

How lfs screens candidates

Hiring organizations are often surprised to learn that over 50 percent of the work done by our professional search consultants involves screening candidates. Before you ever meet a candidate of ours, one of our search consultants has already dedicated many hours to answering one fundamental question, "After reviewing all of our basic screening factors (which we will explore in more detail below), does this candidate have the potential to become a truly valuable resource to your legal hiring organization?"

A Different Type of Motivation is Involved in Our Screening Process

Is it hard for you to believe that we will only present candidates to you who have the potential to become truly valuable resources to your legal hiring organization? It shouldn't be. We know that our success is dependent upon making placements that work. Period. You can rest assured that a candidate will never be presented to you unless we believe that the individual is a "good candidate" who has a realistic chance of joining your organization and succeeding on the job.

Our internal statistics indicate that though we receive thousands of new resumes each year, we choose to work with only a small percentage of these potential candidates. In fact, we believe that we are more selective about choosing our candidates than any other search firm in the United States. Due to our thorough screening process and high standards, almost every one of the candidates we choose to work with will eventually find full or part-time

employment through Law Firm Staff, Inc. Like any organization focused on realizing its long-term objectives, we are painfully aware of the fact that our credibility is on the line each time we present a new candidate to you. Accordingly, we make every effort to ensure that our standards remain high as we concentrate on making placements that your hiring organization and our candidates will deem successful. In pursuing this goal, we sometimes will present candidates to you who would not typically be presented by other search firms.

Screening for the Obvious. On a daily basis, we refuse to work with candidates other recruiters might readily choose to represent. We only make these decisions after we've talked with the individuals and discerned that they are potential "trouble." We do not want to present an individual to you who:

1. is not enthusiastic about working,
2. is unsure of what he or she wants,
3. has experienced significant problems at his or her current legal hiring organization,
4. is looking at several markets, in addition to the one you are in, or who
5. has simply managed to "rub us the wrong way."

We refuse to work with approximately 25 percent of those who might be considered "otherwise qualified" except for the reasons listed above. Out of this 25 percent, many candidates have qualifications "on paper" that would normally enable them to get hired by a top ("AmLaw 100") law firm.

Screening for the Less Obvious Factors.

We approach our work in a highly personal yet methodical way. We use a sophisticated database that updates our files on a daily basis with news about many legal hiring organizations. We attempt to understand what you do, where you are going and the nature of your hiring needs. We also keep meticulous records on the “types” of candidates we have presented to you in the past and which ones you have chosen to interview. These records help us identify new candidates you may want to consider in the future.

When we recruit candidates, we never limit our review to simply noting which schools they attended, degrees, their current employment situation, and their past work experience. We recognize that a person’s achievements at one school or employer may prepare that person to excel in your organization better than similar sounding achievements at other institutions. When reviewing individual candidates, Law Firm Staff, Inc. tries to take such factors as those listed above into account. We also take other factors into account that may be missed by those who do not put as much thought into what they do as our search consultants. These other factors may include:

1. the candidate’s perceived degree of motivation,
2. the candidate’s presentation,
3. the candidate’s work experiences other than in law,
4. evidence that the candidate has overcome significant life obstacles to enter and stay in the practice of law,

5. the maturity gained by an individual from other life experiences, after choosing to step away from the practice of law for a period of years,
6. a rising trend in academic performance versus solid but unexceptional work,
7. financial pressure requiring employment during school,
8. significant personal achievement in extracurricular work while in school. Other notable work or military experience. Prior training and background in an unusual area, and
9. economic, social, or educational obstacles that have been overcome successfully by a candidate

Each of these factors has contributed to favorable consideration. Other similar factors also are considered.

Legal hiring organizations generally seek to maintain a diverse group of attorneys and staff; this creates an environment in which the free exchange of ideas and viewpoints can flourish. It also provides a rich experience for both employees and clients. In an effort to help provide this diversity, our search consultants actively recruit minority candidates during our screening process. We do not shy away from stating that ethnicity is a factor that we consider, in conjunction with other more typical background information, when choosing which candidates we would like to represent.

We also consider unique and challenging personal experiences a candidate has faced. Did the candidate confront and surmount life’s difficulties with grace, courage, and

effectiveness? Is this a candidate that shows compassion and concern for the welfare of those around them? Factors like these help us to assess a candidate's ability to be both objective and responsive to the needs of a diverse client base. They can enhance the chances for both minority and non-minority candidates.

We should add that the failure to respond with vigor and effectiveness to opportunities created by affluence or sacrifice on the part of one's family or other benefactors is viewed negatively in the assessment. We continue to believe that this policy is right for both the institutions we serve and consistent with current and controlling legal mandates, which we intend to fully respect and follow.

Our multilayered approach often requires the legal hiring organizations we serve to look "beneath the surface" so that they can see the considerable thought and analysis that has gone into presenting a specific candidate to them. Obviously, objective indicators of intellectual capacity and the quality of each candidate's past legal experiences are the primary determinants we use when deciding if we want to present a particular candidate to you. Unless an applicant has good "paper qualifications," the chances are small that we will choose to work with him or her.

However, we should add that each year we choose to work with some applicants whose "paper qualifications" are a bit below those frequently presented by attorneys seeking jobs with top-tier law firms. We do this because these applicants have other truly impressive credentials.