

The Capability Crisis



The 7 Biggest Mistakes CEO's and Investors Unwittingly Make When Hiring for Critical Leadership Roles. How to Avoid them and Create Growth

by Oliver Parker



Who is this book designed to help?

Do you sometimes imagine being surrounded and supported by your ideal "dream team"? For any Leader, hiring the right people is arguably the most important thing you do and forms the foundation of your growing and successful company.

So why is it so easy to get it wrong? Why are the hiring models we have been fed over the years so poor at achieving the results we need?

- If you are a CEO, MD or Business Owner looking to reinforce the capability within your business and overcome barriers to growth and increased profitability, then this book is for you.
- If your company is facing a growth plateau and you just haven't yet found the impetus, skills or expertise to get over that hurdle, then this book is for you.
- If you are in a Leadership position and despite great effort and expense, the people you have hired in critical roles just don't seem to be stepping up to your expectations (or their promises), then this book is for you.

- If you aim to disrupt your market or industry, but find more often it is you being disrupted, then this book is for you.
- If you lead a team where some members look good on paper, but their performance is not so impressive (and perhaps even damaging in some cases), then this book is definitely for you.
- If you are worried about the growth and development of your business, because you are not sure you have the team to support that growth, then this book is for you because you will discover exactly how to create a team that is 100% capable, inspired and driven to achieve your goals.

Who am I and what qualifies me to help you solve these issues?

I am Oliver Parker, Director and Founder of Capability Consulting Ltd. We specialise in helping entrepreneurial business leaders to gain the resources and capabilities they need to achieve their desired goals for business growth.



Since beginning my first business (aged 14), I've had several careers and entrepreneurial endeavours - some very successful and others best described as 'good learning experiences' in the Peter Drucker line of thinking when he wrote "I would never promote a man who had NOT made mistakes, and big ones at that. Otherwise, he is sure to be mediocre".

Since 1997, I have recruited hundreds of Executives into Senior and Leadership roles across the UK, internationally and in almost all commercial industry sectors. I have been fortunate to work with many successful small and large businesses from established international giants and FTSE 100 firms to high growth tech start-ups and ambitious local enterprises.

At Capability Consulting, we also work closely with and learn from specialists in areas such as Leadership & Organisational

Development, Business Transformation and Restructuring, Employer Branding, Employee Engagement and Cultural Development. This means that when we recruit for a business, we add far more value than simply getting a suitably qualified candidate in through the door.

We long moved away from typical recruitment industry techniques like simply matching candidates in a 'little black book' to job descriptions by using keywords. That approach (sadly still used by many recruiters - part of the reason the industry has such a poor reputation) may be fine where you need 'bums on seats' or for performing simple routine functions, but even then, those people will probably not stay long and in fact you may be better to replace those functions with tools, automation or outsourced services.

The demands on Leadership roles have changed greatly over the past 20 years. Being merely competent and having experience in a function is no longer enough to have either a successful career or to lead a successful business.

Finding the right people to drive your business requires a hiring process that is tailored and adaptable to you, your business and your market. Just like the people you hire, need to be tailored and adaptable to those same factors.

Now, through 20 years of honing, I have outlined a hiring approach for you which will create highly valuable Assets for your business. Assets that will seek opportunities to drive the growth of your business. Assets that will make your business resilient in tougher market conditions. This approach rests on simple principles that have proven transformational for my clients in adapting their companies to a business world where the only remaining certainty is change.

For example, a recent CFO hire managed to save my client's company over £250,000, BEFORE HE EVEN STARTED THE ROLE. That is commitment to the success of that business. The new strategic business plan he developed with the CEO has taken the company back from the brink of failure and put in on track to reach 3x growth in 3 years.

What would that level of input and commitment achieve on your senior team?

Here's Why this Book can Quickly Move You Closer to Your Business Goals and Help you Sleep Better at Night.

This book will share simple principles that will enable you to hire Assets rather than Overheads. People that will enable you to maximise growth, because they embrace opportunities for progress rather than hold onto the perceived security of maintaining status quo.

Successful hiring is about people with the right attitude for your business. Strangely, most hiring processes (internal or external) have not yet adapted to that fact. They still put the emphasis on what people 'know' and not 'how they use it'.

Today, a successful career and the resulting success of a business is dependent on the person's attitude, not just their knowledge.

We will also discover:

- How to see and harness change and disruption as an advantage and opportunity for you and your business, instead of a threat.
- How to stop feeling like you have to do the work of some Senior Team members for them. So, you can finally work 'on'

your business instead of constantly being drawn to working 'in' it.

- How to avoid the massive cost of failed hires, without any extra hiring costs, so you can afford to bring in the best people with a real value for the development of your business.
- The real reasons why some previous key Executive hires in your business may not have worked out as you had hoped. Plus, ways to improve results in those cases, or how to make changes that will kick-off the full performance you need.
- You will receive a sure strategy and step by step plan to ensure new Executive hires bring the full capability to dramatically boost the performance and growth opportunities in your business.

The Executive resourcing strategy I share with you will get results whether you use a Recruiter or not. This is a simple process that can be implemented in-house. The caveat on that is that whilst it is simple, it does require a significant input of time and effort from someone with genuine expertise in objective people and organisational assessment.

Read on and we will cover exactly how to get your hiring right.

The World has Changed - why you need to pay attention to this NOW!

WARNING

This material may conflict with most or even all your previous experience in hiring Leadership and Business Critical roles. It is certainly not what you will hear from many 'experts' in the recruitment industry, because although it will make your life much easier, it is more time consuming and requires more advanced people assessment skills from the recruiter.

Even just 10 years ago, people used to go to work for security, salary and steady progression. Leadership often meant simply efficient running of a core business function, based on the tried and tested knowledge gained over years of experience.

An Executive's value to the business was primarily in the knowledge they had accrued during those years of experience in their function and industry.

Now, we live in the Digital Age where information is a mere commodity and the knowledge once so highly valued is immediately

and often freely available at the touch of a button. Knowledge that previously took years to build up is now immediately accessible to anyone, at any time. Data that once took years to acquire and learn (so that expertise could form the basis of an entire career), can now be analysed and interpreted in seconds by integrated software and shared with anyone in nanoseconds.

10 years ago, stable and consistent growth was the target. Not any more. Now, you must change just to stay in the game. The knowledge and expertise in your business was a barrier to entry into your market. Not any more. Now, is the Age of the Start-up, where a bit of money, determination and a healthy dose of entrepreneurial nous are enough to create new competition in most industries, in mere months.

An Executive's value now is not in accruing knowledge, but in how they access and use the wealth of knowledge and data available.

The value now is in having people that can make decisions on how to optimise your business using the incredible array of technology and resources available.

