

# SENIOR CANDIDATE TRACKING (SCT) – TURN CANDIDATES INTO CLIENTS

Many recruiters interview or talk to senior candidates either regularly or from time to time. Usually, those recruiters have a pleasant conversation, discuss a role with those candidates - or let them know that they don't have a live vacancy at the moment for them, but that they will be in touch as and when one arrives.

**Question:** What's the biggest complaint from candidates about recruiters?

**Answer:** "I never hear back from them!"

The fact of the matter is though, it's nearly impossible to stay in regular contact with every single senior candidate that you speak with. However, there is a clever way to manage this - Senior Candidate Tracking (SCT) - and it is an incredible way to develop new business.

After reading this, a light bulb should go on for you. Senior candidates are, or soon will be, your clients!

## SCENARIO

A recruiter talks to 100 senior candidates. Unlike our competitors, this recruiter is smart enough to ask a question that will lead to a huge amount of new business within the next six months. That question is:

**Recruiter:** "Sarah, one of the key things that employers are looking for in people at your level is the ability to build teams. Could you tell me about the teams that you've built over the years and how you went about doing that please?"

**Senior candidate:** "I recruited a team of 20 people from scratch. I used two recruitment companies to hire 12 of those people plus I went into my black book of contacts. I also hired a team of 6 contractors whilst I was building the permanent team."

Can you see what this smart recruiter is doing? He/she is qualifying the amount of potential business that this senior candidate could give them when that person lands their next job and then - *and this is massively important* - he/she will track a small number of senior candidates in order to **nurture** them into future clients.

Imagine, after speaking to dozens of senior candidates, you were to complete a Senior Candidate Tracking sheet, like the one below, that isolated five of your senior candidates who recruit very regularly. Take a look at it and then read the anecdote below the SCT tracking sheet.

Senior Candidate Tracking			Consultant: _____
			Date: ____/____/____
Name	Employer & Position	Comments	Action
		25 perm	Re-write CV
		15 contractors	Golf

This is a true story about a recruiter who improved his billings from £300,000 a year to £1.8 million a year in under four years. Imagine what you would earn if you were able to do even ¼ of that?

This recruiter was coached in Senior Candidate Tracking. A year later, he met his coach at a Christmas function. Upon seeing the coach, he came over saying, *“I’ve had my best ever year, I’m now billing £1 million a year.”* The coach congratulated him only for the recruited to say, *“It’s all down to you, I implemented that Senior Candidate Tracking concept.”*

The coach then asked the recruiter how he did it. The recruiter said:

*“I just did what you told me to do. I called the senior candidates deliberately at 7 PM. During those calls I explained how hard we’ve been working on their behalf, I told them that we had approached the five major companies that they had told me they want to work for but that, although the market was very active, we hadn’t found exactly the right role for them. I pointed out that we don’t want to compromise quality by arranging unsuitable interviews, to which the candidates warmly agreed. I let the candidates know that the whole team was aware how good they are and that we are trying our very best to find the right role for them.”*

Can you see what the recruiter was doing here? The biggest complaint in the marketplace from candidates is that recruiters don’t stay in touch! He deliberately called them late in the evening to send a message of work ethic and selectivity. If you were a client would you not value a recruiter who kept in touch, worked hard and was very selective?

The recruiter then said:

“A few days later, I called some of the candidates and said that I had been reviewing their CV and that I believed it could be strengthened. I then invited them for an early morning coffee to give some advice. Later, after getting to know them, I invited one of them for a round of golf at the weekend and another, who was a big Arsenal fan, to come to watch Arsenal. Three months later, one of the candidates was placed by a competitor at a FTSE 100 company as a director. Even though the competitor placed him, he called me with two requirements, which I filled. After filling the roles, I mentioned to him that I thought XYZ recruitment company managed their PSL. His response was telling, “my people deal with whoever I tell them to deal with, and I’ve told them to deal with you!”

