

for profit and success

# the business end

business end

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## HEAD HUNTING

### GET THAT JOB

As employment picks up, recruitment experts detail what they're looking for.  
**Report: Leo D'Angelo Fisher**

● Any short-listed candidate invited to that first critical interview will know that the others vying for the job will have an almost identical resume. So what does a recruitment consultant look for when faced with a selection of candidates with similar skills and experience?

Understanding the "tricks of the trade" won't necessarily land someone the job, but demystifying the recruitment process will at least enable a candidate to focus on the things that matter.

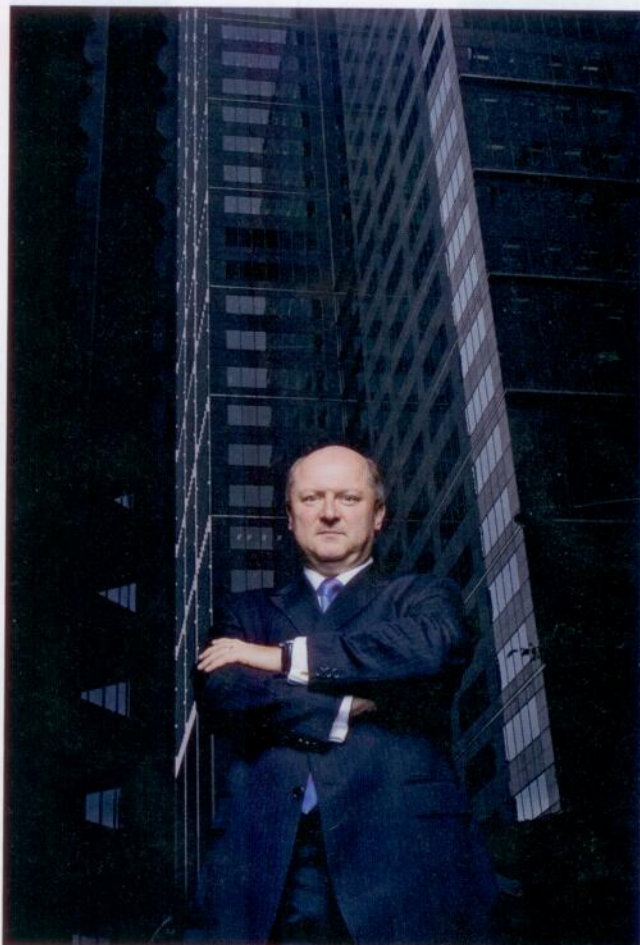
The managing director of recruitment firm Ambition, Paul Lyons, says it is common in recruitment to have to choose between candidates with similar qualifications. "In such circumstances, we take guidance from our clients' preferences. Different clients emphasise different requirements either as a philosophy or specific to the circumstances of each role," he says.

During the selection process, irrespective of how senior or specialist the role, Lyons says three basic questions need to be answered: Can the individual do the job? Do they want to do the job? Will they fit into the team?

Since the global financial crisis, Lyons says employers have tended to demand an "exact fit". They want a candidate with "90-100 per cent" of desired attributes who can make an immediate contribution to the company. A candidate with 70 per cent of attributes but who has long-term potential is not as attractive to employers right now.

"This approach is taken as a risk-management strategy to reduce the risk of a poor hire at a time when profit margins are tight," Lyons says.

Getting the "exact fit" stamp is easier



**Intuition: Peter Salt,** director, Salt & Shein recruitment agency

said than done. As Lyons notes, "the best person for the job in terms of skills and experience doesn't necessarily get the job".

Peter Salt, a director of Sydney recruitment firm Salt & Shein, prizes consistency when interviewing candidates. Recruitment consultants don't have a "little black book" of techniques to arrive at their perfect candidate, he says, but experienced recruiters will have honed their interview techniques to enable them to root out inconsistencies.

"A recruiter will ask a series of questions but in different ways and at different times to see if they're getting the same information," Salt says.

"It's fair to assume that there will  
*Continued on page 46*