

Praise for *RECRUIT – The Savage Way*

‘Another masterpiece from the master of the recruitment sector! *RECRUIT – The Savage Way* is a comprehensive toolkit for every recruiter, no matter how long you have been in the business – a cradle-to-grave tutorial of “best in class” tips and tactics.’

Geraldine King, CEO, Employment & Recruitment Federation (ERF), Ireland

‘This book is your best bet to ensure your recruitment consulting skills lead you to success. If you want to be better, earn more and succeed in recruitment, leverage Greg’s knowledge and expertise. The power is in your hands!’

Angela Cameron, CEO, Consult Recruitment, New Zealand

‘Greg’s passion for the recruitment industry, wisdom and knowledge jump off every page.’

Simon Hair, Managing Director, Precision Sourcing Australia, Australia

‘This book is a superb reminder of the importance of self-belief and the impact that YOU can have on people and organisations. The book is packed with actionable tips, thought-provoking commentary – and inspiration! A must-read for every recruiting professional.’

Simon Lusty, Chief Marketing Officer, Aquent, USA

‘This book is a must-read for every recruiter, non-negotiable – it’s brilliant! Greg’s no-nonsense style, with plenty of humour, keeps you turning those pages. There is no other book like this. It’s what the recruitment industry has been waiting for. Thank you, Greg. I can’t wait to share it with everyone in my team.’

Nikki Beaumont, CEO/Founder, Beaumont People, Australia

‘As a rookie recruiter in 1983, I would have been far more productive MUCH sooner if I had read this book. *RECRUIT – The Savage Way* is a must-read for any career recruiter who wants to be the best version of themselves! Greg Savage, you have done the profession I love a great service!’

Andrew Banks, Founder/CEO, Morgan & Banks and Talent2, Australia

‘Greg is always an inspiration. He puts things in a simple, blunt and unapologetic way that every recruiter needs to hear. *RECRUIT – The Savage Way* only galvanised my pride in this job and the industry I love. Whether you’re a rookie, new to the industry, a manager, owner or CEO, it’s a great read, and there’s much to take away.’

Jeremy Sampson, CEO, North East Asia, Robert Walters Group, Japan

‘*RECRUIT – The Savage Way* is the go-to for rookies and experienced recruiters to hone these skills or refresh their experience. It should be part of your onboarding kit for all your new recruiters and on the desk of those who have been with you forever.’

Mark Smith, Group CEO, people2people, Australia

‘*RECRUIT – The Savage Way* is a mini library of recruitment nuggets and ideas. They are as easy to digest as they are to implement, making this an absolute must for new and experienced recruiters who want to learn new ways of working, refresh old ways of thinking and put ideas into action.’

James Osborne, Chairman, The Recruitment Network, UK

‘Greg writes as he talks – with honesty, directness, intelligence, humour, passion, and care. In reading *RECRUIT – The Savage Way*, you will come away with a new respect for the character strengths, human skills and technical proficiency the best recruiters possess – and the inspiration to be one.’

Ross Clennett, FRCSA, High-performance recruitment coach, Australia

‘Greg is an industry leader with decades of experience but a modern approach, and this book is filled with tips, tricks and strategies for people to thrive. If you’re looking for a comprehensive guide to modern recruitment practices, I highly recommend *RECRUIT – The Savage Way*.’

Paul Hallam, Founder and Director, Six Degrees Executive, Australia

RECRUIT

The Savage Way

Skills, attitudes and tactics to be an outstanding recruiter

GREG SAVAGE



MAJOR
STREET

I dedicate this book to Ron Savage and Deb Savage:
two outstanding human beings who gave me so much more
than I thanked them for while they were here.



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About the Author

Greg started his career in executive search in Australia before he went on to manage the London office of the United Kingdom's largest accounting recruiter for two years. Then, in the early 1980s, he returned to Australia to run the Sydney office of Accountancy Placements (now Hays), where he was invited to join the board of directors at age 27.

