



Are Headhunters Doomed?

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Why Executive Search companies will continue to partner clients in finding and attracting the best leadership teams...

Listening to the news recently, it was claimed that soon, like travel agents, estate agents will soon be extinct - thanks to the plethora of new websites like Tepilo, Sarah Beeny's site, billed as an "alternative way to buy and sell houses". Moreover, this "insourcing" process has taken on new impetus recently with companies seeking to reduce costs by cutting out the "middleman".

If we are losing travel agents and now estate agents from the high street, could recruiters be next? The answer is yes, some of them could.

Transactional recruitment *will* go online

I would argue strongly however, that it is only the *transactional* end of the recruitment industry, that is "no win, no fee" or contingent use of databases with little application of industry knowledge/client knowledge and expertise, which will fall prey to the current economy, aided by the increasing use of internet tools. For this to happen HR departments will need to develop capabilities in searching LinkedIn and other social networking sites and online databases for candidates to shortlist to save money in database fees. This could and indeed is already happening. But they will not replace the executive search consultant.

Why Executive Search is *not* doomed

In a market where so many people are out of work and so many are sending in speculative CVs, difficult to fill roles remain difficult to fill. There is a wide field to choose from and those expert recruiters who really know their subject are able to deliver a shortlist of the best talent available, without wasting the CEO's time in meeting candidates who do not fit the bill. Great candidates are also appreciative of the value good headhunters offer. As the link between client and candidate that maintains distance while also ensuring the pieces fit together, we can help get the right result for everyone.

Teasing out the very best, not just the obvious

Candidates sitting on internet databases or who openly make available their details on sites such as linked in are not necessarily going to make the best shortlist. As headhunters we have a clear responsibility to ensure we meet and select candidates who fit the brief. We take a detailed brief before we start the process, working strategically with the leadership team/CEO to agree the remit and the person profile, advising on what is and what is not achievable. Using our knowledge of the industry, sector, clients and their culture, we leverage our contacts which have been built up over many years to deliver a top quality result.

Who will survive?

Unquestionably, there is now an oversupply of headhunters. There will be casualties amongst those who do not work strategically or who do not put their clients and candidates first. The current economic turmoil together with increased use of internet technologies will spell the end for many tactical recruiters.

Only the best will survive - those headhunters who show real added value, with a great reputation, who consistently delight their clients and candidates.

A Word from the Partners

We hope you've found this piece interesting and useful, and we'd love to hear your thoughts on this subject. If you would like us to explore this subject in more detail, or if you would like to suggest other topics, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to working with you.

Best wishes

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