This is a very simple strategy, one that will definitely lead you to new business and massively increase your earning potential if you do it well. However, there is a price to pay:

Look at what this recruiter was doing that other people are prepared to do:

- Calling candidates at 7 PM, when sometimes those conversations go nowhere
- Getting up very early in the morning to meet candidates for a coffee before work
- Investing his own time at the weekend

In fact, there’s a part of the story that you don’t yet know in that he said: “I’ve had my best ever year, and I am billing £1 million now, but I’m exhausted and I will probably flop into a chair over Christmas to recover!”

The point is, Senior Candidate Tracking works extremely well, but you have to put in the effort in order to get the rewards.

What effort would you be prepared to invest in order to bill over £1 million a year?

# **ACCOUNT DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

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Account development is yet another skill to be mastered, although the foundation is relatively easy. Whenever you gain some new business, particularly in a bigger company, simply identify all the hiring managers and decision-makers in the recruitment process that you know in that business and all the ones that you don't know!

The identification of these contacts can either be through LinkedIn or by asking questions:

- Who else should I be talking to within the business?
- Who else is involved in the decision-making process?
- Who else hires XYZ people?
- Who else should I invite to join us for a drink after work?
- Who else will be interviewing my candidate at second and third interview stage?
- When I come down to see you, who else is also worthwhile me meeting?

These types of questions, plus LinkedIn, will enable you to create Account Development Plans like the one below:

_____ - Account Development Plan					ACCOUNTABLE
CONTACT	TITLE	STAFF NO.s	LIKELY SPEND PA	LEVEL	ACTION
		P	£		
		C	£		
		P	£		
		C	£		
		P	£		
		C	£		
		P	£		
		C	£		
		P	£		
		C	£		
		P	£		
		C	£		
		P	£		
		C	£		

In the Account Development Plan above, you will notice two columns entitled 'Level' and 'Action'.

The 'Level' column is very simply your opinion as to how warm the relationships are with the contacts you've identified, using simple ABC scoring. The 'Action' column is for you to suggest positive next steps as to how you might develop warm relationships. You will see in the example, one of the contacts likes playing golf. The recruiter who is managing the Account Development Plan for that client happens to play golf and so he has made a suggestion that inviting that contact to a round of golf might be a way to build a relationship. Of course, this is only an illustrative example but it should give you a feel for how you need to think in order to widen your relationships within target clients.

### What can Account Development Plans do for you?

Some recruiters have only four or five major clients, but all of them spend several hundred thousand pounds a year. If you get a foothold into a key target client, it's relatively easy access other contacts in those organisations, based upon being able to mention successes with the one client contact you have developed.

Here are some ideas as to how you can do this:

- Call your existing client, check that they are happy with your service and then ask who else they can introduce you to.
- Arrange regular review meetings with your contact, ideally before you meet but occasionally whilst you are at the meeting, and ask, "Can you introduce me to XYZ contact whilst I'm here?"
- Arrange a social meeting with your client and ask, "Who else would you like to bring along?"
- If you are more experienced, ask the client how much training each hiring manager has had in competency-based interviewing. Then suggest that you or a manager/director could come into their offices for a two-hour lunchtime session between 12 PM and 2 PM to train those managers free of charge (check with your manager or director before you do this).

## FLOOR WALKING

Some recruiters have made £100,000s by regularly visiting contacts within key target clients. On occasions, employees within those companies even perceive those recruiters to be colleagues - that's how often they are on those premises! Clearly, you will only make that much effort if there is a significant potential financial return but, as with any form of selling, getting to know your client is critically important and the key message here is **get to know your clients in those target companies.**

### Identifying roles that no other recruiter gets hold of

A beautiful technique for contract recruiters is to draw out areas of dissatisfaction from their clients about some of their contractors. Here's how the technique works:

**Recruiter:** "Of the 20 contractors you have working for you at the moment, how many of those would you say are performing at an exceptional level?"