The value now is in having people so well aligned with your business values and purpose, that they are ready and willing to adapt and

adopt as fast as new resources become available and as fast as the needs of your market change.

This is the Age of Disruption. The Age of Transformation. Above all it is the Age of Change.

Is your business ready?

Where are you now?

Do any of these scenarios sound familiar?

You have a dynamic and successful company, but perhaps you are now paying too high a personal price to try and maintain momentum in your business.

- How much time do you get to spend on doing the work you love and which you feel will make the most difference for the development of your business?
- Perhaps you feel you have brought the business so far, but you struggle to find the time and energy to work 'on' the business instead of 'in' the business?
- Do your people complete their tasks and responsibilities without your constant input?
- Are your people driving the business growth momentum, or does it feel that it is always down to you?

Maybe your business is struggling to keep up the pace of change or disruption in your market?

- Your product may be top quality, but low-balling competitors are undercutting you which is reducing the value of what you offer?

- Perhaps new technology is squeezing margins or threatening your market share?
- Or you know there are plenty of new ways to increase efficiencies or reduce operational costs (perhaps some competitors already are), but you just don't know how to fit it all in without disrupting what you already do?

Progress has been good, but growth has slowed and hit a plateau and you are stretching your cash flow trying to reach the next level of your plans, but that glass ceiling is just moving up too slow, not at all or even pushing downward pressure on you.

- Who do you turn to for advice, guidance or support? The buck stops with you, but maybe you feel isolated as well?
- Perhaps you can see a good opportunity, but getting it right will be a real challenge, so you feel it could be more of a risk unless you're sure you will have the necessary support and expertise?

Perhaps some of your senior people just don't seem to be pulling their weight?

- Maybe they came in with a great looking CV, talked the talk, but now just seem to be in cruise mode rather than challenging the status quo and driving forward to changes you know the business needs for consistent growth.

- Are their mistakes costing you money and their lack of drive costing you in missed opportunities?
- Do you find it increasingly frustrating going into Board meetings and feeling some of your team are just not on the same page?
- Does it feel like some people are creating more problems than solutions? Worse, are they actively disruptive of your plans?
- How do these issues affect the performance of staff reporting to them too?

Where do you want to get to?

Just suppose you felt confident that the resources and expertise you need to overcome any of those barriers facing your business, are in fact easily accessible to you? Would you feel more in control and focused on pushing your business forward?

Imagine having the support of a Senior Team of highly capable people, who share your motivation to achieve ambitious goals for the business and who are truly inspired to put in the work and expertise needed to get there. Everybody focused on the same vision and direction and all working their socks off to make sure it happens?

Would you like to be able to work 'on' the business instead of chasing your tail (and everybody else's) working 'in' the business? Instead of fire-fighting the immediate issues, would that allow you the time and energy to properly assess the risks of new opportunities and actually have the chance to move ahead with them? How might that help you to overcome the next plateau in your business growth?

It might be simply that you want to enjoy your work more? You may enjoy parts of it, you may enjoy it a bit at a time. But what would it be like to really enjoy your work?

So How Do You Close the Gap?

If one or more of the 'Where Are You Now?' scenarios do sound familiar, and 'Where Do You Want to Get to?' resonates with you, then of course there is a gap.

The question then is... How Do You Close the Gap?

How I arrived at the answer to that question...

14 years ago, I was a high-flying recruiter covering senior commercial appointments for one of the UK's largest and best-known recruitment brands. I already had 6+ years experience under my belt, I had a strong network of clients who trusted me and most importantly (at that time), I had access to an excellent database of candidates looking for new career opportunities. This was my 'Little Black Book' that provided not only the products I would sell, but also the leads to connect me with new customers. I was well ahead of my sales targets and I was getting regular promotions and commission raises to "keep me sweet".

So, strange you might think, that my Boss was not happy with me at all. Why? Because I didn't do as I was told.

You see, I learned a lot about the recruitment industry during my first few years. First thing I learned was that I was not a 'Recruitment Consultant', but in fact I was a "Salesman". Apparently, my job was not to work with a business to find the best personnel for their needs. My job was to sell our service to as many companies as possible, send them 5 CVs from my "Little Black Book" so they could offer at least one of them a job. The unofficial term for this approach

to sales/recruitment was "spray and pray" and this is widely taught as the route to success across the recruitment industry.

Sound familiar? Maybe you have experienced such a process from a "Recruiter"? Sadly, there are far fewer recruiters listening to their clients than studying their own sales stats, so many become cynical and pushy sales people rather than expert recruiters. It's the main reason that the recruitment industry has such a poor reputation.

But quite early on in my recruitment career, I rebelled.

I discovered that if I work very closely with each client, build their trust and my understanding of their needs, then do a really good job of sourcing the very best person for them, I was guaranteed to make a fee from that client. This seemed so much more efficient and productive than selling our service to 20+ clients, then "spray and pray" candidates in the hope of filling at least one vacancy.

What I considered "efficient and productive", my Boss saw as "lazy" and worst of all a bad influence on the newer recruiters in my team. I was berated every month for not doing enough sales calls and for not meeting my quota of "CVs sent". I even had part of my commission payment docked most months, for missing those 'activity targets'. But I made a lot of successful placements - more than my

colleagues, so instead of sacking me, he promoted me. So, I carried on learning from my clients and their experiences.

My point is that the recruitment industry didn't teach me how to recruit. It was studying and responding to my clients that taught me how to recruit.

Now, after working with hundreds of CEOs and Business Owners, listening carefully to their experiences and researching their situation, I can see clear themes of where and how so many other recruitment processes have failed to live up to their expectations and have even sabotaged company progress.

Now I can share with you what I learned from all those clients and over 20 years of breaking the 'rules', in order to guarantee I put the right people in the right place for my clients.

If I can do this successfully for so many businesses, then I promise **you can do the same for your business** (with or without my help).

The "One Thing" that Can Close the Gap Right Now

What's going to close the gap between where you are now and where you want to be?

One thing. **A simple, reliable and repeatable approach to ensure you get the right people, in the right place.**

What does that really mean?

First, when we talk of the 'right people', we are not talking of people who are merely 'competent' or 'good enough' to do the job. You have standardised processes in your business, but the people, especially in key leadership roles need to be exceptional, driven and creative to implement the measures that will take your business to the next level.

So next, let's look at the problems and mistakes inherent in the 'typical' approach to hiring for Leadership and Business Critical roles, so we make sure we are avoiding them.

Big Mistake No.1 - Waiting

Everyone likes a bit of certainty in their lives. We feel a need to make the 'right' decisions. We wait for the right moment. But if we are waiting for the right solution to a problem, that problem is probably getting worse while we wait.

What usually prompts you into recruiting?

