



How to get the most ROI from your recruiting partner

Emily, VP of marketing for a fast-growing tech startup, was in a bind. Her CEO had called her into his office just an hour before to deliver the news: Her marketing budget would be slashed by nearly 30%, and more cuts might be coming.

As Emily walked back to her office, a familiar sense of dread settled over her. A fresh-faced new manager during the 2008 recession, she'd seen challenging times. But with a bigger team, the pressure felt different. Their next big product launch was right around the corner, and it couldn't fail. And just last week, she'd interviewed candidates for several roles she was desperate to fill. Would there even be a team for them to join?

Emily spent the next two days poring over performance metrics and expenses, looking

for fat to trim and creative ways to stretch her budget.

But then she remembered she wasn't alone in her seemingly Sisyphean task. She had her trusted advisors at Freeman+Leonard, who she'd recently enlisted to help her fill those open roles. Her experience as a candidate just 18 months prior was enough for her to know they were no ordinary talent acquisition partner.

So even though she didn't know if she'd continue to have much of a budget to work with, she decided to at least reach out for advice.

"If I have to cut a senior-level team member, could two junior-level backfills work?" she asked. "Can I even still hire that automation expert when I also still need a copywriter?"

"Not so fast," said Lisa Foster, her Freeman+Leonard consultant. "It doesn't have to be either-or. Let's consider a different approach."

Together they assembled a team of top-tier creative contractors to cinch those launch communications and an automation specialist to set up their campaigns for the coming quarter.

Emily may have had to change her hiring plans for the near term, but this new approach allowed her to prove marketing's value (and her leadership skills) even under incredible constraints. Perhaps most important, it gave her an on-demand team of freelancers already trained on her brand – a team she could turn to down the line for other pressing and quick-turn projects.

A truly strategic and innovative recruiting partner like Freeman+Leonard will see beyond budget limitations and provide solutions you may not have even realized were an option. Solutions that save you money in the short term, but also set you up for long-term success.

But most hiring managers underestimate what a recruiting partner like Freeman+Leonard can do for them. They

then risk not getting the full value a partnership like that can provide. Let's change that, shall we? Here's our team's advice on how to get the most ROI from your recruiting partner.

1 Ask for guidance and keep an open mind.

Sometimes clients come to us with a key role to fill, and we're thrilled to do it. But often it's more complicated — their budget is stretched thin, they've over-hired where talent's no longer needed, or they're trying to backfill for a product that will sunset next year.

So, what's the next best move? It depends!

Think of your recruiting partner as less of a seat filler and more of a strategic advisor. The challenges you face that appear to be nearly impossible to tackle look a lot like the problems we solve for clients every day.

In Emily's case, she saw the value in taking a different approach.

Her Freeman+Leonard advisor found the right on-demand resources to help her meet her KPIs without hiring a full-time employee she wasn't even confident she could hold onto long-term.





"My advice: Don't automatically assume you need to fill your open roles with the same kinds of FTEs who vacated them," says Kathy Leonard, President & Chief Marketing Officer at Freeman+Leonard.

"Look at it from another angle," she says. "Consider what KPIs you need to hit this quarter, and this year. What strategies and tactics will get you there? Only then start thinking about the marketing skills you need."

And remember: We can help you at every stage of this process, so there's no need to figure this out alone.

2 Collaborate and communicate with us.

Communication is key to delivering ideal outcomes. Your recruiter can act as an extension of your team, ready and eager to collaborate — less of a vendor, and more of a colleague and confidante.

The more we know about what's going on in your company, the better. If pressure is building internally to change up the role you're hiring for or to add different types of skills, let us know early and often — even if you're worried about giving us whiplash.

Rather than hashing it out on your own, bring us into the conversation, and sooner rather than later. You never know what new ideas we might generate.

When in doubt, let's talk it out! Allow us to be a sounding board to help you make sense of it all and mitigate the impact of these changes on your hiring process.

3 Commit to attracting talent together.

Part of a recruiter's job is to play intermediary, and we're masters of reassuring candidates while they're in the running. But if you're serious about competing for top talent, you

can't afford to play hard to get. You need to keep your head in the game and play to win, which means being responsive to, and transparent with, candidates.

Leverage your recruiter as less of a defensive player and more of a relationship facilitator.

We get it; sometimes things are unsettled on your end and you don't have answers yet. But keeping candidates in the loop matters.

That whip-smart marketing director with the blue-chip brands on her resume who nailed her interview two weeks ago but never heard from you? She's not waiting for your call. And if she feels ghosted, your employer brand reputation and ability to attract top talent are at stake.

Candidates talk to each other, and a negative interview experience can come back to haunt you. Help us help you make a strong impression with talent.

Seize the opportunity to gain a true partner

Economic volatility aside, the new way of working calls for more creativity and strategic thinking in hiring practices, the

ability to pivot on a dime, and a continuous commitment to attracting top talent.

In Emily's story, there are lessons for all hiring managers. When you open your mind to new ways of working with talent, you can solve today's problems in ways that prepare you for greater returns tomorrow – while still taking care of your people.

Whether you've been asked to ramp up at a moment's notice or shift to do more with less, a strategic recruiting partner like Freeman+Leonard can ensure you're still able to meet your goals despite the toughest constraints.

If you have questions about hiring and ensuring your marketing and advertising teams are fully resourced – even if you're not necessarily ready to hire – reach out to a Freeman+Leonard consultant.

Get in touch today.

(800) 278-7782

contact@freemanleonard.com

CONTACT US →

