

THE EXECUTIVE SEARCH PROCESS:

A step by step guide to finding
the right candidate

Valuable advice for locating those hard
to find top performers

Sure-fire strategies for
conducting search research

Expert tips for
recruiting success

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About the Author

Welcome! As an experienced Executive Search Consultant with 15+ years in the business environment and cross industry knowledge, I have a wealth of information to offer you, the reader. I have recruited for organisations of all sizes: from start-ups to US Fortune 500 companies.

In the United States, I was fortunate enough to have worked for an established retained executive search firm located in the San Francisco Bay Area. This was a highly beneficial stage in my career as it showed me firsthand how some of the leading American professionals ply their vocation.

After almost seven years abroad, I returned to my country of origin and worked as a Senior Consultant for a boutique talent acquisition company in Perth, Western Australia.

My executive search assignment experience is across functional areas, mainly in the mid- and senior-management level positions.

Leveraging the executive search model and leading-edge techniques, I have a drive and determination to locate and attract high-calibre candidates that are the right fit for my clients' mission critical roles. This has propelled me into a rewarding career path.

My efforts are motivated by a commitment to a high standard of delivery and core values such as integrity, honesty, professionalism and mutual respect.

I am dedicated to providing people interested in the executive search industry the knowledge, the skills and some of the insider tools needed to establish themselves on the correct footing towards a successful career or business.

I hold a Bachelor of Social Work degree and Post Graduate Diploma in Business (Marketing), both from Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia.

I reside in the north coast area of sunny Perth, Western Australia with my partner and two children.



Inspiration

The spark of an idea to write a book came from a short article that I wrote for *Working Women Magazine*, published early in 2009 titled, “Tips from an Expert. Career - how to get found”. These were tips on building your external profile and can be found on my blog.^[1]

Working in a busy agency as a search consultant, there wasn't time to stop and dissect the process from the outside as client projects were always demanding my attention first. When I became an independent consultant I had the flexibility to deepen my interest in writing. Not one to sit back and wait for life to happen, I indulged my aspiration to update my skills with the latest in the search industry and created this book.

I started to pen a book initially for jobseekers, but then refocused to my area of expertise and educating others. There are already umpteen titles of books for job seekers but very few for search consultants or companies, so my writing, dare I say, may be viewed as groundbreaking.

Dedications

One of the things I have enjoyed about authoring this book has been the ability to take a closer look at the process and global industry of talent search. Without formal training in recruitment, I was fortunate enough to have worked with seasoned mentors, learned from those I worked with, attended seminars, read books, participated in online communities and researched online. To all: for your patience and guidance - thank you!

Thank you to my dashing handsome partner Jorge, who put up with my constant jibber jabber about the book and accepted my hermit like existence for several months (without complaint). He has the patience of a saint, the intelligence of a genius, the humility of a Buddhist monk and the wisdom of a sage. I am forever grateful for your support.

Since my other very important job in life is raising two intelligent, spritely kids, I must show my appreciation to them also. They understood (most of the time) when I said “Mummy is working”, which meant accepting a temporary lack of response to one of their demands or questions and leaving me to continue typing away at my computer. This book is dedicated to them and I hope creating it will benefit their life in the future.

¹ <http://shireendupreez.wordpress.com/how-to-get-found-career-tips>

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Finding that perfect someone - The purpose of the book

As an executive search consultant I am often asked by recruiters, hiring managers, candidates and business associates how I go about conducting a search process. I recently attended a networking function and was asked by a lively young PR professional, "**So how do you find someone?**" And my answer was resolute, "**You follow a proven process!**"

This book has evolved in response to the how questions, as well as an as an effort to help others with the tools and skills I use, by providing a comprehensive, easy to understand and useful guide.

This guide will enable you to conduct an executive search process yourself and therefore find the right candidate for a critical role.

Why struggle through months and months of anguish not finding suitable candidates through traditional recruitment means when you could read this guide which distils the best-of-breed ideas into short, sharp tools and tips.

If you are an agency recruiter, internal recruiter, researcher, HR manager, hiring manager, CEO or anyone in a position of hiring staff, then you will find this guide a powerful tool for your business or career.

Perhaps you are new to the recruitment industry, or are looking to start your career in searching out talent. With this guide, you will be able to work at peak performance by learning some of the research and candidate approach methods search firms use.

Use the guide as a tool or as a resource and benefit from the experience and ideas of those who have succeeded in this space.

This is not a “we sit in an ivory tower and only conduct executive searches for CEOs and board members” type of book. It can be used for any position that is tough to fill; from a technical sales executive to a medical specialist to a managing director. The search process may vary for each assignment, but is similar in method overall.

Where are all the books? The search resource vacuum

In my research for this book I was surprised at how little has been written for executive search practitioners. In the world of science, much is discussed, debated and published about the methods of discovery as well as the outcomes of the science. However, in the search industry there have been very few books on how search consultants go about doing what they do.

Further, on review of the top search consulting firms in the world, hardly any even explain on their websites the mechanics of a search.

Paradoxically, many of the publications written by executive search experts were aimed at the job seeker market – those people looking for work, not those finding great workers. Search consultants have turned their knowledge of the recruitment process into words of wisdom for folks on the other side of the desk time and time again, but not their fellow consultants!

In conducting my research, I felt I had a partial answer to the question as to why so few publications exist when I read this quote:

“HEADHUNTERS RARELY TALK TO EACH OTHER
BECAUSE OF PROFESSIONAL PARANOIA.”^[2]

² Levinson, J. C., & Perry, D. E. (2005). *Guerrilla Marketing for Job Hunters*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

By virtue of the nature of the industry, keeping one's cards close to one's chest is par for the course. Perhaps this is as a result of the type of work we do and the competitive nature of the industry. Confidentiality is paramount in our game. Hopefully this book will be a step in the direction of a more open dialogue about the how of the profession whilst leaving out the who to protect our clients and candidates.

Executive search can be a minefield for the uninitiated and inexperienced. You can wander aimlessly around the web looking for candidates and places to find them for hours on end, only to find a few candidates that are almost right but no-one with the exact background for your position. Conducting executive search research takes time; knowing where to focus your efforts, through a tried and true methodology prevents wasted resources.

Also, calling the wrong candidate or approaching them in an inappropriate manner can tarnish your professional reputation and cause you and your client embarrassment. Avoid these mistakes and become skilled through this guide. Don't settle for the pool of candidates that apply to your job advertisements, the veritable "post and pray" approach (post an ad and pray you get the right candidate). With this guide in hand, you can get the inside information executive search consultants have and do it yourself.



In this book you will learn:

- ▶ How to go about finding the right candidate, when other methods have failed
- ▶ To understand the full executive search process - no need to guess or live in the dark anymore
- ▶ How to develop your own search strategy
- ▶ How to avoid making common mistakes in the search process
- ▶ How to gain inside knowledge of the search process and keep your search firms honest
- ▶ To save time on research
- ▶ Strategies for finding the names of suitable candidates
- ▶ How to make a call to passive candidates
- ▶ How to increase the number of viable candidates you have at shortlist stage
- ▶ How to leverage your job advertising by being strategic with your ad placements
- ▶ How to follow a proven methodology to arrive at the offer stage with the right candidate
- ▶ How to fill that position for the client/hiring manager
- ▶ How to identify top performers
- ▶ How to save time improving your existing search process
- ▶ How to use the latest tools used in the executive search arena
- ▶ How to boost your income/billings/client base by building your track record

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