With two others, Greg founded Recruitment Solutions in 1987. He rapidly built the start-up across Australia and New Zealand, culminating in its successful listing on the Australian Securities Exchange, with Greg as Executive Director and COO.

In April 2001 Greg joined Aquent and, as International CEO, assumed responsibility for all Aquent businesses outside of North America, comprising 25 offices in 17 countries across Europe, Asia, and Australia and New Zealand.

In 2010 Greg acquired Aquent's Permanent and Search business in a management buyout and founded Firebrand Talent Search. He quickly created a global brand for this specialist digital and marketing recruiter and successfully sold the company, in seven countries, in January 2013.

In recognition of his contribution to the Australian recruitment industry, Greg was named an Honorary Life Member of the Recruitment and Consulting Services Association (RCSA) in 2004.

In 2011 he was awarded a special commendation by the RCSA for 'Outstanding Contribution to the Recruitment Industry'. In addition, he was named the most influential Australian businessperson on Twitter in 2016 and the most influential recruiter in Australia in the past 60 years in 2015.

In 2018 Greg was inducted into the Recruiter International Hall of Fame.

In November 2018, he was named one of LinkedIn's 'Top Voices'.

An early adopter of social media for recruiting, Greg's industry blog, 'The Savage Truth', attracts more than 1 million visitors annually and is a must-read for the recruitment industry.

Greg's first book, *The Savage Truth*, was instantly successful, selling over 10,000 copies. As a result, the book was made mandatory reading for the first recruitment degree in the world at the National College of Ireland, which now offers a BA (Honours) in Recruitment Practice.

In 2021 Greg founded the Savage Recruitment Academy, a niche learning management system for the recruitment industry. It has seen outstanding success and growth, with thousands of subscribers worldwide.

Greg now acts as a non-executive director and advisor for 16 recruitment and HR tech companies in Australia, the United Kingdom, Singapore and New Zealand.

Greg still takes an active interest in founding and growing recruitment businesses, investing in recruitment start-ups in Australia and the UK.

Foreword

In my line of work – advocacy for businesses that are making a difference – there is a truism that has emerged over the past few years: it's about *the stories you tell*, not *the facts you have*. Indeed, this book is full of great stories – my favourite is about the human skills of David, the Pitt Street coffee shop owner. These examples are a treasure trove of experience from decades in our industry worldwide.

But facts also matter. For an industry so visible in people's daily lives – here in the UK, recruiters are heavily represented among the winners of *The Apprentice*, and people deal with us every day – the value of our work is often underappreciated. I have a nice line in facts that counteract this: a million temps in the workplace every day, a new permanent job every 21 seconds, a sector more significant in value added than law or accountancy (often seen as professional services powerhouses).

Given this vast impact now, our productivity matters. Our professionalism matters. Greg identifies tangible signs of increased professionalisation across our industry in this book. As a career, recruitment is exciting and meaningful.

But we also need to step up. Clients face fast-changing product markets, labour and skills shortages, and hugely different employee expectations post-pandemic. CEOs have always claimed talent as their number-one priority – now they are acting like it.

What will set a recruiter apart in this world? Human skills. Professionalism. The ability to advise and guide both the client and the candidate. When the tech stack – an essential part of every business – is a leveler, it is the people who make the difference.

There is no one better to guide us through this challenge than Greg Savage. For decades, across multiple continents, Greg has recruited, built businesses and guided recruitment leaders. He has worked with us at the REC to support the UK industry for many years. Now, he returns to the basics: building great recruiters. It could not be timelier: when I ask REC members what keeps them

up at night, the first answer more often than not is developing their team.

We are on a treadmill of ‘technology will disrupt recruitment’ right now. It will. It has. We adapt. But, as Greg points out, some of these tools have allowed recruiters to hide behind the technology. He notes how ‘it has weakened the human skills that made great recruiters so special’.

