

One Little Question

One little question is all it takes to keep your deal from exploding at the last minute.

The candidate has spent the last week meeting with your client, and it looks like a placement will result. Yes, they've fallen in love. Don't go buy that boat yet. That little red light on your phone means there's a voice mail message waiting for you from the candidate. You listen to the message and you can barely hear the candidate's voice because of the 'Thu-Thump, Thu-Thump' from your heart. The adrenaline rushes throughout your body as you feel the tinge of anxiety when you listen to your candidate telling you he's backing out at the final hour.

This is how they usually say it, "Hey, um, I've been thinking. Um, I just, um, wanted to tell you that I can't take the job right now. But thanks for all your help."

Click.

Here's what you should have asked the candidate in the beginning of the process to keep him from backing out:

"Is there anything keeping you from going forward and making a move in the next thirty to ninety days?"

Ask this question before you put the candidate in the process. When you put a specific short-fused timeline in the question, it focuses the candidate's mind on his calendar and helps him really understand that this move could take place. By giving a timeline in the question it helps him understand that it's a real situation.

The objective of this question is determine the difference between deal killers and deal complicators. A deal killer is when the candidate says that his daughter just made the varsity cheerleading squad and he can't relocate. A deal complicator is when he says he's expecting a bonus in six months. If it can be overcome, it's a deal complicator. If it can't, it's a deal killer.

Remember, the deals are in the details. Insert this question early in your process and see how much easier it is to deal with issues before the candidate and the client fall in love with each other.

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