it comes to getting new clients, the most important thing is building trust. That's where being genuine and having a good rapport comes in.

It's also helpful to build a rapport with a candidate so that they feel comfortable working with you and telling you more about themselves. This helps in your judgement of where to place them, but also gives you more confidence when making a pitch to a client because they can see how genuine it is!



## Mentoring candidates

Although everyone interviews candidates, not everyone goes the extra mile to mentor them on how to ace their interviews. This isn't the kind of mentoring that tries to control the interview process, instead, it listens to the candidate's worries and tries to address them so that they are prepared and confident.

You don't want to waste anyone's time as a consultant. A mentoring session could alleviate these worries (whether they are connected to the candidate's CV, the interview, or the candidate's skills) and make it simpler to place the candidate.

## Networking

Networking is an important skill to have as a recruitment consultant. Meeting a variety of people with a wide range of skills and experience helps you in your position. Because recruitment has been a business focused on people, networking has been and will continue to be a staple.

Networking is a key tool for every recruiter, whether it's face-to-face, one-on-one, or online. It's claimed that up to 60% of jobs are never advertised and are filled by a candidate in someone's network.

## Be accurate with job descriptions

The more accurately you describe the job to candidates, the better the chances you'll fill the position quickly. Make use of varied and enticing wording. Make sure to leave out any information that isn't absolutely necessary. You don't want to turn away any potential applicants or limit your clients' possibilities.

The job postings need to be accurate and it's necessary to include the role and responsibilities, but also try to obtain a sense of what a candidate's day at work would be like, as well as the atmosphere of the business.

## Conclusion

So now you know what the role involves, how to get the job, and how to succeed once you've started. You're now able to prepare for your interview and prepare for recruitment careers in the long run.

Recruiting can be a fruitful profession, especially since if you think about it, you can really change someone's life after a conversation. Plus, you can change a client's business. If you end up hiring someone who stays long term, your client is more likely to come back to you for any recruiting needs. [Click here to find more about careers at Globe.](#)



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