



The Interview



"Mike is undoubtedly the world's best recruitment trainer" – Glen Walsh MD AXIOM

MIKE WALMSLEY

Improve 200 recruiter skills
in just 12 months

Katie Tho: Mike, you've trained over 30,000 recruiters now across the UK, USA, Canada, AsiaPac, South Africa and Europe

Tell us, what's the best way to improve the skills of experienced recruiters?

Mike Walmsley: "That's a great question. And my answer is micro-training.

A few years back I saw that Microsoft described micro-training as the hottest new way to continually improve skills. I smiled when I saw that because I've doing this for years to improve experienced recruiters. I must have been ahead of my time!

Katie Tho:

Can you give me some examples please?



Mike Walmsley: “Yes, an IT contract recruiter improved his billings from £300,000 per annum gross profit to £1.8 million per annum. He attributed this massive improvement to one idea he took away from a micro training session. In case you’re wondering, it was systematically tracking senior candidates that he could not place in order to nurture them and develop them into clients.

Another example is a client of mine in Canada that implemented three-dimensional interviewing which they now claim is the bedrock of their business development and candidate sourcing. They turnover \$6.5 million with just 15 staff”

Katie Tho: That’s impressive, but how did you come up with the idea of micro training sessions and what exactly is involved?

Mike Walmsley: “With hindsight, it was one of the best things I ever did but the truth is I stumbled across it.

I was a big-billing manager, stretched to the limit.

I was billing £1M, whilst some in the company were only billing £100K. I realised I was doing things better than most, but I kept giving myself the excuse that we should bring in a trainer. And I gave the excuse that I didn’t have time to run training myself.

Looking back, I think I wasn’t fully confident in my ability to train. I’d never done it before.

Katie Tho: Wow. So what did you do?

Mike Walmsley: “Well, one day I decided to run a 30-minute learning lunch. I rationalised that it takes me and my staff at least 30 minutes each to go a café and eat lunch so I bought lunch for everyone and replaced that 30 minutes with a micro-training session. So in my mind, that training didn’t take any time out of my working day as I simply replaced my 30 minute lunch trip to the café with a learning lunch.

I also tried breakfast training after observing that staff often used up time by buying breakfast after arriving at my office!”

Katie Tho: But isn't training mainly for rookies?

Mike Walmsley: "There is no such thing as 'I've been trained.' If you want your staff to bill £500K+ you have to view learning and development as a journey to mastery. A journey of continual improvement and refinement of technique and delivery. To repeat, I was billing 5 to 10 times more than most people in my company who had already been trained.

So I decided to do something about it and to stop abdicating responsibility.

Katie Tho: Tell us how you ran the sessions please, Mike.

Mike Walmsley: "I ran the sessions reactively. For example, if I observed in my weekly 1-to-1s that the KPI for candidate referrals was poor I'd run a micro-session on candidate referrals or if I spotted a couple of my staff struggling to handle a certain objection, I'd run a session on that.

If you have 4 recruiters in your team and you improve one skill every week for 12 months you'll have nearly 200 improvements. It's so simple."

Katie Tho: Two questions please Mike. Firstly, how do you avoid running out of content? Secondly, I guess for you as one of the biggest billers in the world it must have been easy but how can managers replicate what you did?

Mike Walmsley: "I was worried at one point that I'd run out of topics but I never did. In fact I've since itemised over 200 small things that Super Billers do better than middle-of-the-road performers and my production team is well on the way to creating 200 Reality Recruitment training videos to help managers do what I did but with zero preparation needed."

Katie Tho: Tell us about these Reality Recruitment videos please

Mike Walmsley: "When I run micro-training sessions I don't train from scratch. Let's say I've spotted that none of my team are proactively securing client referrals from existing clients.

I'll start that session by asking how they are winning new business. I would probably ask a question such as; "How many client referrals has each of you generated in the last 3 months?" Then I would do the following...

Example micro-training session

Manager: "OK, only 2 client referrals in the last 3 months? Let's split up into teams and brainstorm how to get more client referrals

Team of recruiters: "We can ask our clients who they can recommend to us; we can invite our best clients out for a drink after work and ask who they can recommend; we can ask them to introduce us to people they know."

Manager: "What about conducting a service review with your best clients and at the end of that meeting or call you say something like...

"Mr.Client: I was wondering if you might be able to help me. I'm trying to build some relationships with XYZ Corporation and I wondered if you could kindly point me in the right direction."

Team of recruiters: "That's so simple..."



"Ah, no problem Alex. Just so you know, there are some important things I found out from the employer that are not on the job specification and I'm actually creating the shortlist right now for the client. What time might you be free later today or this evening as you do appear to be a very good match. Or can you spare 5 minutes now?"



"When experienced recruiters are tasked with finding improvements to real sales conversations, the effect is transformational." – Mike Walmsley

Mike Walmsley: "I like to praise their ideas because praise is a motivator, plus I never want them to stop giving ideas but I only share the best ideas AFTER the have exhausted their own thinking..."

"Clearly, I haven't gone into fine detail there, but the key is to let the team exhaust their own thinking.

That's essentially how we've built our Reality Recruitment videos. We simply re-enacted real calls made by experienced recruiters in over 200 different scenarios, which managers can now use each week with their own experienced recruiters to improve one aspect of performance every single week.

The beauty of this approach and our Reality Recruitment videos is that experienced recruiters can no longer say; "I'm experienced, I don't need training." Because anyone who exhausts their own ideas first before being shown at least one improvement that they hadn't thought of will improve at least one recruitment skill per week.

And for managers that means bigger billings and an easier life!"

Katie Tho: Thank you for the tips, Mike. Your Reality Recruitment videos seem like a big breakthrough for the recruitment industry. Great to see you again.



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