The most common trigger is when a 'vacancy' comes up due to someone leaving. It's a reaction. It's an event you don't control (unless you fired them). Not many hires are made proactively, to actually solve issues in the business - even though the 'right person in the right role', is the one tool capable of proactively solving any issue and overcoming any hurdle facing your business.

No software, equipment, strategy or tactic will improve your business prospects without the 'right person in the right role' to conceive and implement the plan and get the most from it.

A cautionary tale:

A family had a hamster called Bob. Bob hadn't moved for 3 days and just lay at the bottom of his cage. He didn't eat or drink. He

didn't spin on his little wheel. He didn't move at all.

But he was still breathing. Just.

So, his owner took Bob to the Vet. But something shocking happened when the Vet took Bob from his cage. Bob leapt out of the Vet's hand and began running around the room like he was possessed.

The Vet was just as surprised as Bob's owner.

"Anything unusual happened to him recently?" asked the Vet.

"Well he did escape from the cage into the kitchen and we finally found him under the fridge" confessed Bob's owner.

"A-ha!" said the Vet, then opened Bob's mouth, searched around and soon brought out a tiny fridge magnet that had been lodged in Bob's cheek.

Poor Bob had been pinned to the metal floor of his cage for 3 days. Bob soon recuperated with the help of some fancy protein bars and lived happily ever after (a year at least).

Yes, it's a silly, furry, feel-good story, but it does have a purpose.

You see we can all get stuck by the Magnetic Hamster Trap. Even a small event or change can end up causing a problem you didn't see coming. You can get pinned down with a feeling of inability to act or solve the problem.

You wait. Then it takes an expert to do as the Vet did - spot the problem, solve it and get you back on track.

Given the right expert solution, would you take it to solve your problem or stay stuck?

Back in the real world, you want your business to grow. It needs to grow. You have set targets and plans to reach those targets. But there are problems or 'issues', which are getting you stuck or are in your way.

Fortunately, there are only really a handful of 'issues' in the history of business. They crop up again and again. What changes is your ability to handle them.

Here's a real-world example:

One of my clients runs a tech manufacturing business. He and his FD set steadily progressive plans for growth, but over a two-year period both volume and profitability had taken a significant hit. The business plan was not 'wrong', it was just not 'enough' to make the changes needed for real progress and the downward spiral was even threatening the future of the business. The 'steady' FD defended the plan and blamed Sales, saying if the Sales team keep their promises then sales will pick up and all will be well.

The CEO waited. But the sales were hit because the products were old, and the strained budget did not allow enough for new product development. Finally, cash flow hit crisis. In desperation the CEO asked for help in setting a new strategic plan to put the business back on track and then heading for the growth he needed.

We hired a CFO, initially on a contract basis, to work with the CEO on the new plan. Before even officially starting in his role, the CFO had shaved over £250,000 in recurring (but unnecessary) costs. The plan completely restructured and even relocated the business, eventually cutting more than 50% of administrative and operational costs that could then be pushed back into product development and marketing.

The estimated cost to that business of waiting 2 years to solve the problem was £5-8 million. Plus, another year to get back on track. Plus, the missed opportunities had the issues been tackled sooner.

That's a lot of time and money lost due to waiting. Especially when the right person to solve the issues was found in only a few weeks and was able to create and begin implementing an achievable turnaround plan in less than 3 months.

The 'issues' in your business are solvable too with the right expertise

and the right attitude. If your current team are not dealing with the 'issues', then there is help available.

The right expertise is out there - it's just a case of finding it.

Who can help you uncover and face up to the 'issues' before they do more damage to your business? Do you have as a trusted Advisor or Mentor? If not, I would recommend having a chat with [Jonathan O'Shea at The Alternative Board](#) for impartial, objective and independent assistance from him and his Peer-to-Peer Board members.

If you are hesitating for any reason (time, cost, resistance from colleagues, bad previous experience etc.) about hiring the right person to deal with the key issues that are holding you back, then [contact Oliver Parker at Capability Consulting](#) for a no-obligation discussion. Together we can establish a plan and put together a proposal to determine your preferred way forward.

Big mistake No.2 - "The War for Talent"

The "groundbreaking" book titled 'The War for Talent' was published by McKinsey in 1997, the same year I began working as a recruiter. What a gift that was for the recruitment industries marketing departments - one of the world's best-known business consultancies telling everybody that their future depends on competing for the best "Talent"!

Over those 20 years, the focus on "talent" has become the mantra of most recruitment firms, to the point that many now refer to themselves as a "Talent Management Agency" and many corporations hire internal "Talent Advisers" and "Talent Acquisition Consultants".

So, what is this "Talent" that everyone is supposed to compete so hard for? "Talent" is simply a hyped-up version of "competence". Now, we are not saying competence (aka "Talent") is not important, but it is just not the key to a good hire.

Why? Well, have you ever hired someone who seemed very bright, competent and with great relevant experience to draw from - only to find that they just don't live up to expectations? It happens all the

time and almost every business leader I know has known this disappointment at some stage.

It doesn't matter how bright, competent or talented your new hire is, if they don't apply that 'talent' to achieving the goals that are important to you, your business and your customers.

'Talent' is completely wasted if the person you hire doesn't:

- α) **'get' what your company does, how it does it and why your company does what it does,**
and
- β) **'want' to deliver it.**

First, your new hire must **'get it'**. They must understand the core values that drive your business.

For example, I am good at hiring inspired people for leadership roles because I love finding people that can make a real difference for a business and take it to the next level.

However, I once took a role with a leading firm of IT recruitment specialists but despite my track record of 'talent' for recruitment, I didn't fit in. I didn't agree with their approach to recruitment and despite their efforts to help me, I just didn't enjoy working there. For 6 months, it was a waste of my time and a waste of their money.

Second, your new hire must **'want it'**. They need to feel driven, purposeful and easily motivated (even when the 'sh*t hits the fan) because that is the right place for them to be. That person feels inspired to achieve the goals you set for their role.

At the same IT recruitment firm, another colleague started the same week as me. He 'got it' and despite no prior experience in recruitment, with a little training and the desire to excel in the role, he was flying by the time I decided to leave the firm. He excelled because he 'got it' and he 'wanted it'.

In that situation, though I appeared to be the 'Talent' choice, in fact my less experienced colleague was the better hire, because he really wanted to follow that firm's business model.

For the right person to 'get it' and 'want it', you'll need to share your business values accurately.

Otherwise it comes back to bite you, as in this example:

A corporate law firm specialising in protection of Intellectual Property described a core value as "Caring for our clients and putting their outcomes first". For new hires, this statement had a significant impact on their choice to join the firm. Unfortunately, despite being highly qualified, many of these new hires were not staying long

(often less than a year). The firm was even losing clients due to perceived "instability" because of the regular turnover of senior staff. Why?

