

“We do not ‘top-grade’ as it detracts from our culture”

Rebuttal #1: *“(Name), I get that and even think that it’s a good policy to use when attracting the right individuals to your team. Everyone wants to feel like they have the right of first refusal when it comes to opportunities for promotion. However, I want to challenge you on this because I am concerned that it’s truly not in the best interest of the long-term growth of the firm. That kind of policy will eventually breed complacency among your team, stale ideas in leadership, and average results. Why do you think that we replace the President of the United States every 4 to 8 years? The best way to move forward is to bring new thoughts, ideas, and individuals to recharge the state of the union. No different than a (type of) company. And I can find them for you. What kind of individual would you not be able to not interview?”*

Rebuttal #2: *“So you’ve never hired anyone to gain a strength that you didn’t feel like you had in your organization?”*

“You have a fiduciary responsibility to everyone in the firm to move the firm forward as best as possible. Now, if you can do that by promoting from within, it’s always the best way to go. But what happens when you don’t have that person? Let’s use a 1 – 10 scale. The position that you have open – the person you’d promote internally is let’s say a 6. Great person, awesome, loyal, but in terms of their caliber of candidacy based on the market, they are a 6 – but meanwhile, you could get a 9. This 9 is not only better technically, but enhances your culture even more than your person who is a 6. Are you bettering the company by promoting from within, or getting a 9?”

Rebuttal #3: *“Let me ask you this – who is your favorite sports team?” (They answer – let’s use the Chicago Bears in this example) “Okay, so you’re a die-hard Bears fan. Every year, what do you want? Not only do you want them to make it to the Superbowl, but you want them to win it. So imagine if the Bears had your same philosophy, and their starting quarterback goes down – out of commission and can no longer play for the rest of the season. And right now, on the market, Tom Brady is available. But the Bears philosophy is that although we know Tom Brady has won three Superbowls, but we are a ‘promote from within’ type of organization. Instead, we are going to promote our #2 quarterback – the guy who took two snaps all year. How do you feel about that, being the Bears fan that you are?”*

Rebuttal #4: *“I understand your desire to be able to promote a culture that home-grows talent. However, there are certain times or unforeseen circumstances where you find yourself needing a skill set or level of competency that just doesn’t exist within your walls **yet**. As a result, while trying to serve the greater good of your home-grown culture, you consequently set someone up to fail by putting them in roles that they just aren’t yet equipped to handle. So although I understand the attraction to breeding this kind of culture, are you interested in benchmarking external talent with your internal options?”*



Rebuttal #5: *"I understand what you are saying. It seems a little cut-throat and cold-hearted. Those are two things I wouldn't want someone to use in describing me either. At the same time, there are people in every company that are under-performing. It's a fact. Even at our company there are people who are not in the right spot. I'm not recommending that you start immediate firing and hiring. I am however recommending that you understand your options and at least consider the fact that there is the potential to increase the horsepower of your team. Forget the phrase 'top-grading' for a moment. Ultimately are you willing to consider seeing resumes of top industry players in your market?"*

