

# The Job Seeker's Guide to Gaming

With the amount of superior quality candidates available on today's job market, **Bruce Gamble**, Managing Director, International Search at Pentasia, highlights some pointers for those looking for work in the gaming industry.

**It still amazes me** how quickly the employment market has changed over the last few months. There are a lot of very good candidates on the job market who have actively been seeking employment for many months. It is certainly a good time to be hiring as the choice of high quality candidates available has never been higher. However, frustrations with the slow job market for highly experienced candidates remains at an all time high.

Candidates are regularly asking me what they can do to maximise their chances of securing a position. Although there is no magic formulae, there are a number of points that candidates can do to ensure that they making the most of their chances in a competitive job market.

- **Target your key skills** – It is not worth 'spraying and praying' your CV as far and wide as possible hoping that you will hit the right person. It is true that there can be an element of right time and right place, but employers want to see that they are evaluating someone who has recognised their niche and core skills. Employers like to think that they are dealing with a candidate who has identified a clearly defined career path for themselves, rather than a generalist who can turn their focus to whatever is required of them that day. It is always useful to have employees in the team who have some short-term flexibility when required but generalist office do-gooders rarely end up being selected from the pile.
- **Tailor the CV to specific jobs** – in reality, most of us can switch our skills to what is required. However, taking into consideration my point above, do not be afraid to have two to three versions of your CV to suit specific roles. Be clear to demonstrate that you have mastered a specific function which gives the client a higher degree of assurance. Therefore, a close introspective look at key skills and competencies will ensure that your personal marketing is targeted and focussed. It is always worth getting advice from a recruiter or a candid friend as a fresh pair of eyes gives another perspective.
- **Where possible, ensure that your remuneration requirement is clear during the early stages.** A seasoned recruiter will always try to qualify this up-front so that there are no deal-breaking 'time bombs' ready to surface at the eleventh hour during offer stage. Although some flexibility on salary is advisable, do not be afraid to hold out for

something commensurate with your experience and worth. Many candidates ask me why they are still not getting calls when they have significantly reduced their salary expectations below that of pre-credit crunch. In reality, professional employers are very willing to pay a fair salary for the skills which they are engaging. Obviously, the 'bullish' negotiations of dictating your terms have gone, but a fair salary for your skills should be your minimum requirement. There is also likely to be an internal pay-structure for experience which you are likely to upset with a seemingly irresistible 'bargain basement' offering. If employers feel that you are desperate, they probably also think that you will leave when the market becomes buoyant again which will raise a loyalty doubt. The old adage, 'if a deal is too good to be true then it probably is' will be in the employers mind.

Frustrating as it is, ensure that you are pitching yourself at an appropriate salary range and without crossing the fine line to arrogance, and remain confident in your ability and worth. Once again, seek advice from your trusted sources to ensure that your expectations are realistic as you are more likely to arouse interest in the median range than by being too high or low.

- **Keep networking, attending events, and 'press flesh'** wherever you can. The iGaming industry does not suffer from a lack of opportunity to socialise and network, so, tough as it may be, keep your profile raised. Also keep in touch with ex-colleagues and acquaintances on the growing number of networking websites, remembering that some are far more professional than others. Increasingly, employers and recruiters will search the Internet for your name prior to requesting an interview.
- **Try to meet your recruiters** – the power of a face-to-face meeting remains far superior to any other form of communication and will ensure that you are more likely to be remembered. Try to select a small range of recruiters with whom you work closely and ideally have developed a reputation over time and they will be more willing to push their clients. Ensure that your selected recruiters fully understand everything about you and your target market. There are a growing number of generalist recruiters eager to enter the seemingly

recession-proof world of iGaming and will undoubtedly sound highly convincing of their capabilities.

- **Insist that your CV is not sent anywhere without your express prior permission and keep a log of which recruiter has done what and when.** I have seen good CVs deleted after being received on numerous occasions from different sources. Neither clients, nor recruiters, want a dispute over rights of CV ownership.

It is clear to both recruiters and candidates alike that employers are taking much longer with hiring decisions. The average recruitment project now lasts a third longer than it did twelve months previously. Although it is a refreshing feeling for employers to now have a stronger position, any lack of feedback remains a real issue to candidates. A candidate's memory of a bad experience in a recruitment process will remain with them for years and can easily be avoided. The subsequent damage to the reputation of an employer's brand, which mostly remains unseen from within, can cause unnecessary bad feeling among candidate communities.

It is worth employers remembering that candidates of today are very often clients or potential business partners of tomorrow. They will judge a company by their experiences of dealing with them as a candidate rather than the quality of the products or services. Therefore, transparency of process and clarity of expectation should be regularly communicated by employers to recruiters and candidates at every opportunity and will go a long way to ensure that their reputation remains as intact at the recruiting angle as it does from their clients' perspective.

There is no 'one size fits all' solution that can be summarised in an article to suit all job seekers. However, I hope that some of the above will assist the majority of people who have fallen foul of the economic climate. As my old boss once said to me "cream always rises to the top" so ensure that you remain optimistic and patient, and make the most of your unique skills. ■

AUTHOR PROFILE



**Bruce Gamble** is a founding director of the Pentasia Group and Managing Director of its Leadership Search Division.