When asked "how do you get the best results for your clients", the Senior Partner said; "we are fiercely aggressive in defending our clients, we leave no stone unturned and take no prisoners to get the result our client wants".

So new hires were responding to a 'caring' image, but in fact the firm's approach was 'fiercely aggressive' - it didn't matter how brilliant, qualified and talented the new hires were, the firm had a retention problem because they were attracting people who just didn't 'get it' or 'want it'.

Of course, you want brilliant 'Talent' for your team, **but only if you are sure they 'get it' and 'want it' too.** Great 'Talent' that is not aligned with your business values will either not stay or will too easily become disheartened and even disruptive.

Hire 'Talent' that is inspired by your company's purpose and values, and now you have the capability to really make magic happen. That person is your 'Spark' and will achieve Explosive Results.

The one who 'gets it' and 'wants it' will perform at 100% and will be

inspired to quickly learn any new skills needed to get the results you need. In the Digital Age, knowledge or expertise is quickly available to anyone with the motivation to find it and put it into action.

If you have any doubts on the clarity of the purpose and values and how they are expressed across your organisation, then I would recommend contacting [Karen Gill at 2 The Point HR](#). Karen is known for "delivering profit through people and purpose". The "Spark Capability Plan" will get the very best from your new hires, and Karen will help you get the most from your existing team.

When you follow the "Spark Capability Plan" (keep reading to discover more), you can be crystal clear on the relevant core values before you hire, so you make sure you target the 'talent' that 'gets it' and 'wants it'. For precise details on pinpointing the core values for a specific role before you hire, please [contact Oliver Parker at Capability Consulting](#) for a no-obligation discussion. I'll happily share the details with you in confidence if you prefer to undertake the search yourself, or I can do it all for you if you choose Capability Consulting to assist you with the hire.

Big Mistake No.3 - 'Specialist' Recruiters

Okay, so this one is likely to ruffle a few feathers. Especially in the recruitment industry, where being a 'Specialist' recruiter is often central to their business development.

Let's be honest, we all know that the evergreen 50% sale offered on TV by some furniture stores is just a tricky marketing ploy. The sofa has been marked-up somewhere at £1399 for a week or so (but few if any were sold), then hey presto, for the next 3 months only you can have it for "only" £599. We still fall for it - they want us to think we have bagged a serious bargain, though perhaps we recognise we are just buying the sofa at its real value and the mark-up price was just a misdirection.

Well, being a 'specialist' recruiter is a marketing tool too.

Targeting a specific vertical like IT or Finance recruitment or a specific industry sector simply makes it much easier for a recruiter to focus their sales calls and marketing campaigns on specific contacts and candidates, allowing them to quickly build a marketing database or 'hot-list'.

Fair enough really, you probably do everything you can to segment

and focus your marketing efforts too. It's a valid marketing strategy.

However, many recruiters tout this 'specialist' status as a key benefit to you the prospective client, with claims of "expert industry knowledge", "unrivalled access to xxxx candidates" etc.

I was a 'Finance & Accounting' specialist recruiter for almost 8 years. Out of the hundreds of fellow 'specialist' consultants I met or worked with, I can only remember one who actually had prior experience in Finance or Accountancy. So surely that 'specialist' title was earned through extensive training? Lots of training in how to sell - yes. Training in finance or accounting - no, none. I learned as much as possible from picking the brains of my candidates and reading in my spare time, I guess the others did the same. Several years in, I did know quite a bit about my specialist field, but that was rare, and most consultants came in for a year or two and went without ever really understanding their 'specialist' field.

So where is the benefit to you of a 'specialist recruiter'? 10 years ago, there was still some value in a recruiters 'Little Black Book' of candidates in their area of specialisation, but now we have the internet. Now, anyone can find any number of competent and qualified candidates for almost any role.

The 'specialist' database of candidates that so many recruiters still claim is a 'unique advantage' for their clients, is in fact just a limitation on that recruiter's ability to find the best candidate for you. Because that's all they have got. You place a vacancy with that recruiter, they do a keyword search of their database, then simply send over to you the CVs that match most closely. They may advertise the job on a job board to see if any new candidates apply.

When they have convinced themselves of the 'unique' value of their 'specialist candidate database' and a database search is so quick and easy, why would they bother to search online (or in the real world) to discover the best candidate for you?

Truth is, many 'specialist' recruiters are sales people trained to bring in as many vacancies as possible, build their database of candidates and then simply send as many candidate CVs to the clients as possible in the hope they will pick at least one of the available candidates.

No real candidate search process. Very little assessment of the candidates. Very little information for the client to evaluate the candidates. Very little information about the role or the business for the candidates to assess the opportunity they are put forward for. They probably haven't even met most of the candidates they submit

for vacancies.

That might suffice in a faceless corporate environment, where people are numbers (though I doubt it).

But your business needs people that are capable, willing and committed to achieving the goals you have established. Please don't waste your time, energy and money on any half-hearted attempts to match a CV to your vacancy with keywords, performed by an ambitious sales person who doesn't care about your business success any more than they do with the other 10, 20 or 30+ vacancies they are working on at the same time. You need better than a recruitment process limited to "spray and pray", where getting the right candidate is often down to luck.

If you choose to hire using a recruiter, do yourself and your business the biggest favour possible by only working with a professional whose 'specialist' skill is in EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT!

"Effective recruitment skills" means really understanding both the business and the people that might suit that business. It means understanding:

'WHY' - why do you need help and why might a candidate want to provide that help.

'WHAT' - what does your business need to achieve with this hire and what will a potential candidate need to do to meet that goal.

'HOW' - how is the business planning to meet its goals, and how will the potential candidate meet that expectation.

Your recruiter must care about your business enough to do thorough and in-depth research to understand your business, your team, the role you have in mind and the issues the right candidate will need to face and fix. That takes time – if they are working on 10+ other vacancies at the same time, they cannot give you the attention you need.

There are some excellent 'specialists' out there – I sometimes refer my clients to certain specialists that I trust, perhaps where very specific depth of technical understanding is required for example. But they are few and far between and they must be highly skilled in 'recruitment' as well as their area of technical expertise to be effective. So, be very careful in selecting a 'specialist' service if you are sure you need one.

Big Mistake No.4 - 'Job Descriptions' and CVs

Does your role involve doing the same tasks all day, every day?
Probably not. The nature of Leadership roles is that the only constant is usually 'change'.

You strive for improvement, evolution and sometimes even revolution in the way you and your team operate and the way your business performs. If your business is not moving forward, it is dying. And that pace of change seems to be getting faster and faster.