This isn’t back to the future; it’s the behaviour we always needed to make a difference as professional consultants. But we are heading towards a time when recruiters won’t just be less productive if they get this wrong – their market will go away. With that in mind, this book is a great guide – from the tips on the human skills that retain and guide candidates (up to and including coaching them for resignation meetings and preparing their letters!) to how you can offer easier, quicker and more productive solutions to clients.

It’s a human business. We need to compete on value, on professionalism. No one hires the cheapest lawyer or the lowest-cost strategy consultant. We win with high standards of service to clients and candidates, swift processing and strong delivery – with strong career paths built on insight, experience and effort. There is no better guide to getting there in your career than Greg.

Enjoy the journey!

Neil Carberry

Chief Executive, Recruitment and Employment Confederation, UK

Preface

Welcome to *RECRUIT – The Savage Way*.

Gleaned from 44 years in recruitment, this book is based on a key premise: success in recruitment is determined by your ability to master human influencing skills for the greater good.

Of course, the process is critical too, and only a fool would deny the impact of technology, especially the emergence of AI tools. However, the recruiter's value is determined by their ability to create excellent outcomes through managing the key 'moments of truth' in recruitment.

You have no real future in agency recruitment unless you can build relationships, become authentically consultative and earn what I call in this book 'recruiter equity'. Recruitment comprises a series of critical interactions between people, the outcome of which can be impacted by an intelligent question, a piece of advice or an injection of encouragement. Of course, great recruiters own these moments of truth.

The moments of truth in recruitment are when the magic happens. If you hide behind digital technology, you will fail as a recruiter. Of course, you must be excellent at using technology, but the differentiator is in building relationships, garnering trust and influencing outcomes. Agency recruiters must master the 'craft' of recruitment.

There are lessons in this book for anyone involved in recruitment and sales. However, it is written for agency recruiters: an often maligned, poorly acknowledged group of people who deserve much more credit than they ever get.

I have based these 128 chapters firstly on my own experience as a recruiter. I was a good recruiter but I was not truly great. So, I have built in the lessons I learned from the many great recruiters I worked with and against, managed and mentored.

The danger is to chase the recruiting pack to the bottom, ending up as no more than a résumé-racing, inbox-spamming, cold-calling, transactional recruiting hack: harsh words, perhaps, but used

with intent because they are accurate, and I wish you to choose the right path.

Recruitment is the most wonderful of careers if you can develop the nuanced consultative skills I share in this book. Like any career, it will be a journey of constant improvement, learning, upskilling, growth and evolution. But, unfortunately, many recruiters stagnate; when they do, it is the beginning of the end. *RECRUIT – The Savage Way* invites you to restock your ‘skills briefcase’ and be dexterous and nimble in a rapidly evolving world.

The skills I share here are crucial to your success, but even mastery of those will not compensate for a poor attitude or a flawed mindset. If any job needs enormous mental strength and a positive mental attitude, it is agency recruitment. Unfortunately, I have seen many otherwise capable people fall by the wayside because of a lack thereof.

The sections on candidate skills and client skills are micro in their advice, including scripts you might use for the best outcomes. This is intentional, as I have learned that getting 5% better at those interactions can lead to a 50% increase in revenues.

Unsurprisingly, *RECRUIT – The Savage Way* covers a great deal on ‘selling’, but it mainly focuses on how selling is built on questioning, listening and understanding needs. I expand my selling advice to include digital brand-building and social selling tactics, which are so essential in the modern era but so poorly understood or implemented by most agency recruiters.

Finally, this book leaves you with thoughts on how to prolong your recruitment career and maximise the fun and money this great profession can offer.

Agency recruitment is challenging. Few survive two years in the business, and fewer still turn it into a lifelong career. However, if you do the work, develop the skills and hone the attitude, success will come and self-esteem will soar. When that happens, recruitment truly rocks.

I trust that you will enjoy *RECRUIT – The Savage Way*. I hope it helps you to be the most outstanding recruiter you can be.