

“I’ll have to get approval on this – let me get back to you.”

Rebuttal #1: *“Typically, I’ve found that when people tell me that, it’s one of two things. First is that they don’t have the authority to sign off on it themselves, or second is that they actually do, they just don’t know how to tell me that they still have concerns about signing off on the agreement. Which of these two camps are you in?”*

Rebuttal #2: *“Which specific part of our agreement do you need to get authorized? Typically I’ve found that it’s not the Contingent Agreement that you need to get approved – you usually have no problem signing them yourself. Is it the financial commitment that you need to seek approval for?”*

“That sounds about right. Let me ask you - do you want me to get started on this search immediately? I know your timeframe is urgent – are you open to signing the contingent agreement today, with the understanding that we convert to the retained terms as soon as it’s signed? If, ultimately, there is no financially dedicated search signed off on, we will operate under the parameters of the contingent agreement. But I assume that there won’t be an issue with the retainer based on what you shared with me? Do you see any reason why you couldn’t sign off on the contingent agreement today?”

Rebuttal #3: *“Whose is the actual signature I need to include on this paperwork? Have you ever suggested this type of relationship before? What has been the response? What has been the reluctance?”*

I’m going to copy him/her on this email with the agreement attached. I’ve found that it will be much easier for you to introduce this concept to him/her if they’ve had a bit of time to acclimate themselves to our firm and our process. This will save you some time having to duplicate everything we’ve already talked about, and give us a better chance of getting this moving quickly. Is his/her email in the same format as yours? So it’s (email address)?”

Rebuttal #4: *“Let me ask you this – do you truly want to work together on this search? Do you truly believe that I can get this taken care of for you?”*

Okay, then I’m going to tell you exactly what we need to do to get this approved. First, I’m going to copy them on the email that I’m about to send you with an overview of the track record and process for our firm. Second, you need to go in there and have a conversation with him/her – but here’s what you need to say. (insert the accolades/points of differentiation for your firm). At the end of that meeting, I want you both to call me together and I want to answer any questions that he/she has. You don’t have to close this for me – I’ll do what I do best – what I need you to do is just introduce me in a way that’s better than the ‘cold’ introduction that I would have if I just called him/her out of the blue. If you want me to fill this for you, and do it quickly with the best (title), that’s what we need to do. Are you comfortable with that?”