10 Mistakes Every Agent Makes When Hiring

1. Hiring Because You NEED Someone
Urgency lowers standards. Being short-staffed makes an average candidate look great. You start selling yourself on the candidate instead of evaluating whether they actually fit.

2. Falling in Love With the Résumé
Insurance experience, sales experience, or an impressive work history doesn't automatically mean someone will perform in *your* agency. **Past experience gets them the interview. The person gets them the job.**

3. Talking Too Much During the Interview
If you're explaining your agency for 35 minutes and they're talking for 10, you didn't interview them… they interviewed you. Get them talking. Then listen.

4. Asking Questions That Have "Right Answers"
"Are you competitive?" "Are you motivated?" "Are you comfortable making calls?" Of course they're going to say yes. Instead: **"Tell me about the last time you had a goal you weren't hitting. What did you do?"**

5. Hiring Personality Without Testing Coachability
Someone can be charismatic and still be impossible to manage. Challenge something they say during the interview. Give them feedback. See how they respond. **The interview should test how they'll react when you coach them later.**

6. Ignoring the Little Red Flags
Late to the interview. Didn't research the agency. Poor communication. Blames the previous employer. Takes forever to return paperwork. Agents overlook these because they like the candidate. **Small problems during recruiting usually become bigger problems after hiring.**

7. Only Interviewing When You Have an Opening
The worst time to build a recruiting pipeline is when somebody quits. Recruiting should be an **ongoing agency activity**, not an emergency response.

8. Moving Too Slowly on Great Candidates
Good people have options. Waiting four days to follow up, dragging out interviews, or taking a week to make an offer gives somebody else the opportunity to hire them.

9. Thinking the Job Is Done When They Accept
Signing an offer isn't the finish line. The first 30–90 days determine whether your new hire becomes productive or becomes your next recruiting problem. **Recruiting without onboarding is just expensive turnover.**

10. Keeping the Wrong Person Too Long
This may be the most expensive mistake. Owners often spend months trying to turn the wrong person into the right person because they don't want to recruit again. **Don't let the pain of replacing someone become the reason you tolerate someone you already know isn't working.**

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3 Ways to Put Those Mistakes Behind You

1. BUILD A BENCH… DON'T FILL A SEAT.

Recruit year-round.

Your goal shouldn't be *“I need to hire someone.”*

It should be:

“I want qualified people available before I need them.”

Interview consistently. Keep relationships with strong candidates. Build a pipeline. Then when someone leaves or you decide to grow, you're choosing from options instead of hiring from desperation.

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2. INTERVIEW FOR EVIDENCE, NOT ANSWERS.

Stop asking candidates who they **think they are**.

Make them show you.

Instead of:

“Are you coachable?”

Try:

“Tell me about a piece of feedback you disagreed with. What did you do with it?”

Instead of:

“Are you competitive?”

Ask:

“What's something you've wanted to be the best at?”

Instead of:

“Are you comfortable on the phone?”

Try:

“I'm a prospect. You have 30 seconds. Call me.”

Look for **behavior, examples, communication, energy, accountability and coachability.**

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3. RECRUIT → SELECT → DEVELOP

Great recruiting doesn't eliminate the need for leadership.

You need all three:

RECRUIT
Create a consistent flow of candidates.

↓

SELECT
Have a repeatable process that identifies the right people.

↓

DEVELOP
Give them structure, expectations, training, accountability and coaching immediately.