

Looking to get ahead? Make a recruiter part of your career toolkit

Most job seekers only think of working with a [recruiter](#) when it comes time for them to actively start their [hunt for a new job](#). And it makes sense, recruiters are good at connecting people to jobs. But have you ever thought of maintaining a good working relationship with a recruiter when you're happily employed? Call us crazy but the savvy professionals of the world have been doing it for years.

Recruiters can be great career advocates. A lot of jobs are never advertised, and they can keep you informed of these types of opportunities,? says Michael Berger, Director at Talent Blueprint.

- **Why you want an ongoing relationship.** Maintaining a good working relationship with a recruiter not only means that your door remains open to career development possibilities, it's also a security net - helping you bounce back into the job market quicker should you decide to change roles or if you ever find yourself out of work.

"Recruiters can be great career advocates. A lot of jobs are never advertised, and they can keep you informed of these types of opportunities," says Michael Berger, Director at Talent Blue Print.

Berger says recruiters are also well placed to advise on market activity, trends, and salary bandings because they are not aligned to only one client. In addition, recruiters can also often offer valuable insider knowledge about companies including culture, market rates, leadership teams and the latest news. This means even if you're happily employed, you can ensure you're across movements in the industry.

- **Tips to staying front of mind with recruiters.** Peter Acheson, CEO of Peoplebank recommends keeping in touch via email and social media even when you are not looking for a job and your current role is going very well. "This way recruiters know your ongoing career highlights and achievements, and can talk to you about potential opportunities that may be opening up in the future," Acheson adds.

Berger says he values candidates that understand it is a two-way street. There are many ways you can show this, for example, keeping in contact, sharing an industry article or writing a LinkedIn testimonial. "Sending referrals or introducing the recruiter to your company or people in your network is also a great way to foster the relationship," he adds.

Neither last nor least, Berger says he favours candidates that are very clear from the outset about what they want and where they want to go in their career and who have a good understanding of their next role and their market worth.

- **How to choose the right recruiter for you.** Priority one is ensuring they are a specialist in your area of expertise, says Berger. After that, you should be looking for recruiters who have been in the industry for a long time. And if you're aiming for the holy grail – look for a recruiter who specialises in your area of expertise and who has been doing so for a long time.

“Also consider their role – are they a principal consultant? Have they climbed the ranks, won awards and do they have industry standing – also do your colleagues know who they are?” he says.

Take note of those you work well with when you are hunting for work, even if you don't gain employment through them, do your research, and if they tick the boxes above, ensure you stay in touch.