

10 Candidate Tips for Working With a Recruiter

1. **Understand the recruiter's niche.** There are at least three varieties of recruiters – Retained search, contingency and third party staffing/consulting. Retained search recruiters get paid a retainer and are typically utilized by companies for executive level searches. Contingency recruiters typically recruit for mid-level permanent positions and get paid a fee contingent on their filling the requirement. Third party staffing and consulting agencies frequently have limited duration assignments to fill for their clients. They often compete with several other agencies on particular projects.
2. **Respect your recruiter's time, confidentiality and skills.** When a recruiter reaches out to you he or she is probably on an aggressive deadline, looking for highly qualified candidates, and may have a short window of exclusivity before the role is parsed out to multiple vendors. So, be responsive and call back quickly, send your current resume when you say you will, and above all don't share information regarding the assignment with others unless your recruiter requests that you do so.
3. **Stay in touch.** Help your recruiter to help you. Be easily available, check in frequently, share information about the status of your search, and be willing to share information about companies and people within your network.
4. **Be positive and professional.** Nothing will turn a recruiter off more quickly than a negative story about a previous assignment or worse yet, a previous boss. No recruiter wants to put a negative, bitter, petty person in front of their valued client.
5. **Be sure that your resume is accurate and complete.** Your resume is your sales document. Be sure it is chronological, uses a direct style, is neat, has no typo's, is action oriented, and provides results rather than responsibilities. Never, ever lie about your experience or skills.
6. **Be candid.** If you're unwilling to relocate – say so. If you have a minimum salary requirement – share it. If you have specific skills or experiences that should be highlighted with a hiring manager and make you stand out from the crowd – be vocal – let your recruiter know. All of these things help your recruiter to properly present you to the client.
7. **No surprises.** If you've already been presented for a particular opportunity by another agency, be sure your recruiter is aware of that fact. If you're considering two other offers and will need time to evaluate the new opportunity be sure to tell your recruiter. If you commit to do something (send a resume, take a telephone interview, do a face-to-face interview) do it. Keep the lines of communication open!
8. **Be prepared.** Do your research about the company and the assignment. Your recruiter has an obligation to help you with this step, and often will send you links and information regarding the company. Study it and be ready for the interview when you get it.
9. **Be flexible.** Be willing to consider contract or contract-to-hire roles as well as permanent positions. Working together with your recruiter to identify skills, experience and the value you bring to an opportunity will result in success for both of you. Be open to a variety of options.
10. **Provide referrals or industry information.** Your recruiter is juggling the needs of multiple clients and candidates and trying to stay current. If you run across an interesting article, or someone in your network might be a lead, let your recruiter know. You'll definitely stay "top of mind" with your recruiter this way!