

## From the President

*To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.* -Winston Churchill

Brian Wright CPC Executive Leadership Solutions



Many of you know that I am a history buff. In reality, if I could make as much money being a World War II History Professor as I could being an Executive Recruiter, you guys would have never met me. Maybe, a few of you fellow history geeks would have read a book or two I would have written. Nevertheless, recruiting has paid for my hobby and allowed me many trips to Europe to study and travel with fellow history buffs.

Winston Churchill is one of my favorite leaders from history. He was the Prime Minister of Britain during the worst years of WW II. This quote is one that I have read over and over in the last few months. Certainly, Churchill faced a much tougher task than I have as your President. However, this quote rings true for what your society's Board of Directors has accomplished in the past few months. Many things have changed and many things will change. Some of them will be tremendous successes. Some of them will have to be modified and adapted as we move forward. Some of the changes we may find are not successful and need to be dropped altogether. However, one thing is for sure.....change is in the air! I have communicated with many of you about one or more of those changes that have been instituted. Most of those communications have been affirmations that the change is good. A few have been concerned that "The Pinnacle Society" isn't staying true to what the founding members desired for this society. I respect the concerns that have been shared with me. In some cases it has tempered my approach. Other times, once explained the member understood better what the Board was trying to accomplish. I can state one truth emphatically; your Board simply wants to make our society stronger and better for the membership. Change can be scary, no doubt. However, change also brings with it an invigorating atmosphere.

### Here are some of the changes as well as some of the new initiatives started in the past 9 months:

1. Board composition now involves each Board Member serving as a Committee Chair with 2 to 5 members serving on each of the committees.
2. A new Board seat and Committee was established called Outreach. Rob Bowerman chairs this committee which is designed to look at ways the Pinnacle Society can give back to our country. The first initiative happens Saturday afternoon during the Dove Mountain conference.
3. A "Pinnacle Awards" program instituted by Michelle Parchman and her committee and approved by the Board was recently announced. Hopefully, everyone has visited our website and made your nominations!
4. Dan Martineau our Website/Technology Chair and his committee have partnered with Kathleen Kurke our Branding/Marketing Chair and her committee to redesign and refocus the society's website to be a better tool for marketing your recruiting services. Kathleen's team essentially wrote the message, refocusing our brand and Dan's team updated and modernized the website. This is now a tool to be proud of and to use when marketing your executive search and recruiting services to potential clients. By the way, the new website will also save approximately \$1K a year in the society's expenses.
5. Jordan Rayboy and his Member Education committee have brought many new and dynamic presenters to our conferences. In the past, Thursday was reserved for "management issues" with Friday and Saturday focused on "personal production". Now all three days are focused on personal production but we heard

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## THE Pinnacle SOCIETY

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## Our Purpose:

The Pinnacle Society was established to honor high volume producers in the personnel contingency and retainer placement employment services industries. It provides an educational forum through which members share information and ideas.

## From the President *continued from page 1*

some member's feedback and are bringing in a personal financial advisor to speak at this fall conference. The number of days and conference formats are an area we are also reviewing for possible changes.

6. Our newsletter has been redone by Scott Willis, our Administrative Chair led by Robin Bland as the new editor. This move is part of the efforts of your Board to continue to share good and pertinent content with the membership while doing so in a bit more cost effective manner.
7. Financially, we are in better shape than in the past. Cost continue to rise and while we felt it was prudent that the annual dues were raised at the beginning of this year. Tom Keoughan the Society's Finance Chair/Treasurer and his committee have looked at ways to tighten our belt without affecting the noticeable quality of conferences.
8. Gail Kaplan our Hospitality Chair and her committee have shared in the efforts to do more with tighter budgets. However, we will still have great conferences. Her committee has lined up some exciting locations for our future conferences. As bad as I want to share those in this column, I'll allow Gail to share the details! Personally I can't wait to attend conferences at these new locales! I'll just share this bit of advice, shed some pounds and get out your swim wear.

So, a busy 9 months for your leadership. Each person has given their precious time away from their desk. So, as I asked once before, buy these folks a drink if you get a chance. As for me, I'll take a glass of water, need to get rids of some pounds before the swim suit resorts come around! ▲

## Recruiting and the Law

Recent changes in laws governing how and what information can be used in the screening of applicants are controversial and varies state by state. However, the ruling body; The EEOC has made rulings that affect the screening processes of employers, search and staffing firms of potential employees.

