

Ep 96 - How Long Until Recruiters Can Headhunt Transcript

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Welcome to another episode of The Lone Recruiter podcast. I'm your host, Brett Clemenson and if you're a recruiter out on your own or just lacking general advice or mentorship, you've come to the right place. Our episodes are designed to give you the motivation, the strategies and the support you need to become the very best lone recruiter. So join us,

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grab a cup of coffee and let's take your desk to another level.

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Now today someone has written in, they will remain nameless. They're going to listen to this and know who they are. But they've asked me a very simple question, and I think it's actually a really interesting one to discuss today, which is, you know, basically when is it okay to headhunt from a client?

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I'm going to read to you the question that was sent to me, and then I'm going to discuss that openly with you because I've got my thoughts on this and I think a lot of people have similar questions. So it goes something like this. Hey Brett, I'd be really interested in your thoughts on when a client is no longer a client in terms of headhunting from them.

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I've been recruiting for 15 years in the same industry, so I've worked with many clients. Some of these clients I may have worked with a lot. Five years or so ago and I've done nothing with them since and the contact I work with has moved on also. Also, often with the large corporate companies, you may do a one off placement with and then they never give you any more jobs or volume after that and advise you that you are suddenly on some PSA, which is not worth the paper it is written on.

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Yes. So the question he has is do you have a timeframe in your head after making a placement where you feel it was okay to approach their staff if they were not actively giving you any more work? Will be keen to get your thoughts. So I received this. I was running around. I think I was heading onto a plane, but I had a quick answer for him and then I wanted to elaborate later on that.

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But for me it's a pretty simple 12 months. I said to him, 12 months is my number. If you're transacting with a company in January 1st, 2023, roll around to January 1st, 2024. I would say, you know what? That's okay. And most terms that a big company will send you will have a similar sort of timeframe. Now, I added to that for him, if you intend to work with this company again, I wouldn't do it if you work with them 13 months ago and theoretically or ethically, we're going to go headhunt from that company.

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Fine. But you need to expect that you're not going to work with them because a company you headhunt from that you've never worked for before. Whatever, they like, they've got nothing to complain about. They understand that's how the world works. Whatever. But if you've got a client who's opened up their doors giving you briefs, told them about their company, you understand the personnel, the projects, whatever that company's doing, and you make a placement or two with them.

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Yeah, it's been 12 months. I haven't had any any, you know, need or you haven't had any luck. And then you start to headhunt, they're going to feel hurt. They're actually it's beyond, oh that's not fair. It's kind of like a, dude, what are you doing? And it's a feeling. And that feeling is really hard to come back from.

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So if you do plan to work with this client again, I just 100% would not touch them in terms of headhunting because you're just shooting yourself in the foot. You're doing, not the wrong thing, but you're doing the wrong thing for your future if you think there's opportunity there. Which kind of led me to, so that's that's my simple answer.

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And I would love to hear your thoughts on that, because I think most recruiters would think that way. I know there's most recruiters I meet these days are very ethical, which I love, but I know I've seen people who just blatantly headhunt from people they work for, usually junior people who don't really think beyond themselves or beyond today.

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And, you know, they're headhunting from places that they're sending CVs too or, you know, making placements with. The worst one is when a colleague is headhunting from your client. That one is tough because it does reflect poorly on you as well. And you've got to manage people within your office. So that's a really important one to get right too.

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But yeah, 12 months is my answer. I we then went on and talked about bits and bobs and I just said to him, Look, you know, my line on headhunting and taking staff from clients is

really transparent. I actually tell this to my clients when I sit with them and I go, Cool. Just so you know, if we are working together, I am not headhunting and they're like, of course I would expect that. You say, but what I want to raise with you is I do a lot of advertising and I do a lot of like podcasting and I do a lot of media stuff.

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And if someone comes to me and says, Hey, I know you work with our company, but I'm leaving, I say to them, my number one, and here's what I do. My number one port of call is just go, Cool, What's your issue? I listen and if I think that issue is silly or resolvable or important for the company to know because they can probably tweak it.

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I say, Look, let's not waste your time. Let's not waste my time or anyone else's time, go and talk to such and such and just table this with them. Don't be scared to do it. Go and have a chat with them and they should be able to resolve your issue. Now, one of two things happens one is the candidate goes okay and does it and they stay, fine, you go and tell your client what you did, they're going to frickin love you.

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And like, yes, you didn't get a candidate to place and a vacancy to fill. But trust me, you are weaving trust into that relationship. They're going to love you even harder and give you even more work. And that's what this is what we're here for the long term. But two, if the candidate comes back to you and says, ahh look, I had the chat of, I'm not comfortable, I just don't think they're going to be able to resolve it.

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a.) Fine, let's go b.) If it ever comes up, you can say to the client, I told them to come to ya, like what was I meant to do? And see, if they say, Well, you shouldn't have taken them or placed them. You'd say, Well, I couldn't exactly come to you and say, Hey, such and such is looking for a job.

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Imagine if you came to me and said, Hey, I think you know, you know me well, Could you find me something else? You wouldn't expect me to go to your boss and say, Hey, such and such is looking for a job. Would ya? No, I guess not. So I just say then, Look, my line is I'll never approach your staff.

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In fact, if they come to me through a channel, I'll push them back and say, try and resolve it. And if that's the case and it doesn't happen, I help them move on because it better be me. May as well be me as opposed to someone else. They're getting a job anyway they're

going somewhere. At least in that process I can have in the back of my mind, how can we help back fill this role?

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That's my stance on it. It might be different to other companies. Again, I'd love to hear what other people's take is on this because I don't know if there's a right or wrong. That's my ethical line. And I feel like being transparent with clients around my ethical line. So there is no grey. They appreciate it. I think they just want to know where they stand with you and they want to know that you are an ethical recruiter.

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12 months is my thing. If you don't plan to work with them, I'd be happy to go in 12 months after that, let's go for it. Yipee-i-a What am I saying? You're going to have to cut this, Jackie. That's all I've done for you today. I'm losing my mind. It's only three episodes in for today. I lose my mind.

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It's all I have to be today. As always, have an amazing day and may all your deals come true.

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