

# Talent scouting

*Finding talent that not only fits a firm's culture but enhances it and drives performance too is no mean feat, but it is possible*



**ASHLEY LOWE**  
Reporter, Citywire Switzerland

**D**espite being a tight-knit community based on centuries of tradition, Switzerland's asset management industry is reflective of the wider world, constantly evolving and reshaping itself to better fit clients' needs.

Therefore, asset managers must attract and maintain top talent, which is tough in such a competitive landscape, with firms vying for those who can bring a wealth of experience and a book of clients to the table.

But bringing a superstar on board does not always spell success. Hiring the wrong candidate can impact team spirit, client retention and ultimately the bottom line. Wealth managers are not only hunting for talent, experience or for clients, but for someone who fits into their firm's culture. For some this centres on an entrepreneurial spirit, while for others on a team-centric approach. Here, wealth managers tell us how they determine whether a candidate will fit into their firm.



**FABIAN ZELLWEGER**  
Valvest Partners  
Zurich

As a small company having the right people is key. At Valvest all employees are partners, meaning that everyone's salary is linked to the ongoing business. As a result, everyone needs to bring something to the table, whether it is client relations or research, it needs to add value to what we do.

For us it is important that we share the same basic mindset. And this mindset is: clients first. We truly believe that if we want to be successful in the long run, we need to focus all our work towards achieving the best results for our clients. And this is a lot easier if we work together as a team.

We don't have a standardised hiring

process in the way large companies do. Our hiring is more focused on how we and a candidate fit together. And this is probably the most challenging part to get right. Then it is important that we are happy with the new person, and it's even more important that he or she completely shares the values we stand for, so we don't take shortcuts here.

All our previous hiring processes lasted more than six months. Besides meetings, discussing mindset and long-term plans, we also go for lunches and have team dinners. We do everything to make sure that we get to know each other as well as possible. And so far, this process has worked very well for us.

## VIDEO INTERVIEW



**Chinese Equities:  
Fundamental investing in light  
of the U.S. and China trade talks**

Watch Lilian Co's insightful interview on [ericsturdza.com](http://ericsturdza.com)



**ERIC STURDZA  
INVESTMENTS**



**MARK EBERLE**  
Bellegcapital  
Zurich

We operate in a hyper-competitive human capital business where people are free agents. The best free agents are creative, entrepreneurial, enthusiastic, full of ideas, inspiring, fun to be around and can deliver results.

Attributes we seek include improving alignment to clients' best interest, tying compensation directly to performance, quality of life and working with people who share our values. Importantly, as a small firm we are always looking for new talent, are willing to take risks on people and are not afraid to fail.

We are all individuals, but we recognise that we are stronger as a team. It's critical our recruiting process focuses on people with values, skills and ambitions that align with our long-term game plan to build the best

independent asset management team in Switzerland.

We seek players that think and operate as business owners, running and building their own practices within the context of the team and strategy of the firm. Not as employees, but as financial service entrepreneurs compensated on performance.

We have a trust-based culture that works for seasoned professionals with large client books and younger entrepreneurs looking to grow their businesses.

Effective recruiting is only the first step in the journey. Providing and nurturing a stimulating and rewarding environment where people can achieve their potential is the ultimate long-term recipe for success.



**MARC PACCOLAT**  
TASK Wealth  
Management  
Geneva

When deciding to integrate a new member, the starting point is always culture. While it is clear that we ensure the relationship will be profitable for all parties, it is first and foremost imperative that the manager be able to integrate perfectly into the TASK Wealth Management environment.

Our values of independence, integrity and excellence are deeply rooted in our corporate culture and shared by all our employees. The key for success we are looking for when recruiting a candidate is strong and relevant professional experience, as well as first hand personal references.

Our corporate structure, investment process and risk management tools provide the foundation that allows our relationship managers to capitalise on their skills and experience and provide the highest level of service to our clients.

After our successful merger at the beginning of 2017, which obviously involved a few subsequent adjustments, we are benefitting from very healthy growth within our institution, both organically and through the acquisition of managers who have all fully integrated and brought complementary skills as well as knowledge to our company.



**URS MEIER**  
SSI Wealth Management  
Bäch

Besides professional experience and investment skills, all our client advisors and relationship managers need to be entrepreneurs in the first place. Although SSI's brand has gained recognition, it is not yet widely known.

Our people not only offer SSI's services but primarily represent the values of our firm, in contrast to CA/RMs at large banks, where they operate under a well-known brand with a long history.

We have a bias towards hiring front people from smaller organisations who we already know or who we are referred to through our own network of contacts. It is our experience that these people usually have a close relationship with their client base and are willing to act as entrepreneurs to add value.

Equally important for us are social skills and the fit with our organisation as we can only succeed as a group. We are very proud to have a great team spirit within SSI whereby everybody supports one another and the team as a whole.

To make sure that successful CA/RMs stay with our firm and to further align interests we invite them to become shareholders in SSI.

The most challenging step in the hiring process is probably the assessment of the candidate's asset volume potential and the respective conversion rate.

New members of the team are well supported in their onboarding process through SSI's outstanding infrastructure and personnel.