Most recently nine State Attorney Generals have protested the ruling that prohibits an applicant from being considered for employment based on previous criminal convictions. The EEOC therefore provides extensive guidance on determining whether an employer's criminal record policy is properly related to a job necessity. The EEOC cites with approval the factors set forth by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit in *Green v. Missouri Pacific Railroad*. The court held that employment decisions should take into account: (1) the nature and gravity of the offense or conduct; (2) the time that has passed since the offense or conduct and/or completion of the sentence; and (3) the nature of the job held



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## WINNING - The Relevance of Competitive Sports in the Recruiting World

By Brock Boyd CPC



No offense Mr. Sheen, but this is definitely not about you. This is about trying to find the most predictable path of finding and hiring successful recruiters. Do we hire school teachers or stock brokers? With recruiting experience or without? Should presentation matter if most of what we do is on the phone?

Who is the perfect person, and what is the most ideal background to target when hiring a recruiter?

Let me apologize up front...I don't have the answer to any of these questions. Other than the most obviously relevant background, those including inside sales experience or previous recruiting experience, I have had a track record of hiring that will probably sound very familiar to many of you reading this. Lots of "decent" hires, some dismal failures, and a few smashing successes.

The traits I've found most often lead to success in our business will be no surprise to anyone: competitive, hard working, personable, resilient, and reasonably intelligent. (as a side note, I've found that a dash of stubbornness and good story telling skills can help a lot, but the game is not lost without those two)

Most of these traits a person is either born with or not. The easiest by far to recognize in the interview process is whether or not they are personable; you either like them or you don't. Done. Intelligence can be tough to judge without the use of testing (which I'm not sold on), but there is also a reason I listed intelligence last. I personally believe that the hard working and resilient person will beat out the smarter person missing those traits ten times out of ten.

So the traits we now have to try to measure during the interview process are competitiveness, work ethic, and resiliency. These three can really be said to be "one block" of key traits for success in recruiting (or any sales environment for that matter). Since usually a person who is truly competitive will have a strong work ethic and resiliency as a result. Simply put; these types want to WIN, and you cannot win consistently without working hard and being able to bounce back from an occasional defeat.

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## Pinnacle Outreach Initiative

By Rob Bowerman, Committee Chair, Outreach



By now, everyone in the Pinnacle Society should be aware of an important new movement within the Society—that of our Outreach Initiative. I was excited to be given the challenge by Brian Wright of kicking off this initiative. With the partnership of our committee members Veronica Ramirez and Andrew Bec-

cue, we are developing and instituting creative ideas to build a charitable outreach "arm" of the Pinnacle Society. The initiative's mission statement is "To inspire the commitment of Pinnacle Society members to give of their time, talent and/or resources to benefit people in need. Further, it is to organize this commitment toward meaningful action by the membership."

We are all blessed to have been successful in this business, and the Outreach Initiative provides an opportunity for each of us to "give back".

The reality is that we have so many inspirational stories in our group already, and I am convinced that each and every one of us "gives back" to the world in one way or another. We have found through surveys and conversations with members that most every member is involved in charitable giving- within their communities or at the national level, and both financially and through meaningful action. Many of us support fellow Pinnacle members' outreach efforts as well, such as Doug Coley's foundation or Danny Sarch's Pan Mass Challenge rides. Whether we are volunteering in our children's school, organizing a local food drive, or writing a yearly check to our favorite charity, the spirit of generosity runs deep within the members of Pinnacle. The purpose of our Initiative is not to replace these individual efforts, but rather applaud, support and enhance them.

We hope that providing opportunities for Pinnacle members to work side-by-side on charitable activities will foster a stronger "team spirit" and enrich the society's membership experience. Admittedly, Andrew, Veronica and I are "feeling our way" on this to determine what sort of activities will resonate with the membership. We recently emailed all of you with some ideas and hope that you will participate in those that appeal to you, as well as provide feedback to us on how to better move this initiative forward as a Pinnacle Society collaborative effort.

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# Press Releases, Search Engine Optimization, and Taking Your Brand to the Next Level

By Jeremy Sisemore



If you're like me, you always just assumed that press releases were expensive and had to be handled by a third party public relations firm. I knew that in order to reach my goal of becoming the #1 firm in the U.S. that focuses exclusively in SAP talent acquisition,

I needed to do more than just be the best recruiter in terms of delivery.

