

REAGENT RANT **NO.8**



**COMFORTABLY  
NUMB  
OR  
SEEKER  
OF TRUTH?**

# THE ONE CONSTANT, AS THEY SAY, IS CHANGE.



The current relentless worldwide financial tectonic rumblings, with every country blaming the other for the global mess, are a long-overdue process of change in the way money is perceived and exchanged between nations. But when it ends, we'll surely all be in a much better position.

Marilyn Monroe was famous for a few things, but when she wasn't busy accidentally showing off her knickers, she managed to be quite insightful – she once said "Good things fall apart so better things can fall together."

So what are you doing to take apart good things so better ones can replace them? What are you doing to challenge the commonplace and replace them with the less common?

There are two primary choices in life - to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them. Which choice have you made? Or which choice will you be forced to make?

In our game, recruiters and talent attraction specialists can be split into three broad categories:

1. **Comfortably numb** – those unaware of their problems, who ignore modern technology, accepted developments in process, the competitive environment and the swings in the balance between talent supply and demand. Change happens to these people.
2. **Hair on Fire** – those that know that their approach is sick, but run around grabbing at solutions and cures at random to solve an undefined problem. Change happens randomly around these people.

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3. **Seekers of truth** – those that constantly test the strength of their processes, believing something better exists, uncannily always ahead of the curve, much to the annoyance of their peers and competitors. These people drive change.

### Which one are you?

To help you decide, let's do a quick quiz:

1. Imagine there weren't any online job boards – name five media types you use as a matter of course.
2. Do you press your providers for fresh and creative sourcing ideas, or hide behind your team when they come calling?
3. Do you get upset with your ad agency when they suggest improvements to your ads, or embrace their advice?
4. Ignoring jobseekers and self-declared candidates, how many people every week do you persuade are unhappy with their job?
5. Would you really be excited by one of your own job ads?
6. When you compare your careers website with all your competitors' sites, are you still confident you'll be chosen first by the industry's top talent?
7. Do you ask your ad agency for advice around new media channels for specific role types, or just tell them what you want?
8. If an ad fails, do you blame the media or try to improve your ad?
9. What are you doing that's different to your competitors in talent attraction?

Let's look at some of the components of your role that will help you determine whether you are at the forefront of your industry, or about to be replaced.

**Media** – this can be likened to remedies for ailments. Asking your agency whether they think job board A is better than newspaper B without defining your target audience and sourcing outcomes, is like going into a pharmacy and grabbing medication at random in the hope it will make your pain go away. Much better to tell the doctor what's wrong with you, and rely on their qualifications, training and years of experience to recommend the correct solution. Too often we see clients trying to use one media channel (eg job boards) to solve all their sourcing challenges, which is a bit like taking Panadol to remove a brain tumour.

**EVP** – the DNA of your or your clients' organisations. This is your secret recipe in engaging with staff and future talent by delivering on their expectation of an ideal employer. An EVP is a clearly defined model of what you need to improve on, or introduce, to offer talent a competitive employment experience. It is not a set of headlines, a phrase like 'Make a difference' or 'A world of opportunity', or a set of values turned into a word. In the same way as recipe is not a statement of what something tastes like, or a word made out of the ingredients. Imagine if Neil Perry described his main beef dish on the menu as 'a world of beef in your mouth.'

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**Creative recruitment ads** – contrary to popular practice amongst Australia’s miners, being more engaging with your audience is not a matter of putting more people in hard hats in the ads, staring wistfully over a pile of dirt in the middle distance. And the ads are not more powerful and persuasive just because the shots comply with HSE requirements. If you want to change the game, be ahead of the game, you need to be the change.

**Careers websites** – do you see your site as a box that needs to be ticked, or as a room that needs to be filled? Your site should be a welcoming, interesting and rewarding place that people like visiting and will recommend to their friends and colleagues. A warm and inviting space where I can feel at home, am encouraged to look around and make myself comfortable, by engaging and perhaps amusing people whom I can relate to. Not a box full of facts, defended by an over-zealous bouncer of an Applicant Tracking System.

It is human nature to see the world only through our eyes, judging it by what we believe is right and behaving as we see fit. But what if we’re wrong? Or even just not as right as those around us? What if we are not doing enough to be seen as at the forefront of our industry – who will tell us this? Well, hopefully someone, soon. Because people only change their behaviour if it makes a difference for them to do so.

And it’s not always a carrot that is shown to us.

To succeed you need to change. To lead, you need to constantly seek change. Even if it makes you appear difficult or dangerous.

I’ll let one of the most iconic and successful heretics of our time embellish that one – this from Steve Jobs:

“Here’s to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes... the ones who see things differently -- they’re not fond of rules... You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can’t do is ignore them because they change things... they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do.”

So, starting today question everything in your sourcing strategy – pull it apart and rebuild it using modern techniques and contemporary understanding. I promise you will be happier with the final outcome, or even the process of doing it.

Or if you don’t want to change yourself, stop wondering why you’re miserable.

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