

What is Executive Search?

When hiring senior executive-level talent (CEO, CFO, VP, etc.), a client (hiring organization) might retain an executive search consulting firm to help them find the right talent to fill the position.

These are a specialized type of management consulting firm that deliver extensive benefits beyond search including assessing an organization and its culture, assimilating a new leader for optimum success, and advising executive leadership and boards.

Search firms work with their clients to find top executive candidates who fill gaps in their organizational leadership. Search consultants offer industry-specific knowledge and expertise to ensure the most qualified and appropriate candidate is selected.

Executive search involves in-depth research, private networking, exhaustive screening and a methodically thought-out selection process to gain a prosperous outcome for the client.

The most critical thing to remember is that a search firm does not represent you, the individual executive (at least not until you are a serious contender for the position), but instead works for the hiring organization to locate the best possible individual for a particular role.

Because search consultants recruit for positions that are rarely advertised, they give candidates access to what might be termed a “hidden job market” of challenging, high-level, well-compensated positions. Incidentally, your pursuit of a new position also remains hidden; conversations with an executive search consultant occur in private and are confidential.

Relationships with executive search consultants should be established before you need them. If you think that it is probable that you will benefit from relationships with recruiters, as part of your executive career strategy, it is important not to delay making contact with them.

Don't wait until it's too late.

Why Clients Retain Executive Search Firms

Search Firms Help Clients

- Expand candidate diversity
- Locate talent with new in-demand skill sets (cybersecurity)
- Create succession plans
- Find new members for their board of directors
- Keep a search confidential
- Save money by making the right hire the first time
- Grow into new markets and industries
- Scale a company for growth
- Define changing executive roles and responsibilities
- Conduct talent assessments and reference checks
- Provide executive coaching
- Compete for top talent

This article was provided by BlueSteps. BlueSteps is the executive career management service of the Association of Executive Search Consultants (AESC). Boyden is a member of AESC. AESC's [BlueSteps](#) helps 100,000+ executives manage their careers, track their goals and elevate their visibility to the right search firms. [Get started >](#)