



Hire Experts – Save in the Long Run

Experts can deliver dividends beyond what we often take into consideration.

There are many cases to be made why hiring the best experts in their respective fields should be viewed as an investment and not an expense.

In one section of the book titled “Cooked” written by Michael Pollan, a NY Times best-selling author, he discusses the level of time and attention experts in certain culinary fields undertake in order to produce the best possible product.

An entire section is dedicated to the likes of people like Chad Roberts, considered the American “master” of old-world, artisan-quality bread baking. You can look up “tartine loaf” on google which is Chad’s specialty and you’ll find plenty of photos. He’s been written up in the Wall Street Journal and 100s of other publications.

Try as much as you’d like, even with the recipe provided by Chad, it would take months (perhaps more than a year) of trial and error to perfect. It would also require a good amount of specialty equipment, procedures and ingredients for a weekend baker to produce what Chad does (ask my wife and I how we know this). Having focused on nothing but supreme artisanal bread making since his youth, and being trained under other craftspeople tracing back to methods used in pre-colonial France, Chad is a master in his industry who can produce the type of quality nothing less than a lifetime of dedication can achieve.

Just as an expert recruiting consultant can make a search appear “simple” by producing a list of candidate names collected, refined, scrutinized and processed over a few weeks ... which otherwise would have taken a hiring company months or years Chad makes his loaves of old-world style breads appear so easy to duplicate that many are tempted to try only to give up after wasting many months trying.

His loaves of bread cost about double or triple what normal bread goes for. But considering you’d waste many 5 pound bags of flour (assuming you can even locate a source for his heirloom grain varieties) going about it on your own – paying for the expert version is a real time saver in the long run. Just like an expert search consultant can shorten a 6-9 month search down to 45-90 days. Sure it might cost a little more upfront, but the job gets done well the first time around without wasted time or resources.

Search Consultants are like Fishing Guides

In another example of how it pays to hire the best professional in his/her field, I decided to hire a U.S. Coast Guard certified captain this mid-December for our “Father-Son” fishing trip. I took

a one day detour in my business itinerary to meet up with my son near where he was working in Baton Rouge, LA.

Since I only had one day – I wanted the best possible fishing guide to maximize our chances of having a productive day out.

I could have rented a boat and brought my own supplies. But not being familiar with the marshes and wetlands of Southern Louisiana it would have taken someone unfamiliar with the local waters, such as myself, many days just to figure out which knots, line, and rig combination should be used. Not to mention which jigs, bait, and locations I should focus on depending on scores of factors such as weather, wind, tide, temperature etc. It's enough to waste the entire day (if not many days) just on the learning curve involving the local marine habitat.

I decided to hire Captain Markham Dickson of Salty Dog Charters of New Orleans. He proved to deliver the same type of expertise I bring to my own clients and I value professionals that invest their entire life perfecting their skills

Hiring an expert fishing guide is not the cheapest way to go fishing. But in 4 hours with Captain Markham my son and I caught 100s of pounds of fish. We curtailed our full day 8 hour trip down to 4.5 hours. We had so many that we had the option to choose the best and toss back two-thirds of the rest. The result is that within ½ a day we enjoyed more productivity than would have been possible without an expert, well-trained guide. It certainly paid dividends to retain and hire the best guide possible.

Similarities with Search Consultants

An experienced, veteran search consultant with a proven track record produces results similar to that which Captain Markham or any other well trained expert brings to the table: Better quality results in shorter time. If we have any weakness it's that we experts can often make the job appear too easy.

Since most of the manager and executive positions we at IRES work on involve positions responsible for tens and 100s of millions of dollar divisions or business units --- taking short cuts with the quality of the search firm makes no sense at all. Particularly when the slightly higher fee pays off thousands of times more in dividends when the hired individual becomes productive for his or her new employer in a shorter time frame.

While many companies struggle to reel in (pardon the pun) a candidate for a mid-level mission-critical position after searching for months or years, savvy search consultants with the reputation of IRES can deliver results in days or weeks and assure clients every candidate worth netting was analyzed in a shorter time span. Just like Captain Markham had to measure each fish to decide which stays in the boat or must be tossed back, as well as find and get to the fish quicker.

Summary

Whether it's a CPA, CFP (Certified Financial Planner), CMA, Designated Realtor®, Expert employment attorney, Certified Personnel Consultant, or in the case of Markham described earlier, coastguard certified fishing expert ... I've always been a big believer that hiring the best you can afford always produces measurable savings in the long run.

A seasoned, veteran executive search consultant, like a knowledgeable fishing guide, knows what type of hook to use, what type of bait works best, and can direct you to the talent pool where the schools of professionals lie, quicker than someone that doesn't do this type of job on a daily basis.

Choose professionals wisely. And when choosing executive recruiting services, consider the benefits of IRES and our 23 years of consistent record of placement success across many industries and disciplines.

- Frank G. Risalvato, CPC
Certified Personnel Consultant
23 year head of the Insurance and Specialty Practice Group, IRES, Inc.