There may be people in your business who perform continuous repeat tasks, and they either love the fact that they only need to think about their focused task, or they can't wait for some robot or Artificial Intelligence to replace them. That's probably not far off now (perhaps you have a Digital Transformation Consultancy orchestrating that change right now).

But here we are talking about learning and decision-making roles, that will add value, grow your company and "make a difference".

The point I am making, is that 'job vacancies' in the traditional sense, don't really exist any more. Yes, we still have job titles, but even

those are increasingly difficult to pin down. When was the last time you met a Finance Director who spent their time simply directing a Finance department? Perhaps we should re-title the role to "Finance, Metrics, Administration & Regulatory Director with additional responsibility for Negotiations, Pricing, Investors and Investment"?

So, what happens in most companies when someone in a senior position gives their notice?

Out comes the dusty old 'Job Description', a 'Vacancy' is created, and the search begins for a replacement. This even happens with first time hires for a new position - using a cookie-cutter 'Job Description' that is basically just a list of areas of traditional responsibility for that post.

But this is not a 'Vacancy', this is an 'Opportunity'. This is an ideal opportunity to progress with the improvement, evolution and even revolution that will take the business forward, keeping you ahead and growing.

Hire someone based on a historic or standardised 'Job Description' and you risk losing the opportunity to progress. A tendency towards stability and security in what you know is understandable, but there was a good reason that last person left (jumped or pushed) and

trying to find a clone would miss the opportunity for positive change.

Instead of rehashing a 'Vacancy' and 'Job Description' via HR (or is that the FD's remit too?), let's look at where the business needs to get to and what is actually needed to get you there.

What capabilities will add value to the business now and in the future? That list of capabilities needed will give you a much better idea of the type of person, skills, experience and character that will bring both the capacity and the ability to achieve your goals.

You will also have the basis for a manifesto that will appeal to your target candidate (and repel those you don't want - which is a good thing of course).

Let's say for example it was your multi-headed FD whose role we need to fill (he jumped). You want the new person to drive growth, so you need them to squeeze the last penny from cash-flow and be creative on funding for new projects.

Do you think the right type of candidate is likely to respond positively to a list of key responsibilities:

*"Statutory accounts, periodic management reporting,
supervision of a team of four" etc.*

or a description of themselves:

"Entrepreneurial FD with a creative approach to cash management and an eye for quantifying growth opportunities"?

Now you are really describing the type of candidate you are looking for. And when you (or your recruiter) speaks to that candidate as part of your search process, the right candidate will quickly recognise the capabilities they have to offer and be excited at the prospect of a role that fits their ambitions so well.

Instead of a 'Job Description' that puts any self-respecting candidate to sleep, you have produced a 'manifesto' of your goals for the business and the type of character, approach and capabilities you need in that role to reach those goals. When they hear about it, the right candidates will be immediately motivated to show their suitability for the opportunity. Those that don't 'get it' will quickly discount themselves, saving you from a potentially costly hiring mistake.

A key reason for the 'manifesto' approach instead of the traditional 'job description', is that in most cases it will first need to be described to the potential candidate verbally. In that scenario, if you don't sort the 'wheat' from the 'chaff' quickly you will waste a lot of time in long conversations with the wrong people.

Why does it need to be covered in conversation? Because just like 'job descriptions' are deadly dull and uninspiring, the traditional CV is almost useless in assessing the true capability of a candidate. Using CVs is the 'quick and easy' method of short-listing candidates, but if you only interview candidates short-listed based on their CV, then you probably have a 50:50 chance of missing the best candidate entirely - just because their CV doesn't give you a real or objective view of who they really are or what they are capable of.

Remember that the CV is a promotional tool for the candidate. As soon as you start talking about their CV, they are unconsciously in sales mode. So, have a conversation first. Learn about their true character and motivators before talking about the CV or the role you may be considering them for.

A CV should give you an idea of the candidate's basic level of competence and relevance of their experience, **but we are looking for much more than that.** We are looking for the candidate whose character and attitude is fully aligned with the objectives you have set for the business. We are looking for the person who will be inspired and motivated to deliver their greatest work, for you and your business.

That inspired work is when the magic really happens - for the candidate, for you and for the business.

Now we are looking well beyond mere 'competence' or 'talent' into the realm of what I call a person's "Spark Capability". This is where an inspired and motivated person is so well aligned with your environment and objectives that their performance reaches another level. And the results of that performance reach a higher level too.

Most recruitment processes simply don't look far enough beyond the 'job description' and the CV and the skills and experience they describe. Skills, expertise and experience are the tools someone uses to 'get the job done', but when someone is working at the level of their "Spark Capability" then those tools can become superpowers.

Now we have moved up from simply finding 'bums on seats' who were qualified simply because they have relevant experience on their CV. We are attracting and hiring 'Sparks' who combine great skills, experience, character and inspired attitude, allowing them to achieve their full potential and their greatest work for your business.

Now you are getting results to really drive forward your business.

Big Mistake No.5 - Interviews

Have you attended many interviews, as an applicant for a position?

Do you remember what was on your mind during those interviews?

Maybe some of these thoughts ring a bell:

"I am going to impress them so much they can't not offer me the role", or

"I've got to make a great impression", or even

"Please offer me the job, I'm getting desperate"?

Whatever the variation on your thoughts at the time, the theme is generally the same - SELL, SELL SELL. It is a natural human tendency in an interview to want to present one's "best side" and everyone does it (even if they try not to).

Even people who don't really want the job they are interviewing for, will sell themselves as hard as they can, then just reject an offer if it comes later. In fact, the worst possible outcome of an interview is for someone to attend even though they don't want the job ("I'll go along to get some practice"), then sell themselves so hard into the job, that they get an offer and they convince themselves the opportunity might be right for them. They accept the job, only to realise they fell

for their own bullsh*t persuasion tactics and start resenting the job and wishing they were somewhere else. The job becomes their own personal form of purgatory. Regardless how 'talented' that person may be, the best the company can expect in this scenario is for the person to sell themselves into the next opportunity quick. The longer they remain reticent in this role, the more disruptive they will be.

Even when you might have the 'perfect' candidate at interview, the situation is generally not conducive to seeing the 'real' person in front of you. You still only get to see the 'best case scenario' that the candidate wants to portray. You are still seeing a 'sales pitch', even if it is a genuinely inspired one.

This hire could be fundamental to the development and success of your business and you may be working with this person for years ahead - should that decision be made based only on a subjectively biased 'sales pitch'?

And how many interviews have you lead as an employer?

If only a few, then you maybe finished the interviews with a "Yes, 'No' or 'Maybe' opinion on the candidate's potential, but did you feel like you really knew that person?

