

# TRANSPARENT IT RECRUITER

Headhunter Rick DesLauriers is low-tech on relationships, high on honesty

BY JOHN P. PALEN | PHOTO BY TATE CARLSON

**H**onesty can be a refreshing differentiator in a sales environment that has caused buyers to be very cautious. It's especially helpful in the job market for candidates trying to find the right fit and companies tired of the wrong fit.

A graduate of Saint John's University, Rick DesLauriers has been in the recruiting business for more than 30 years and started his own IT headhunting and placement company in 2002. Even though his company is called Recruiters of Minnesota, he insists that he does not find people jobs. People need to do the work of exploring their networks; his company is just one of those tools. Candidates are sometimes surprised by his candid nature, like when he says they should spend 90%+ of their time networking and 3% on their résumés.

"Unemployment is a very unfun, stressful time. People don't want to make phone calls because they might get rejected. It's easier to brush up your résumé or think about going back to school, but getting an MBA does not help significantly in a job search," he says. "You have to make the job search your job."

This, from a guy who gets up about 5:30 every morning, exercises, attends his church a few times a week, and then pops into his cubicle to work on his business. His employees set hours that work for them, some staying late and making calls at night or on weekends.

DesLauriers actually started his company because the company he was working for didn't have much business prior to the Recession. "I figured it couldn't get any worse, so it gave me the courage to go on my own," he says. "I used to collect business cards when I was still in high school. Building relationships and making connections just came naturally to me."

## LESSONS IN EMPLOYMENT HONESTY

**RECRUITERS CAN'T PROMISE A GREAT JOB.** It happens by picking up the phone and working your network.

**TRY TO GET PAST THE JARGON OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS.** Being "deadline-oriented" probably means working nights or weekends to get things done.

**DON'T SUGAR-COAT YOUR NEEDS.** If you require a quiet office for focus, ask for it.

**USE A COMBINATION OF TECHNOLOGY AND PERSONAL NETWORKING.** Make sure your online profile and résumé are consistent and easily searched, but try to create relationships with real people who could send you opportunities — before you need them.



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**BIZ BRIEFING**

## RECRUITERS OF MINNESOTA

**LOCATION:** Minnetonka

**REVENUE:** \$2.5 million

**INCEPTION:** 2002

**EMPLOYEES:** 11

**LEADERSHIP:** Rick DesLauriers, Owner/  
Principal

**DESCRIPTION:** Privately held corporation helping companies fill information technology positions, from the helpdesk to the CIO

**WEB:** [recruitersofmn.com](http://recruitersofmn.com)

Recruiters of Minnesota had a high of 21 employees, but sunk to as low as five during the recession. DesLauriers says he has right-sized to about 11 employees now — internally motivated and commission-incentivized, who know they have to hustle to make a living. They use all the online bells and whistles of search engine optimization, job sites and LinkedIn, but it comes down to managing strong networks of IT professionals who may consider a new or advanced position at another company.

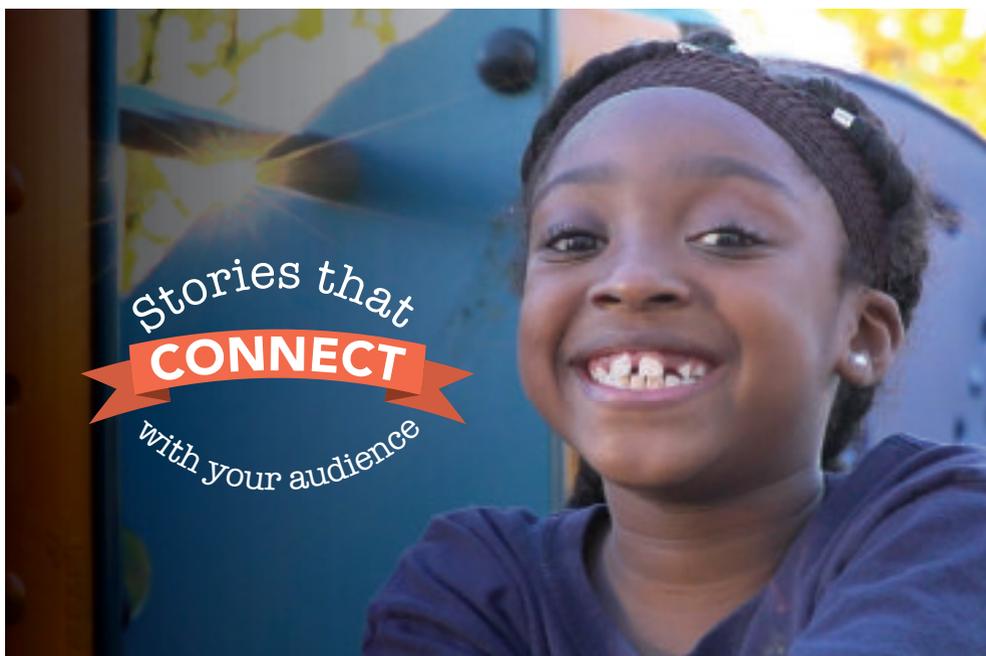
“I don’t focus on hitting quotas or metrics. We have several people who have been with us now for 10 years. The lifestyle fits them.”

Even DesLauriers’ view of clients is transparent. First, he doesn’t call them clients, he says, because they only call when there is a need. Of the 18 Fortune 500 companies in the state, 10 have used Recruiters of Minnesota, DesLauriers says. “I think we have a good reputation and treat clients well. If they have a job and we fill it, they think we’re good. But retaining the people is up to them if they are truly honest and open about what the job involves and the culture. If people work nights and weekends, then say that.”

Recruiting is like dating, he says. Hiding aspects of yourself or the company to make a good first impression won’t prove helpful in the long run. “I’m a straight talk guy,” he adds. “I like meeting smart, successful business people, hearing about their challenges, benchmarks and goals and comparing them to mine. You can learn from that transparency.”



**JOHN P. PALEN** is CEO of Allied Executives and works with CEOs, business owners and executive leaders on leadership and business performance through peer groups, coaching and educational workshops. [alliedexecutives.com](http://alliedexecutives.com)



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5320 West 23rd Street, Suite 235 • Minneapolis, MN 55416  
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