

Six Reasons Recruiters Will Talk to You

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What are the key reasons executive search firms and other 3rd party employer-paid recruitment agencies will pay attention to you?

The fundamental starting point is that these firms and their associates are under no obligation to give you any of their time. The client of the search firm is the hiring organization. That is rule one.

However, rule two is that the recruiting firms need candidates that FIT their current and future assignments in order to do their job. As a result, search firms can be highly selective about how they invest their time. So how do you get their attention?

Here are the top reasons recruiters will talk to you:

1. **You are a clear and strong candidate for a current search assignment.** A search firm gets paid to attract people who are among the best in their field, not those just able to do the job. If you are going to apply to one of their openings, apply a laser focus to the opportunity at hand. Show them "why you."
2. **You fit with the recruiter's specialty and appear to have a pedigree that seems "placeable."** Target the specialist firms and specialist practitioners within general firms who handle your career trajectory.
3. **You come referred by someone important.** The real work of a search firm occurs on the phones, speaking with people in their networks about who is good and ready to take on the challenge at hand. Work your networks. If at all possible, get an introduction to the group rather than going in cold.
4. **You are someone they want to get to know.** If you are respected in the industry or an up-and-comer, don't be invisible. Seed your field so that your name comes up when key people are asked, "Who can do this job?"
5. **You are a file builder during slower times.** The fewer active assignments recruiters have, the more time there is to fill their pipeline. In a slower market, they are likely to be a little more open about the persons they talk to. Try to establish a relationship before you need to find a job.
6. **You represent a valuable contact for a more junior headhunter.** Don't underestimate the power of these folks to insert you into the search firm's active system and assignments. If you are contacted by someone at this level, treat them with respect.