If you have lead many interviews, you may be more confident of your

judgement and how you 'read' the candidate. Maybe you have an idea of how they might respond in a particular situation. You may even think they can handle certain personalities in your organisation (or not) and you may think they could 'fit in' (or not). You may be fairly confident they 'get it' and even believe they 'want it' too. But how do you know they are not just telling you what you want to hear? How will their interview performance translate into the real world if you offer them the role?

The truth is, that in isolation an interview is not enough to help you, or the candidate, decide if they are right for the role you have in mind.

You need more information about the candidate and you need it to come from situations much less partial or biased than a traditional interview. And the greater variety of opinions and data sources you consider, the more likely the success of your chosen candidate.

Luckily, there are many additional ways to gain extra insight into the true potential of a 'short-listed' candidate:

- You could spend 5 minutes and just 'Google' them.
- You could spend an hour or so and also check out their social media and other online profiles.

- Perhaps a few hours delving into their prior work history and references.
- There are a great variety of personality and psychometric profiling tools available for an additional perspective (DISC type or Motivational Mapping for example).
- How about cognitive/problem-solving exercises or tests?
- How can you assess their performance in the 'real world' of your business? Could you set a short but relevant, work-based task for them?
- Could you ask them to make a brief SWOT presentation to see how they understand your business and market and get an idea of how they present under pressure?
- Who else can you ask to meet the candidate for an opinion? Is that opinion impartial? Do you have trusted Advisor, Mentor or Non-Exec whose opinion you would value?
- Does anyone in your network (or your recruiters network) know the candidate and is willing to share their opinion ('off the record' if necessary)?
- Can the candidate spend time with some of your team, who can then provide feedback (may not be impartial)?
- Do you feel confident introducing them to a customer, a supplier or an investor in your business? (Their opinion could be the clincher).
- Can you meet them in different environments?

It depends on how much time you are willing to spend to be sure you make the right choice. This is one of the reasons businesses use external recruiters - done properly, a thorough candidate assessment takes a lot of time and resources. Plus, a trusted recruiter can provide an additional and impartial perspective on the candidate.

The truth is that finding mere 'competence' (or 'talent') is only a small part of your assessment process. Now the internet gives us open access to every potential candidate in the world. You want an FD? You can find hundreds or even thousands of 'competent' FDs in just a few days or even hours with access to a few job boards and even LinkedIn. But you need more than simply 'competence' don't you.

You need the one who '**gets it**' and really '**wants it**'. You want to hire a 'Spark', who combines the skills and the inspired attitude to achieve exceptional results.

That means you or your recruiter looking a lot deeper at potentially suitable candidates than in just a standard interview.

Big Mistake No.6 - Win/Lose = Lost

One of the reasons a good hiring process puts less emphasis on finding 'experience', is that experience can lead us to hold on to bad habits as well as the good habits we are looking for.

Typical recruitment practice is full of bad habits. We have discussed some of those bad habits above and looked at ways to bypass those bad habits.

Now we are looking at perhaps the deepest set bad habit of all in the recruitment process. This bad habit underlies and even creates most of the other bad habits we have discussed.

The problem with bad habits is that they are deeply ingrained through years of experience, until we follow the habit unwittingly, barely conscious that this habit is in fact undermining our own goals and progress.

This particular bad habit is doubly divisive, because it is also sometimes a good habit.

I am talking about our instinctive habit to think about what we 'want' or "What's In It For Me" (WIIFM). This can be a good habit when it

helps us to get focus and to stay focused to achieve our goals. However, it is a bad habit when it causes us to disregard the wants and desires of the people we interact with.

Effective recruitment is about finding common purpose and synergy of skills. The hirer and the candidate must want the same goals and to be able to combine resources so the whole is greater than the elements that created it. That doesn't work if the wants of one 'side' are being ignored or if both 'sides' are only considering their own agenda.

Common recruitment practice puts hirer and candidate on separate sides, with a focused bias on what the hirer wants. The 'Job Description' is all about what the hirer wants from the candidate. The typical CV is all about the candidate presenting what they think prospective hirer wants to see. A typical interview is all about the hirer as the 'buyer' and the candidate 'selling' themselves to get the job. It's more like a confrontation than creating a team. This is a sales pitch when it needs to be a negotiation.

Consider a typical scenario*:

The CEO of Company X wants an experienced Operations Director who can "hit the ground running" so they specify prior experience in a similar industry (Y). They pass on a Job

Description to a 'specialist' recruiter who begins the search. The recruiter searches their database for 'Operations Director' and 'industry Y'. They have 8 potential candidates and they want the CEO to interview as many as possible to increase the odds of filling the role. So, the recruiter does a 'hard sell' to each of the candidates, carefully highlighting all the opportunities (and subtly hiding all the threats). 7 of the 8 agree to be put forward, so the recruiter is happy as they have a good chance of filling the clients time with at least 5 interviews, with a fair chance one will be 'good enough' to receive an offer.

The CEO reads the 7 CVs (which all say pretty much the same thing) and selects 5 for interview. He doesn't know much about the candidates yet, but reasons that he can find out at interview and perhaps unconsciously hopes "there must be at least one good one amongst the 5".

At interview, each candidate tells the CEO why they are the perfect person for the job. The CEO tells each candidate what a great opportunity there is to work at Company X. There may be a 2nd or even 3rd interview stage for 2 or 3 final candidates to explore specific areas of experience.

The CEO feels most comfortable with Candidate A, because he has "been there and done it before" (if in doubt, the CEO reasons to go for the least risk option). Candidate A is unsure,

as this sounds a lot like his last role and he has "been there and done that". So, the recruiter quietly nudges Candidate A into accepting with a significant step up in salary, so Candidate A can feel like he is progressing in money at least.

2-3 months into his new role, Candidate A has moved into 'cruise mode', he's bored and starts speaking to a couple of Headhunters "just in case". The CEO is frustrated to have more 'Status Quo' when he wanted someone to challenge and progress, but what can he do now that Candidate A "has their feet under the desk"?

* Based on an actual case I encountered recently, where the CEO asked me to find a replacement for Candidate A (who came via another well-known recruitment/headhunter firm).

Because the typical process is so biased and one-sided, this leads to lots of assumptions being made on both sides. The CEO must make assumptions about the candidate's true motivation and about their true strengths and weaknesses. Candidate A must make assumptions about their true fit for the company and the role and even whether they are likely to be happy in the new position. Sorry for the truism, but in this case, it is often right: ASSUME = to make an 'Ass' out of 'U' and 'Me'. This can lead to some unsettling realisations on both 'sides' later when the truth comes out.

In this typical example, Candidate A was perfectly competent. But the focus of the whole process was just on a 'Win' for the company. Nobody (including Candidate A) was seeking a true 'Win' for the candidate. Candidate A was not the right person for the role, because he didn't truly 'want it'. That should have been apparent well before the interview (to the recruiter and to Candidate A).

