

Flexibility is the Key to Survival in a Recession says MD of Welsh Company

By Ten-Percent.co.uk Limited

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In order to survive recession, companies must be flexible, says MD of UK recruitment business. Jonathan Fagan studied many texts and writings from business leaders who survived the last recession to conclude that the key is flexibility.

In order to survive recession you must be flexible. This is the conclusion of Jonathan Fagan, MD of www.ten-percent.co.uk, legal recruitment consultancy in the UK.

"I have read a lot of articles recently from business experts on how to survive the recession and including advice from people who had been through the last two recessions as to how to cope with the downturn in business trade sales and just about everything else. One thing that comes through all my reading is that flexibility is the key to survival."

"I'll give you a quick example as to how it has affected our business, Ten Percent Legal Recruitment. Ten Percent Legal Recruitment offers the lowest recruitment fees in the UK for the recruitment of permanent and temporary lawyers with law firms, in house departments and local authorities. We have been charging 15 percent fees for many years now without any increases according to the salary or type of post. Our competitors start their fees at 18 percent and they go up to anything around 35 percent.

Since the recession has kicked in, we have been getting requests from firms to lower our fees, which is fairly rare for us as our clients are usually very aware that we offer the lowest fees in the legal job market and that there is very little room for us to manoeuvre below this level. It has always been commonly accepted in the recruitment consultant world that you do not drop your fees under any circumstances as there is never a reason to do so – if a firm wants a quality candidate from you, they'll take them regardless of your fee - certainly we would be happy to pay a recruitment agency fee if the candidate was going to generate fees for our company."

Fagan explains that the answer is quite simple. "We always start our negotiations by explaining that in order to give something, we have to get something in return and for us as recruiters what is important is ongoing business. A one off placement is great in terms of cash flow, but it usually does not assist the firm or ourselves in the longer term to build a relationship if we are simply placing a candidate and walking away. One of the visions of Ten-Percent Legal Recruitment is to have long term relationships with clients, and we have these already, with clients and candidates remaining with us for many years."

Ten-Percent decided instead not to charge recruitment fees at all, but to offer a Master Vendor Relationship.

Fagan explains that "This basically entails a firm handing over their complete recruitment and HR operations to us and us managing the department externally for them. Although we do not do the weekly tasks of payroll or holiday entitlements, we can assist with all the recruitment process from the sifting of CVs through to interviews and negotiations and on to contracts, references and start date.

We can also help out with external disciplinary issues as required and give management consultancy advice where necessary.

This means that we have an ongoing relationship with the firm and handle all their enquiries relating to

recruitment as well, so they do not need to be concerned about a bombardment from other recruitment agencies or direct applications from candidates.

All of this means that instead of paying us a one off fee, the firm pay us on a monthly basis for a minimum contract of 12 months. During this time we may well introduce four candidates to them and only get paid the equivalent of one and a half to two, but in the same time, we will have also benefited longer term from a close relationship with that firm and be able to recognise their needs quite easily."

Jonathan Fagan is Managing Director of Ten Percent Legal Recruitment and can be contacted for press comment and careers advice at cv@ten-percent.co.uk or telephone 0207 127 4343. Ten Percent Legal Recruitment are expert recruiters for lawyers and have been operating since 2000 with over 5,500 solicitors registered to date. Visit our website at www.ten-percent.co.uk for further details.

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About Ten-Percent.co.uk: Legal Recruitment Consultants for international & UK Legal Jobs. Recruiting solicitors, lawyers, attorneys and fee earners for law firms across the world. Low cost fee structure and well established, with MD Jonathan Fagan recognised as a leading expert.

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