

# Need to Hire the Most Qualified Candidate for a Key Role? Here's Why an Exclusive Search May Be More Beneficial than Contingency

By Carrie Lombardi

Most hiring managers are all too familiar with this scenario; a valuable member of your team has unexpectedly decided to move on. Although you're a manager that wants the best for your team members, you're now faced with the challenge of finding someone who will seamlessly fit into the role and mesh well with the rest of the team.

You want it done quickly and you want it done right! After all, your department is already spread thin and there's work to be done!

That's where working exclusively with a recruiting firm is most beneficial. Although there are many benefits to an exclusive partnership, among the most important ones are the quality of candidates, the expediency in which the search is completed, and the positive company image which is conveyed to the industry. Although I cannot speak to how other recruiting firms operate, I can give a perspective on how Matthews & Stephens Associates works when we partner with an organization on an exclusive basis.

***First, the quality of the candidates.*** When you engage our services on an exclusive basis, you get conscientious, focused attention on *your* search and the broadest range of recruiting exposure to the best available talent. We stay committed until the best candidate for the position has been placed and is a happily contributing member of the team. This is where an exclusive agreement is an excellent example of "*less is more*". Many hiring managers mistakenly believe that by assigning multiple search firms to a search and posting ads on lots of job boards they'll be reaching the most candidates. It may be true that many different people will be exposed to the opportunity; however, this may not be the most effective way to identify the candidates that will *truly* be the best fit for the position. The likelihood is low that you'll get *the best* candidate responding to the ad; rather the best of those that happen to view the ad over the short time period that it's posted on the job board.

When we exclusively partner with a client, we have in-depth conversations with the hiring manager, along with other key stakeholders, to get the real intricacies of the position and the skillset that *they* feel is most important to them in an ideal candidate. These conversations allow us to be much more adept at assessing whether a candidate *really* will be the *best* fit for the role. We assure that the fit will be a great match from a skills and experience perspective as well as from a personality fit. We understand the importance of a candidate also meshing well with the organization's culture and the personality of the team that they may be joining.

Our conversations also allow us to identify similar organizations that may currently employ the right candidates. We usually speak with 80 to 150 or more potential candidates that we've targeted. The vast majority are currently happy where they are. Although they may not be actively looking for a new position or scanning job postings, when approached in a professional manner by a recruiter that explains that they are exclusively working with the client on the search, it immediately adds credibility, many times peaking their interest. They realize that this just may be a great next step in their career or a better opportunity than their current position. This increases the possibility of you getting a premier candidate for the role who will be more likely to become a strong contributor to your team!

***Second, the time you and your people save by completing the search in a prompt manner.*** Your time is valuable, you have a *long* list of things that you need to accomplish each day. Working with multiple recruiting firms and reviewing candidates responding to job postings can be redundant and takes you away from your other responsibilities. If you're already down a member of your team, you may all be picking up the extra slack. This only adds to the pressure you're feeling, and the work is piling up! When

you and your team feel additional stress, it will quite simply affect everyone's morale and productivity will be affected as well; not to mention the health and wellness of your team!

You need the position filled quickly, but you want the *right* candidate, not the *fast* candidate. We understand that! Our process is comprehensive. We use strategies that you would use if only you had the time and resources to do them. We manage the entire search process for you. We keep it moving forward in a timely manner, aligning with your goals for filling the position. You'll feel the relief of being able to check one of the many things off your to do list!

***And third, the public relations and positive image that you convey to the healthcare industry; it really shows that you place a high value on finding the right talent, and that you do so in a thoroughly professional manner.*** Candidates are more responsive to an exclusive search. They can see that the *organization is really serious about finding the right talent*. There is often a great deal of value in your organization's name and reputation. It's often a key selling point when we're speaking with passive candidates to be able share with them that we're exclusively partnering with a prominent organization that many would be proud to be a part of. It's said that "you never have a second chance to make a first impression"; we take this to heart and we work hard to represent your organization and the opportunity in the most positive light.

Every recruiting call is a reflection of your company and you want a firm representing you that highlights and enhances your values and mission. We assure you that this is done and we invest the time to really understand your priorities and the opportunity. Then we present that opportunity professionally and accurately every time. Most hiring managers don't think about public relations when they need to fill a position, but you may know how unprofessional a company can appear if you've ever been called by several recruiters, pitching the same opportunity and often describing it differently.

There are many more benefits to exclusively partnering with a recruiting firm. I've given you an overview of the ones that, in my experience, I feel are most beneficial for the hiring manager. I hope that your department is running smoothly. If you do happen to get that unexpected letter of resignation and are in need of filling an integral role in your organization, I hope you give some thought to exclusively partnering with a recruiting firm. It can be a big load off your shoulders if you can check searching for a premier candidate off your to do list and focus on your other responsibilities. You'll be grateful that you did!