So, **Win/Lose = Lost**. The whole process was biased towards the WIIFM of the CEO (and the recruiter). The CEO thought he had a 'Win', but Candidate A had a 'Lose' (even though he got the job). Eventually everybody 'Lost'.

Whether you are recruiting direct, or using a recruitment service, it is absolutely paramount for the hiring process to achieve a Win/Win. The candidate's 'want' must be just as fulfilled as the company 'want'.

That means open transparency and full disclosure on the role, the business, the team, the plans... everything.

When a 'talented' candidate knows exactly what they are going into, 'gets it' and still 'wants it' - then you have a recipe for 'Spark Capability' and 'Explosive Results'.

This concept will terrify the recruiter in the example above. Out of their 8 candidates, none of them might have chosen to pursue the interview if they had been properly briefed. The recruiter might have had to go out and actually find a suitable candidate (heaven forbid)!

But you only need ONE Spark candidate. You need quality, not quantity. If you don't have 5 Spark candidates, then you don't have to waste your time interviewing people just to 'make up the numbers'.

A thorough candidate search covering all areas of the market, can take weeks and involve contacting hundreds of potential candidates. But there will be at least ONE, whose 'Spark Capability' will align with this opportunity. If you really want to see other candidates 'for comparison purposes' then go ahead, though it may just muddy your decision because those candidates might sell themselves well, but it may be for the wrong reasons.

Big Mistake No.7 - Don't Settle & Don't Pay Too Much

We've talked about finding the 'ONE', with the exceptional, 'Spark Capability'. The 'Spark'. That person has the skills you need, they understand your purpose, values and what they will need to achieve (they 'get it') and they have the desire to give their very greatest work to achieve your shared goals (they 'want it').

When you (or your recruiter) find that person, don't hesitate, hire them!

From my experience meeting thousands of candidates, I believe everyone has 'Spark Capability' within them, though it is not always easy for them to find the opportunity where that Capability can be best expressed.

When that match is made, it is both obvious and magnificent. That person, in that ideal position, will now add huge value to the business and they will love doing it.

Making that match and watching the 'Explosive Results' that follow is what lights my own 'Spark Capability' and why I love my role in working with companies and candidates to place 'Sparks'.

So, don't settle for anything less than a 'Spark', especially when you recruit for Leadership or Senior roles. You don't need to. There is at least one 'Spark' out there for you, you just need a recruiter dedicated to committing the time, effort, skills and resources to finding the 'ONE' (or more if you're lucky).

You'll know when you have found a 'Spark' because they will be 'biting your arm off' to take the opportunity you have to offer.

There is occasionally just one factor that can get in the way - their previous experience and career-level.

Because traditional recruitment processes have long been mostly focused on prior experience (that used to be the only way to gain the knowledge needed to do the job - but not anymore thanks to the advances of the Digital Age and the Internet), that is what employers generally pay most for.

Your 'Spark' really wants to work with you, but they may find it difficult to move if they must drop much in salary package from their previous role. They 'want it' so don't be tempted to pay more than you need to and certainly don't use money to entice them into working with you (if they do that, they don't want it enough).

For Leadership and Senior Team roles, your 'Spark' is likely to fall in one of three career-level categories:

1. Someone ambitious and 'on the way up', because you feel that the attitude and motivation to really get stuck in and challenge the status quo is the more important factor than weight of industry experience. That person knows and has done most of the work involved but may not yet have been fully responsible for all aspects. They might require a longer period to hand-over all responsibilities but could be rewarded as they add greater value over the next year or so. And they will be well motivated to drive the changes you want.
2. A highly experienced Director or Senior Manager who could 'hit the ground running'. They have previously taken full responsibility covering the full scope of the role and could see this as an opportunity to be closer to the 'heart' of the business where they could have a greater impact on the future development of the business.
3. A 'big hitter' who has already achieved the type of results you seek for your business in a similar organisation. They have proven ability to drive change, achieve sustainable growth and they are highly proven as a senior Director and as a key influencer for your business. They love to 'make a difference',

they have done it before and they want to do it again. This candidate could demand a much higher salary because that proven experience should (at least in theory) be easy to replicate for your business.

The salary requirements at these different levels can vary greatly. From Level 1 to Level 3 a difference of £50k is common and even a difference of £100k+ is possible.

The most likely candidates, in terms of the long-term attitude and drive needed, will probably be in level 1 or 2. I usually recommend that a search include candidates at each of these levels. So, if you can attract a 'big hitter' at level 3, who still has the drive and attitude, their added value should be well worth the added salary in terms of ROI.

If you are confident you won't settle for anyone except a 'Spark', but accept the right person could fall in any of these career experience categories, then you will need to keep a wide range open as you budget for salary.

It's worth noting that performance related bonuses or options could help to keep the base salary requirement down on each of these candidate types. In each case, I would also recommend keeping the

starting salary as low as possible to enable future increases to reward their progress in achieving your objectives. Your recruiter should help find the right offer level for each candidate they recommend.

If you have not settled for anyone less than a 'Spark', your ROI on this hire will be remarkable.

So good hunting!

The 'Spark Capability Plan' - Step by Step

First thing to note is that though the 'Spark Capability Plan' is simple, it does take considerable more thought and effort (for the person undertaking the search) than the typical recruitment practice that you may have experienced previously.

Of course, it is well worth it when it results in a great hire that will deliver phenomenal ROI for your business.

To help you recognise the value of this plan, it is worthwhile taking a moment to summarise the steps of the 'old model' of typical recruitment practice to compare and contrast against the 'new model' of the 'Spark Capability Plan'.

Old Model - typical recruitment practice:

1. Vacancy defined in a 'Job Description' outlining key responsibilities, desired skills and experience and salary offered.
2. Source candidates -
 - Search existing database of available candidates (*using keywords from 'Job Description' if you use a typical Recruiter*)
 - Advertise role to attract more possible candidates (most of which are simply added to the Recruiter's database for other searches)
3. Short-list candidates using CV data and (possibly) a phone call, using the following key criteria (in approximate descending order of priority) -
 - Availability
 - Price/Salary Expectation
 - Track record/Experience
 - Understanding/Expertise
 - Talent/Skills
 - Attitude/Character

4. Interview assessment by the Hirer (usually aiming for 5 candidates at 1st interview and perhaps x2 or x3 stages of interview)
5. Offer negotiated with selected candidate (or process re-started)
6. Candidate begins in role (unless they were counter-offered)

New Model – the 'Spark Capability Plan':

