

GET THE JOB

Search Firm Basics

The competition for corporate jobs is intense, from top manager positions to C-level leaders like the chief financial officer to company presidents and vice presidents. Standing out might require an executive search firm.

HOW THEY WORK

No one gets into management without years of dedication and an impressive track record of results. But that won't save you from being caught up in a river of applications when one of these choice jobs comes open. At the same time, an intriguing job opportunity might go unseen. Executive search firms are hired by companies looking for the marketplace's very best talent, without regard to temporary unemployment, or whether or not they are actively seeking a move. In some cases, your placement is guaranteed with retained search firms.

HOW THEY STARTED

Search firms like these emerged in the 1960s, as



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manufacturers and financial-service corporations began putting a new emphasis on efficiency and organizational leadership. Accomplished executives helped drive inno-

vation, sparking new growth. But finding the right applicant proved to be a challenge. Search firms were founded to act as a liaison between talent and companies looking to fill

top positions.

CONNECTING WITH RECRUITERS

The nation's largest search firms are placing hundreds of

executives in new work positions annually, cementing their role in a fast-moving job market. Accomplished leaders with a strong presence on social media will be directly contacted by these recruiters, even if they are not applying for new jobs elsewhere. To potentially align yourself with a search firm, make sure that your professional social media pages are consistently updated with new details about professional development or promotions — and get involved in industry discussions.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

If you're contacted by a recruiter, it will be your turn to do the interviewing. First, discuss the issue of confidentiality. Executive searches and recruitment are often done when one or both of the positions in question are still filled. In fact, most candidates want to keep their involvement with search firms quiet, according to a report from Caldwell Partners. Next, ask about their placement success rate. Find out more about what led them to you, and whether they will negotiate on your behalf with benefits or salary. Once you know where you stand, begin selling yourself so that the search firm can in turn sell your candidacy to someone else.