

“We have an approved vendor list”

Rebuttal #1: *“If you do have a need, and you do have an interest in seeing this candidate, by the time I get on your vendor list, it will be at least 45 days from now. The candidate(s) that I am working with will not still be around. He is actively looking and is going to find an opportunity within one of your competitors in the immediate area – one that doesn’t have the red tape of a vendor list. If that’s the risk that you’d like to take, we can go that direction. What I would recommend that we do is just get a contingent agreement in place – that says you pay no money up front. At least once you’ve signed that, we can present the candidates, as well as get started on the vendor list approval process. You get your position filled in a timely manner, and by that point we’ll be on the approved list and you can continue to work with us. Fair?”*

Rebuttal #2: *“If you are looking for someone to ‘vend’ resumes to you, you may find that firm out there – but it’s not us. In fact, you will probably find that you don’t even need a ‘vendor’ to find the easy resumes that are out there. We are not a vendor, nor do we want to be – the value that we provide in our process is much more than that of a snack machine refill-guy. If that’s the only way for us to work with you, let me ask you two things. First, to your knowledge, have you ever worked with a firm not on your ‘vendor’ list?”*

“Second, who wrote that policy and more importantly, who has the authority to change that policy?”

Rebuttal #3: *“With all due respect, (name), I am not interested in being a vendor. I am interested in working with your firm – but most importantly, so is my candidate. Let me be clear – he wants to speak with you. If you saw his background, you’d want to speak with him. I don’t want to let the red tape of a vendor list prohibit that. What needs to happen to have the two of you speak no later than the end of this week?”*

Rebuttal #4: *“You absolutely should have an approved vendor list for things like equipment maintenance, supplies, (insert industry specific examples), but what we do is more akin to partnering to help companies solve higher level problems than just providing commodities for everyday use. Human beings are not commodities – and as such we approach our relationships with both candidates and clients as a partnership – not a vendor. You need a partner for your executive level searches – not a vendor.”*

Rebuttal #5: *"I am more than happy to start whatever process that is to get me on the approved list. However, I am sure you would agree that the main purpose of that list is to maintain some control over who you ultimately utilize for filling your needs, and don't end up with thousands of recruiters all vying for your business. However, there is a particular individual we are talking about who can make an immediate and bottom line impact to your organization. I am sure that your policy was written with good intentions, but I am also sure that your policy didn't mean to potentially prevent one of the best possible hires to your team. Let me make this recommendation: on an exception basis on just this search, meet with this candidate outside of your vendor list parameters. If after working with this candidate you don't feel that they were worth making the exception for, then don't even approve my submittal to your vendor list. Let's not let a policy that was intended to help grow the organization, be a policy that could end up having the exact opposite unintended consequence. Are you open to talking with him?"*

Rebuttal #6: *"Do you put everyone on this list that does business with you? I understand putting the Ozarka water guy or the soda water machine guy or the cleaning company on this list. I assume you don't put your attorney, accounting firm or consultants on this list. If I'm being lumped in with the water/soda/cleaning guys, I may not want to be on that list in the first place. If at the end of the day I have to be on the 'list' then let me know what I need to do to make that happen as soon as possible. In the mean time, I am going to send you an agreement that states you only pay me if you decide to make the contingent hire. There is no commitment associated with this agreement other than you allow me to send qualified candidates to you. That way you don't miss out on anyone I may find between now and the time we are signed up on the approved vendor list. If I send the agreement now, can you sign and send back today?"*