

CREATING YOUR PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDATION

Script – Contingent Recommendation: *“Our service charge is one third of the first year’s estimated compensation for the position and is payable upon the offer acceptance and resignation of the selected candidate for the position. Based on the estimate of \$90,000, the estimated service charge is \$30,000, but will be higher or lower based on final compensation offered. Assuming our invoice is paid within ten days of receipt, we will conduct a replacement search at no additional charge should the placed candidate leave within 30 days of his/her start date. Are there any questions that we haven’t yet addressed that would restrict you from sending back the agreement once we are off the phone?”*

Script – Contingent Recommendation: *“Since this search is not urgent for you to fill, I would recommend that we proceed on a contingent basis. Our process will still be thorough – it will just not be proactive. I will still screen based on what you have told me you need, I will share with you the motivations and ‘hot buttons’ for any candidates you meet with, I just will not be proactively searching on your behalf. If you don’t hear from me, it does not mean I’m a bad recruiter or have forgotten about you – it simply means that I am prioritizing my day based on those clients who have more urgent and critical needs and have retained me to be their primary solution. This approach will allow you to test the marketplace without any specific commitment from either you or me. Should the position become more urgent and critical for you to fill, then we can revisit and discuss how we can be more proactive for you in the marketplace. Does this approach sound like it best suits what you need at this time?”*

Our agreement is straightforward. It states that you pay us nothing until we are successful in filling this position. If you hire someone we present, then our professional service charge is one third (33%) of the first year’s total identifiable compensation. If you don’t hire someone, then you owe us nothing. Is there anything else we haven’t yet covered that is important to you prior to signing this agreement?”

Script – Contingent Recommendation: *“Based on what you’ve shared with me, I would recommend a contingent approach. I don’t think that financially engaged is appropriate at this time because of (X). Are you open to us setting up a relationship where you can interview people all day long and never pay a thing until you find someone good enough to justify it?”*

On a contingent basis, the risk is entirely all mine. If ever you hire someone, our fee is one third of the base salary. Obviously we provide a 30 day replacement guarantee. Is there any reason you wouldn’t be able to get this agreement back today so I’m able to send you candidates to review immediately?”



Script – Contingent moving to Financially Committed: *“We are a retained search firm. There are two situations in which we will work on a contingent basis – the first is on a peripheral search for one of our retained clients. The second is as a stepping stone to establishing a retained relationship. I am open to working on this initial search on a contingent basis if upon our successful and timely execution of this search, we move forward on a retained basis. Our service charge on a contingent basis is 35% of the first year’s total identifiable compensation and isn’t paid until offer acceptance from the candidate you’ve hired. Of course, our following searches when done on a financially committed basis is a lower overall fee and longer guarantee period, but we can discuss that once we’ve successfully completed this initial search. If I send you the agreement now, is there any reason you would not be able to sign and send back today?”*

Script – Financially Committed Recommendation: *“Due to the challenges that we have discussed around this opportunity and your need for this position to be filled in the next (# of) days, I would recommend that we initiate a dedicated search to maximize our chance of success. In my experience, I am fearful that any other approach is not going to ensure that your position is filled within the timeframe you need and the market coverage you desire.*

To summarize the dedicated search process - I will create an extensive plan customized for this search to ensure that we have a real strategy to identify, evaluate, attract, and secure the very best talent available in a timely manner. I will create a compelling presentation to take to market that you will approve prior to me picking up the phone for that first call. Once I cover the market and screen based on the skills and parameters we’ve already discussed, I will offer you a ‘first right of refusal’ and will not present candidates to any other company until you have made a decision to proceed with an interview or pass. This process will, truthfully, ensure that there is absolute accountability from me and my team to not only get your problem solved, but solve it with the best possible solution. Does this sound like a viable solution for you?”

Our professional service charge is 30% of first-year’s total identifiable compensation. The service charge is paid only as we hit milestones in the search. This keeps the search effort squarely on our shoulders and focused toward completion. If we estimate that this position will pay an average of \$100,000, our service charge would be \$30,000. One third of this is due upon initiation of the search, and the balance is not owed until we have completed the search and your candidate has accepted the offer you’ve extended. What questions have I not yet answered that you need clarity on prior to initiating this search?”

Script – Financially Committed Recommendation: *“Based on what you are looking for, I feel confident in my ability to identify the short list of who you’d even consider for this position and get this off your plate. My professional recommendation is to initiate a dedicated search where I will create an extensive search plan customized for this search to ensure that we don’t simply fill your position with a qualified candidate but to identify, evaluate, attract, and secure the very best talent available in a timely, yet thorough manner.*

The service charge for this search will be based on 35% of the candidate’s first year’s base salary. The service charge will be divided into three installments based on the achievement of specific performance milestones. The first installment of one third of the estimated service charge will be due upon the submission of the search plan and position presentation.



A second installment of one-third of the estimated service charge will be due upon your agreement to interview a minimum of two candidates for the position. The final installment will be due upon the completion of the search and will be adjusted to reflect the final compensation offered. What needs to happen to initiate this agreement and get started with our search efforts?"

Script – Retained Recommendation: *“Our service charge is 35% of the first year’s estimated compensation for the position. One third of the estimated service charge is due upon the initiation of this agreement. The second third of the service charge is due 30 days after the initiation date and then the final third will be due 30 days from that date. An additional payment will, however, be due if the actual compensation offered to a selected candidate is higher than the estimate when the search began. If the search is completed prior to the final payment then we will simply adjust the final payment to reflect the actual final compensation offered. What needs to happen to initiate our agreement?”*

Script – Consulting Recommendation: *“Because of the nature of what you want done, I am recommending us perform work on your behalf as a consultant. This might look a little different than what you’ve seen from other search firms, so bear with me. What you need is specific feedback from the market on (bonus payouts/business development efforts/salary survey information). On a weekly basis, I will talk with (# of) people that are in the (type of) space within (radius/volume/etc). I will summarize that information and send it to you at the close of each month. This will continue until you tell us that you no longer need this information. Our service charge for this market intelligence is \$2,500 a month (for example). Of that, half can be applied to a retainer for any positions that you do need filled within the next three months. If you do end up hiring someone that comes from our search efforts, our standard service charge of 30% applies. Who, besides you, needs to sign off on this?”*