**Client:** "Three"

**Recruiter:** "How many are good or average?"

**Client:** "16."

**Recruiter:** "So I take it that one contractor is under performing, is that correct?"

**Client:** "Yes."

**Recruiter:** “If I could introduce you to a contractor with a proven track record, backed up by the local references from previous employers, who could help you upgrade performance substantially how interested would you be in seeing their profile with no obligation?”

Why does this technique work? Think about it. If you were a manager and most of your staff were performing well, might you duck the difficult decision of confronting the under performer and sacking them? Managers are human beings just like everyone else and it’s a human failing to sometimes duck difficult decisions. Use this failing to your advantage and you will occasionally pick up a contract requirement that no other recruiter in the country even gets a sniff of - particularly if you are meeting your clients regularly.

## MONTHLY TARGET CLIENT REVIEW MEETING

One of the ways to maintain focus on developing your target clients is to have regular, team review meetings. The benefit of this is not just keeping it front of mind and having some accountability to develop those accounts (because you don’t want to go to those meetings without having done some positive actions to develop your accounts!). It’s also about sharing information. For example, you may have read something online you can share with your colleagues. Your colleague may have interviewed a candidate that used to work at your target company, leading to an opportunity for you to take a verbal reference and get into a decision-maker conversation.

## VERBAL SERVICE CHECKS

If you are an experienced recruiter, please answer this question with brutal honesty:

**“What percentage of recruitment spend are you getting from each of your top five clients?”**

You’ve probably heard about *Pareto’s law*, otherwise known as the ‘80/20 rule’?

**80% of business can come from 20% of clients.** If you’ve not already capitalised on this you should be quite excited, see the example below of a recruiter taking a verbal service check with the client that he/she has recruited for quite regularly:

**Recruiter:** “Thank you for your positive comments about my service. By the way, what percentage, approximately, of your current recruitment spend are you placing with me?”

**Client:** “Well, we spent £250,000 last year and to date with spent £47,000 with you.”

**Recruiter:** “Why don’t we have lunch so that we can explore how I can add more value to the relationship?”

**Note:** Verbal service checks are an extremely powerful way to develop referrals - either internal referrals to help you develop an account, or external referrals whereby your client gives you introductions to other companies.

**Action:** When you develop a new contact in a major target client, ask your manager to take a verbal service check on your performance. Some people see this as counter-intuitive in that the client might pick holes in some aspects of their service. Top performers, on the other hand, are comfortable in their own skin - they

have high *emotional intelligence*, they understand that the primary reason for a verbal service check call is not to criticise them, it is to help them develop the account. Here is an example of how this might work:

**Director:** “I’m calling to make sure that you are totally happy with our service. I’m also looking for ways in which we can improve next time around.”

**Client:** “Jimmy was excellent. If I were to suggest an improvement, some of the CV’s could have been better presented. Also, the first candidate did not seem as well prepared as the others. However, Jimmy tried very hard and he filled the role with an exceptional candidate.”

**Director:** “Thank you, we will make a note of that for the next time we recruit for you. What, if anything, would you like us to do differently next time around?”

**Client:** “I can’t really think of anything else.”

**Director:** “Finally, what, if anything, do competitors do that you would like us to do in the future?”

**Client:** “I can’t really think of anything.”

In the example above, the client couldn’t think of anything that is doing something better than us does that is better than what we do. **Important:** Arrogant people rarely succeed. You should be totally comfortable when a client tells you that a competitor is doing something better than us, because, if it is a good idea we will use it and do it better! Let’s rejoin the hypothetical conversation above:

**Director:** “Thank you very much for your feedback. By the way, what percentage of your appropriate recruitment spend are you currently putting our way?”

**Client:** “20%?”

**Recruiter:** “Why don’t you, Jimmy and I have lunch so that we can explore how we can add more value to the relationship?”

## SUMMARY

Account Development Plans can have a majorly positive effect on your earning potential. It’s your responsibility to use them and it’s also your responsibility to approach a manager or director to help you develop those accounts, starting with verbal service checks.

Remember, dominating four or five major accounts will catapult you into the big time.