

“What if we find a candidate on our own?”

Rebuttal #1: *“There’s actually a high probability of that happening, because of the ripple effect that we haven’t yet discussed. Since we have been retained to fill this search for you, I will employ a tactic I refer to as ‘open recruiting’. This means that I will share your name and your story to every single person I speak with – resulting in 15 people a day, 75 a week, and 300 over the course of the month. Every one of those people will get a follow-up email with the details of your position and your company. Obviously, the game of ‘telephone’ ensues – and it’s actually very common for you to start to receive a much higher number of unsolicited resumes than you are used to. It’s because of this ‘ripple effect’ – most of our clients actually joke about it as it’s come to be expected every time they retain us! You are retaining us not only to share your story to the entirety of the marketplace, but to attract, screen, qualify, and ultimately land the right candidate. The originating source becomes a moot point when the person you want to hire isn’t attracted properly and doesn’t ultimately want to come to work for you. Does it make sense that you are partnering with us for the entire process, not just the identification of names on a resume?”*

Rebuttal #2: *“I’m going to be candid with you – this is a little bit of a red flag, because in the past when clients have asked me this it resulted in them essentially competing against me. It was a race to see who could beat the other one to the punch first, which created a saturation in the marketplace that actually worked to their complete disadvantage. My goal is to partner **with** you, not compete **against** you. How do you think it’s best for us to structure our partnership?”*

Rebuttal #3: *“This is actually one of the biggest benefits that we provide being a third party in this process. I just had this happen here recently at our own search firm, so I am sure that you’ve experienced it before. One of my top recruiters, complete superstar, referred his brother-in-law to interview here. I met with him, and he was not in any way a fit for our organization. I knew within three minutes that I would never hire him. How easy do you think my top producer received that news? Especially since his wife, this candidate’s sister, was putting pressure on him to find her brother a job? I know that’s a bit of a tangent, but I’m sure you’ve had a situation like that in your years of experience, right?”*

“The good news is that as your partner, our collective responsibility is to identify, source, recruit, attract, and land the most qualified candidate(s) for this project. Regardless of how the candidate was referred, each candidate should be put through a homogenous filter, and being that filter is my responsibility. The brother-in-law gets sent to me, and if he’s not truly one of the top three candidates, he doesn’t get put in front of you. But it’s no longer your fault – it’s mine, and I have no problem being the bad guy if it results in you hiring the right guy! Now, if the internal referral makes the short list, you interview him plus several other highly qualified candidates, and you make the assessment that the internal referral was the best of the three, I’m open to making a caveat in our agreement that addresses that situation. In that situation, what do you think is fair and reasonable since the identification was done by you but the evaluating, attracting and landing was facilitated by our firm?”