Perception can oftentimes be reality, and I wanted to build an image that conveyed to my potential clients and candidates that we're the "go-to" firm in their niche. What kind of firm would we be if our website was outdated and unprofessional? How good could our firm really be if they couldn't easily find out about us on the Internet? Here's a great question for you to ponder about your own market presence: If a target client was using Google to locate a great

recruiter that specializes in your niche, would that client easily find you on page 1 of the search results? I'm from the "old school" and understand that outbound direct marketing phone calls are the #1 key to our success. However, if you're not looking at how to better utilize technology to land business that you otherwise wouldn't have had, I think you're giving a huge advantage to your competitors. Perhaps more importantly, I learned that it is not very expensive to manage your own press release distribution and significantly improve your brand as others may see it. If you land one new client or attract one "A" player candidate that leads to a placement because of this strategy, it can yield a 10,000% ROI. With some practice, you can write your own press release littered with great keywords and strategically placed quotes for your industry. You can position yourself as the go-to industry expert and you can use market information that people are curious about. Recruiters have lots of great market intelligence to share about what's hot, skills in demand, compensation trends,



etc. Writing great press releases can land you on page 1 Google results in less than two days, and may even lead to future quotes in major television, newspaper, or trade magazines. Read below for a high-level overview on some things to think about as you embark on your journey to take your firm's Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy to the next level.

• Four web sites I recommend you review before you do your first press release are:

1. [www.prweb.com](http://www.prweb.com) (approximately \$200 – \$250 – my recommendation)
2. [www.prnewswire.com](http://www.prnewswire.com) (\$500 – \$1000)
3. [www.globenewswire.com](http://www.globenewswire.com) (\$400 – \$1000)
4. [www.przoom.com](http://www.przoom.com) (Free – \$500)

- Read two free articles on PR Newswire site: Anatomy of a News Release and How to Write a News Release for Better Search Engine Optimization
- Compare other recruiting firm press releases by reading at least ten press releases written by competitors or other talent acquisition firms.
- Try releasing a free press release using PR Zoom and then Google some of the keywords or phrases you used in the article to see your

results!

- Strive to keep your entire press release to 500 words or less – Do not go over 700.
- Make sure to keep your entire release content natural sounding so that the reader is unaware that placement of your keywords throughout the body is planned.
- You want your audience to click-through the link at the end of the release, and the more natural your release is, the more likely they are to go to the URL you direct them to.
- Spend extra time to get a truly great HEADLINE and a SUBHEAD that draws the reader in.
- Use the Tech Support of any of the sites listed above to learn how to include anchor text (hyperlinking a word to a specific URL – like your website)
- Write the full URL of particularly important websites (i.e., <http://thewholeURL.com>)
- I recommend that you plan a new press release once every two months; six per year at a minimum.

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## Press Releases, Search Engine Optimization, and Taking Your Brand to the Next Level *continued from the previous page*

- Have two or three others that you trust review your press release for suggestions and please do us all a favor and do Spell Check!

After you have finalized your Press Release, you'll use a company like PRWeb to help you distribute the press release. Believe me when I say that for \$250 and a little time and energy on your part, if it's done properly, you could land several new clients in 2011 that will actually call you. Furthermore, it'll give you and any recruiters on your team more confidence to know that when people are checking you out on the Internet, they will

find great press releases out there that back up your claim that you really are an industry expert.

Building a brand and creating a highly professional image does not happen without a plan. Remember that your website, consistent press release distribution, your LinkedIn page, and quotes that you give to trade publications or media all contribute to your overall Search Engine Optimization strategy. If you used to think it was only some coding that a web developer did behind the scenes, now you know better! ▲

### Survey Says....

- 95% of Pinnacle Members would not have changed the industries that they recruit for even after seeing how other industries perform and operate. Even if those industries are more lucrative or stable.
- 67% of Pinnacle Members approach recruiting the same now as they did when they started.
- 33% of Members say that 50% of their contact with clients is through text, voice mail or email rather than from voice to voice contact.
- 75% are able to secure searches without having to reduce fees.
- 76% say it is a candidate driven market.
- 64% of Members spend at least 50% of time developing new clients.
- Pinnacle Members are divided 50/50 on using social media such as LinkedIn, Job Boards, Attendee Lists or Internet based sources vs. Referral or "Rusing" techniques.
- They are also split 50/50 on saying that they spend most of their time closing deals and dealing with client issues.
- 43% of Members say that Speed is the most important aspect of providing candidates with the best chance of success.
- While 65% say that it is the Quality of the candidate vs Speed that provides the best chance of success for a hire.
- Only 17% of placements made by members said their placements involved big increases in salary
- 54% of Members personally source, research, cold call or via referrals find and manage candidate process of at least 80% of the candidates that they place.
- 43% of Pinnacle Members say that their clients are more willing to offer relocation of candidates than in the past.
- While 67% of their Candidate are not willing to relocate.
- According to 43% of Members are seeing retiring employees as a reason for searches.
- Only 11% of Members are making more calls or are on the phone more than they have been in the past.
- 25% of Members have decreased the amount of time that they spend at face to face client meetings, networking events and trade shows.
- 23% are paying more attention to their personal metrics or those of their employees more than in the past.
- 52% of Members say they are seeing an increase in the numbers of recruiters in their market this year. ▲

