



NLE Quick Tip: The Reluctant Candidate

**Presenter: Scott Love, President – The Attorney Search Group,
a member of the Sanford Rose Associates® Network of Companies**

Scott Love is President of The Attorney Search Group – a member of the Sanford Rose Associates network of offices. Scott is also a leading expert and authority in the executive search industry and has been quoted in the Wall Street Journal and Selling Power Magazine and is the author of "The Recruiter's Adventure Book! How to Find Buried Treasure in the World of Recruiting". Scott has spoken to nearly every major industry group and is a United States Naval Academy graduate in Annapolis, Maryland.

In this NLE Quick Tip, entitled "The Reluctant Candidate," Scott Love shares his tips to keep your candidates engaged during the recruiting process and understand why they may be reluctant to take the next step in their career. From empathetic awareness to clarifying questions for candidates with concerns moving forward, Scott's insights will improve your success in recruiting and making placements.

Meeting: "The Reluctant Candidate" by Scott Love

When working with candidates, Scott reminds us that it is often human behavior to lean toward the decision that is in their best interests. This is known as psychological egoism, the theory that self-interest is the only motive from which anyone ever acts. This doesn't mean one is trying to be deceptive; however, recruiters need to know when a candidate might be reluctant and address those warning signs through sophisticated dialogue to address their reluctance.

Let's dive in and review Scott's six reasons a candidate could be having second thoughts about your opportunity:

1. Not a Big Enough Motive

The same motivation drives not all candidates. Candidates make a change for a reason- you just have to uncover their motivation! Review the questions below to uncover a candidate's motives; what other questions could you add?

- If I had your ideal situation, let's say this is something you would get excited about; what would it look like?
- What is most important to you in the workplace?
- Why did you choose your last job/position?
- _____
- _____
- _____



2. Not Enough Pull:

Once you find out about their intrinsic motivation, maybe there's not a strong enough pull for your client's opportunity. Remember that people move based on their own reasons, not yours. You might think the opportunity is fantastic with tons of advancement potential, but they only care about moving to shorten their twenty-minute commute. Sometimes that's enough of a pull. Probe a little more, assuming you have the right rapport with them. Start with:

- What else would motivate you to consider something else?

What other questions could you ask?

- _____
- _____
- _____

3. Other Options

If you suspect a candidate could be considering another opportunity other than yours, dig deeper:

- Has anything changed since we first spoke?
- Have you received any calls from other recruiters or sought other opportunities?

What other questions could you ask?

- _____
- _____
- _____

If the candidate doesn't seem interested in your client's opportunity, use Scott's close:

"It still might be worth your time to meet with my client; at least this can give you some perspective. But based on what I know about this company, you at least owe it to yourself to spend an hour with them. Worst case scenario, it will give you confidence in your final decision, no matter what that might be."

4. Not Enough Support From Significant Others/Inner Circle

If early in the process, a candidate is serious and you have established a good rapport, along with them volunteering that this change will affect others in their immediate circle, check in with them:

- _____, what does your wife think about this? OR
- How do your closest friends feel about this potential change?



What other questions could you ask?

- _____
- _____
- _____

TIP: Depending on their response, you could uncover if they have discussed the opportunity with others. Recognize the red flags!

5. Fear of Change

The biggest enemy of our business. If you suspect this could concern your candidate, reassure them: *"Joe, everyone is just a temporary employee. You are not doing anything wrong by looking for ways to advance your personal career."*

6. Loyalty

How can you manage a candidate's guilt for making a move? Agree with them:

"Yes, your loyalty to your company makes you attractive. I'm sure you have seen your company lay off strong people in lean times, right? They were loyal to them, but when it came to taking care of business, their loyalty to the company's growth prioritized keeping people when they couldn't afford to do it. Your personal loyalty will always take priority over company loyalty, and you and I both know that is how it should be. Your colleagues, at some point, will leave your company, and everyone knows that in today's world of work, it's a conditional loyalty, and nothing is forever. You need to do what's in your best interests and continue to keep an open mind to my client's opportunity."

Facilitator: In closing, empathy is the magical pixie dust that dissolves all barriers between people. Say something like this: *"It seems like you are reluctant to go forward, and there's a reason for that; would you mind sharing it with me?"*