

Executive Package Negotiations – True Character Traits Emerge!

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One thing we know for sure — during the interview process, everyone is on their best behaviour. The candidates (even headhunted ones who believe they have nothing to lose) as well as the interviewers, are usually doing their best to show themselves off in the most positive light.



Typically, at the initial phase, the candidates are in the ‘*seller*’ position (yes, this includes top executives who already have good jobs), and the interviewers are in the ‘*buyer*’ position. However this power dynamic will shift throughout the process, depending on who wants (or needs) who more.

This shift becomes pronounced at the offer negotiation phase when, finally, the prospective new employers have announced clearly: “*We want/need YOU*” . The exec, now with potential offer in hand, may at this point experience a psychological transition which can impact his/her behaviour — sometimes in a negative way.

All of a sudden, the candidate (who already has a job, remember), is faced with some important and urgent decisions that he/she will have to make. Until now, the new job, the new employer, the new everything, has been just a proposal. Nothing concrete, nothing definite... and so while the executive may have hypothesized, pondered and surmised about the prospect of a new role, the reality of the offer presents a ‘*line in the sand*’.

And, depending on how an individual copes with and manages substantial and significant personal change (a new executive level job, after all, will fundamentally impact one’s life), this offer negotiation phase is a time when ‘*true colours*’ are revealed.

How does the exec manage all the stakeholders in the transaction? How open and communicative is he, how enthusiastic and energized does he become? How does he cope with the inevitable delays with paperwork and admin? Further, does he become greedy and demanding when it comes to the offer itself, or does he have an intrinsic measure of fairness?

This final phase is a revealing one indeed — about the character of the incoming exec and how he deals with all of these factors, as well as the inevitable counteroffer that he is more than likely going to face when he resigns from his current company.

If only the hiring company could get a glimpse of these *'high pressure'* traits and core values PRIOR to extending an offer...