## Recruiting and the Law

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or sought. In its discussion of these factors, the EEOC also noted the importance of distinguishing between arrests, which do not necessarily reflect misconduct, and convictions, which typically do. The new guidance also clarifies what constitutes "individualized assessment," including the right to present facts and circumstances of the initial conviction, and to provide evidence of rehabilitation.

In a case involving a criminal record exclusion, the Eighth Circuit in its 1975 *Green v. Missouri Pacific Railroad* decision, held that it was discriminatory under Title VII for an employer to "follow[ ] the policy of disqualifying for employment any applicant with a conviction for any crime other than a minor traffic offense."<sup>89</sup> The Eighth Circuit identified three factors (the "Green factors") that were relevant to assessing whether an exclusion is job related for the position in question and consistent with business necessity:

- The nature and gravity of the offense or conduct;
- The time that has passed since the offense or conduct and/or completion of the sentence; and
- The nature of the job held or sought.

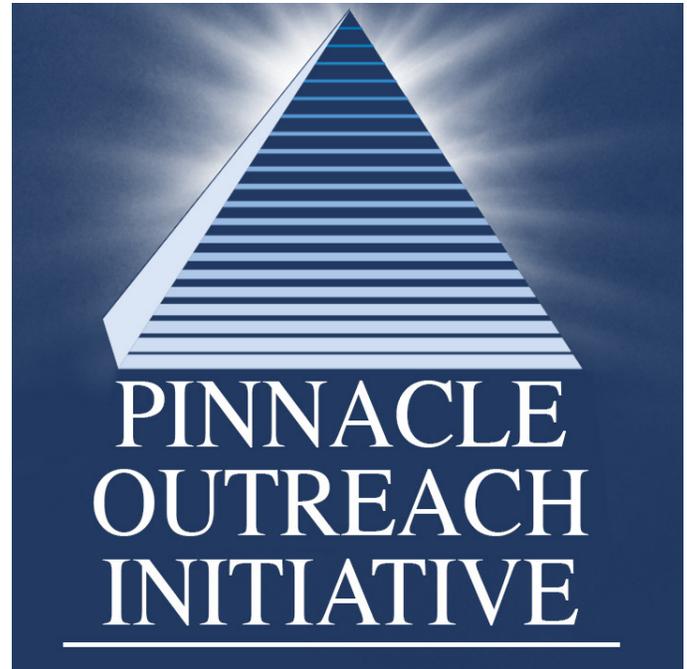
California State Law has amended its background checks to include items that might be considered "embarrassing".

Under California law, your employer must get your permission before initiating a background check on you. Under the Investigative Consumer Reporting Agencies Act, you have the right to request and review a copy of the background report supplied to your employer. If you dispute any information supplied in the background report, the person, agency or organization that produced the report must re-investigate the dispute information. If the disputed information is found to be incorrect, a new report must be issued detailing the corrected information or eliminating the inaccurate information.

### Access to Personal Information

While an employer has the right to request information that is relevant for "employment purposes," California law prohibits an employer from accessing without your permission certain types personal information that is irrelevant, embarrassing or may be used by an employer in a discriminatory manner including but not limited to age, criminal record, medical information, school transcripts and marital status. ▲

Information compiled by Robin Bland CPC.



## Pinnacle Outreach Initiative

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To start, please join us on the Saturday afternoon of this Fall's conference as we help with the good work of the Marana Community Food Bank, in the town where our beautiful Dove Mountain resort is located. This small facility provides much needed food for the residents of the area and is constantly straining its resources. We will be packing their food bags for the upcoming week—an activity for which the food bank relies solely on volunteers to complete. Should you be unable to attend, consider making a financial donation to the cause, to support the community that is hosting our conference. For those of you who have an appetite for more athletic endeavors that will also have a charitable benefit, Veronica and Andrew have identified several running and biking events as well as a serious challenge, the "Tough Mudder".

