



switchgear

Recruiting Firm that uses Culture Fit to Place Talent for the Energy, Engineering, IT and Finance Industries



Dixie Agostino
Founder & Chief Executive Officer

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Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: *Ms. Agostino, what was the vision when you start Switchgear and where are you today?*

Ms. Agostino: I first started it because I had worked at several jobs where I loved the job but I knew there was a better way to do things. When I was working for a

recruiting firm, it was very automated, focused on matching the words in a job description to the words in a resume. What I wanted to create was a system to hire for culture, finding someone who not only can execute the outcomes the client needs but wants what the client has to give and will fit within the company. That way we can help reduce turnover costs and in the meantime, make everyone happier.

“Two types of companies need a really strong recruiter, the rest can probably get good results on their own. The first is looking to hire for a custom position they’ve never hired for before. They want to avoid over or under hiring and compensating. For those who need clarity, we walk them through a proven process to get it. The other type does not have the time or energy or budget to make a hiring mistake. Maybe it’s a smaller company, or this is a team that is going to get a lot of visibility in the company or this person needs to do something for the company that’s never been done before. Basically, they must get the results they are paying for and our outcome based screening process delivers that.” - Dixie Agostino

CEOCFO: *How has that played out so far?*

Ms. Agostino: It has played out pretty good. We have had a couple of clients that we have tracked the candidates we have placed with them for years to see the long-term results. For instance, our client asked for a sales engineer. When we really dug in to the role it turned out they did not need an engineer, but someone incredibly smart and persistent with a mechanical mindset. We presented some engineer candidates along the lines of what they originally envisioned for the position. We also presented a nontraditional candidate with sales experience in a very challenging industry, and they ended up hiring that person. It was their first non-engineer in that role and that person did five times as much as any other sales rep their first year. Our client was outgrowing their present facility, and they had to fast forward that move up a year because of the volume of work that this person brought in.

CEOCFO: *Are you surprised the industry has missed the concept of finding out what the client really needs and providing it?*

Ms. Agostino: No, because change is hard. It takes a lot of work to go that deep with people, especially when you have to talk to twenty candidates at a minimum to find the one that is possibly the fit for your client. It takes a lot of effort, it's like