1. Tailored plan, jointly created by Hirer and Capability Consultant (this step is free-of-charge and no-obligation, so you can benefit from this even if you choose to follow the plan alone).
2. 'Deep Dive Research & Analysis' to fully understand and define:
 - Current situation of the Company and the Team
 - Core Values, Purpose and Mission for the Company, the Team and the Role
 - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) for the Company, the Team and the Role
 - Problems or Issues facing the Company, the Team and the Role
 - Alternative or combination solutions – technology, outsourcing, interim etc.
 - Why hire?
 - What is expected ROI on this Role/What's in it for the Company?
3. Definition of Parameters for the Role:
 - Range of budget available/required for salary/package

- Core Capabilities required – what do they need to be especially good at to succeed in this role
- Target Objectives anticipated – what are the markers of success in this role, what KPIs or scorecard will be used to evaluate performance in the role
- Areas of Responsibility - Team, Budget etc. and who the role will report to
- Future progression opportunities – what can the right person in this role look forward to in future
- What's in it for the right candidate – how might this role help their career, what challenges would the right person relish, what can they learn from this role and this company

4. Presentation the opportunity to your ideal 'Spark' candidate:

- Creation of a profile/outline of the role, the business and the objectives this role is set to achieve. This is your Manifesto.
- This is not a traditional job description. It is designed to connect emotionally with our ideal candidate. They need to recognise this as an ideal opportunity for them.
- It should appeal to their motivations, values and purpose. They need to see that this is the role where they can really 'make a difference'.
- This presentation may form part of a targeted advertising

campaign and is likely to be sent to short-listed 'headhunt' candidates.

- Done correctly, this will attract our ideal candidate, even if they are not actively looking for a new role.

5. Source candidate 'talent' (you may need to consider 100's of 'competent' candidates before you find 'The One' who will deliver Explosive Results) -

- Proactively search relevant online databases, social media and offline networks etc.
- Headhunt 'passive' candidates
- The recruiters 'Little Black Book' of relevant contacts (still useful, just not on its own)
- Advertise to attract further 'active' candidates (if required)

6. Rigorous pre-interview assessment of candidates with a combination of CV data, phone interviews, face-to-face meeting (not an interview, or use Skype if necessary, social media profile data, feedback from contacts, personality profiling - using the following key criteria (in approximate descending order of priority):

- **Inspiration** – What do they believe in? What's their purpose in life? What values do they hold to guide their actions?

What pushes them (from within) towards greater achievement?

- **Motivation** – What do they aspire to? What ambitions do they have? What are their motives for action? What (external) factors will pull them towards greater achievement?
- **Expectations** – Where are they in terms of career level? What do they want to achieve career-wise? What is their aim for their next role (and beyond)? Salary level? Responsibility level? Work/Life balance requirements?
- **Attitude/Character** – What are their key personality attributes? How are likely to react to pressure, stress, setbacks etc.? What is their management style and how are they best managed? Are they a problem solver?
- **Talent/Skills** – Which aspects of their work and life do they find easy or hard? What comes naturally to them and what do they have to work hard to achieve? Which specific areas of their career have they excelled at and why? How do they communicate? How easily do they make decisions? How fast do they learn? How easily do they adapt?
- **Understanding/Expertise** – What specialist expertise can they offer and where would it be of most value? Can they

adapt what they 'know' to a new role and environment?

What understanding do they have of this role, this business and this industry? What additional expertise can they bring that could be of value in this role?

- **Track Record/Experience** – What specific achievements can they demonstrate? What references and/or testimonials do they have? What is the 'word on the street' about them from my network or connections? How do their previous colleagues, customers or suppliers rate them?
- **Availability/Interest** – Are they actively looking for a new role? If not, what might tempt them to move? What do they think of this opportunity?
- **Price/Salary** – Current remuneration? Current benefits package? What range would they consider for their next move? What additional benefits will they expect?

7. Recommend only candidate(s) showing 'Spark Capability' potential to the Hirer.

- Supported by a detailed appraisal of the candidate(s) plus their CV.
- Bear in mind it could have taken several weeks just to find one 'Spark' candidate so when you have one, move that candidate to the next stage (and keep searching for others).

8. The Interview with the Hirer. This is a 2-way communication stage, designed to ensure a Win/Win for both the Hirer and the candidate. This can be supported by an NDA if required.
 - How do you get on?
 - Do you agree with the evidence provided in the candidate profile report and their CV?
 - Can you and your Team work with this person?
9. Alongside the interview you might ask them to complete further assessments. Just make sure to communicate the requirement in advance, as even 'Sparks' don't like to feel like a performing animal suddenly being made to jump through hoops.
 - Cognitive or reasoning assessment?
 - Motivational Mapping?
 - Perhaps a short, but relevant, work-based task or presentation (for example, a brief outline of their proposed 100-day plan once they begin the role can work well)
10. Additional meetings as required. Again encouraging 2-way communication to ensure you are both confident they are the right person for the role and the role is right for them.
 - On site, perhaps to meet the team?
 - Off site, an informal chat over a coffee perhaps?

- Perhaps with a respected Mentor, Advisor, an Investor or even a Customer?

11. Offer to candidate.

- The offer is based on information gathered from the pre-interview assessment (and ideally re-clarified during the interview stage), so there should be no surprise re-negotiation or rejection of the offer.

12. On-boarding process begins to help the candidate feel

welcome, prepared and help them 'hit the ground running' as well as possible. Also covers necessary administrative elements such as payroll registration, acquisition of necessary equipment (laptop etc.).

13. Candidate begins role.

14. On-boarding continues to help the candidate become familiar

with the company, its culture, its staff and its work, which helps to ensure they get 'up to speed' and fully productive as fast as possible. This may include training, introductions to colleagues, business partners, customers, suppliers etc.

Yes, there are significantly more elements to the 'New Model' than the 'Old Model'. And both the sourcing and the pre-interview assessment phases are much more comprehensive and time-consuming in the 'New Model'.

But if you follow this model, you will greatly reduce the risk of a “bad hire” that could be highly costly or even catastrophic for your business.

Choose the right recruiter to do this for you and getting the outstanding capability you need should take very little of your time or effort.

What Next?

If the commitment in time and effort into getting the process right concerns you, then that is of course what a skilled recruiter is for.

You can choose to engage Capability Consulting to manage your 'Spark Capability Plan' for you, and you'll get all the benefit of a proven and complete recruitment process, without the headache.

We are so confident of our results with this plan, that your exceptional new leadership recruit would even be **guaranteed by Capability Consulting for a full 12 months** (other recruiters typically offer only a 12 week guarantee period for their placements).

This really is a Win/Win scenario.

To start creating a fully tailored 'Spark Capability Plan' to make sure you get the right person in the right role, then [contact Oliver Parker at Capability Consulting](#) for a no-obligation discussion and plan.