Even if you cannot join any of these events, please let us know what you do to "give back" so that we can collect and share these stories with the membership. Let's harness the power of the Pinnacle Society to be a positive force in the world----and thanks to all of you for what you do! ▲

## WINNING - The Relevance of Competitive Sports in the Recruiting World continued from page 3

I would venture to say that the activity of the highest producing recruiters probably resembles that of the highest producing baseball players; lots more strike outs than home runs. What makes them high producers is the ability to bounce back from (or hardly notice) the mini-defeats along the way.

Have I said anything earth shattering here? I would have to guess that anyone in a hiring capacity for recruiters or sales professionals of any kind have heard most of these things at least a hundred times before. So why bother to bring up what has been said a thousand times before?

While I believe that repetition is the mother of skill (a Tony Robbins trademark), I bring this up mainly to explore how to identify that key trait (competitiveness) in a way that can be more predictable than simply asking "do you feel you are competitive?" and trusting the answer.

This is where the sports background comes in.

A competitive sports background is one way to verify that a person is competitive, resilient, and willing to work hard...since all of these traits are required to compete in a sport for any decent length of time. Think about what's involved and I think the links will quickly be obvious. Sports requires many more hours of practice than it provides moments of glory in front of a crowd. It requires your hard work on days you feel great and days you feel lousy. It presents you with plenty of opportunities to quit when the going gets tough, since no one is getting paid unless playing at the professional level. It teaches you that setbacks and challenges are the NORM, forcing you to keep your eye on the goal and not be easily discouraged.

Cold calling can be brutal. Candidates can and do disappoint you. Sometimes even the best of us can go 30-60 days of working very, very hard and yield little to no results. If you've learned somehow along the way that these things are part of life (i.e. through sports), you are much more likely to both survive and thrive.

To go one level deeper, I personally believe that the length of time in a given sport is more important than the success they had. While I have no scientific formula,

I would say that if a person spent 3 years or more in a competitive sport in high school or college it shows that they were willing to fight through quite a bit of ups and downs. That's a lot more important to me than someone who's hard work and determination also happened to win them a national title. In some ways I'd be a little worried about a person who has been too successful for too long in a single sport because it has been so long since they've had to claw their way up from the bottom in a new and different "sport". (similar to how a salesperson who has been successful for 15+ years all with the same company can find it very challenging when they switch companies, and may spend much of their time reminiscing about "the good old days")

I have a personal bias toward people from individual sports like wrestling, swimming, tennis, etc. vs. team sports because of the individual nature of our industry. That said, the important part is that they have spent a decent amount of time developing the habits of hard work and resiliency, which of course takes place in both individual and team sports.

By no means am I saying you cannot find a competitive, hard working person who has never played a sport.

There are plenty out there in our business with a stellar track record who may have never met my "minimum 3 yrs in a single competitive sport" criteria. I'm simply saying that it is much harder to know that about their future...when you cannot spot it in their past.

Ok, I believe I hear the whistle blowing...back to the gym for another day of setbacks and defeats.

Happy Hunting!

Brock ▲



## Accolades

**Carol Wenom CPC, CTS** of Whitaker Technical Services was inducted into the NAPS (National Association of Personnel Services) Hall of Fame .

**Jackie Nabat CPC, MBA** of Byrant Bureau/ Snelling Staffing Services Network was honored as their top recruiter in the nation and for managing the top office in the nation. Both for the 3rd year in a row. She was also elected to serve on the board for the Arc of Hope. Arc of Hope provides hope and healing to families with how to best help their special needs children. They have a strong dedication and interest in helping all families that struggle with finding resources they need to maintain family stability

**Jeff Vernick CPC** of Hobson Associates was honored as the Associate of the Year for 2013

**Beth Schneider CPC** of Hobson Associates was awarded a Life Time Achievement Award by NEAPS (New England Association of Personnel Services) .

Hobson Associates owned by Danny Cahill CPC (former Tony Byrne Educational Chair) and employees Pinnacle Members Tim Flanagan CPC, Jeff Vernick CPC, Beth Schneider CPC and Robin Bland CPC celebrated its 40th year in business.

See you Next Year in Boston

Boston, MA – April, 2014

### Who We Are

The Pinnacle Society is the nation's premier consortium of top recruiters within the direct placement and search industry. For more than 20 years, the Pinnacle Society has provided the nation's top recruiters a forum in which to exchange the business principles and placement techniques that led them to achieve, and allows them to maintain their success.



At The Summit  
The Pinnacle Society  
Recognizing Excellence in Recruiting Fall 2013 Newsletter