



The Cambridge Perspective

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Can Technology Replace Expertise?



From the introduction of the Internet to job posting sites, to CRMs and applicant management systems, to social and professional networking sites, new technologies are continually being introduced to assist companies in finding the best talent. Which leads many to ask the question: Why use an Executive Search firm when we have all these great new tools to do it ourselves?

Many people assume that executive search simply replaces the HR function in the hiring process, but the purpose of hiring an outside consultant to identify and secure the best talent is to mitigate hiring risk. New technologies may enable users to cast a wider net, but without experienced interpretation and assessment, they can exponentially increase hiring risk by “commoditizing” the process.

The cost of hiring the wrong candidate, in terms of lost productivity, profits and

reputation can be devastating, particularly in senior executive roles, so it's critical to find the right person the first time.



As executive search professionals, we know that frequently, the best candidate is not sourced from the client's industry or community, but from a referral or tip outside of the client's and/or the recruiter's original network or target specifications. Often, the most impressive candidates on the shortlist did not fall within the original job specification, but offered other valuable skills or characteristics that made it worth re-thinking the original criteria in order to recruit them. These candidates would likely be overlooked by a technology-focused recruitment approach.

An experienced search partner provides valuable insight and proven expertise in HR strategy, project management, recruitment, behavioural interviewing, skills assessment, compensation, and offer negotiation. All of

these diverse talents are leveraged on behalf of clients to ensure that the right people are identified, the most impressive finalists are presented, and the candidate with the right combination of skills, knowledge and cultural fit with the team is secured.

There are many important reasons to use a search professional:

Objectivity is a valuable, and often overlooked, aspect of partnering with a search firm for senior roles. The use of an external organization demonstrates that the hiring decision will not be influenced by internal politics or personal connections. It also reduces the influence of personal relationships on hiring managers, allowing the field of candidates to be honed by merit, not personal feelings.

Consistency is another benefit of executive search, ensuring that all candidates, both internal and external, are recruited, assessed and communicated with in the same manner. This also enhances the perception of fairness inside and outside of the organization.

Distance from the search can also be highly beneficial to the organization when researching and sourcing candidates, particularly for candidates who may be employed by competitors within your industry, and also for confidentiality when approaching candidates who are not “on the market” or seeking new opportunities.

The art of **Persuasion** is a critical aspect of the recruitment process. A seasoned executive search professional understands how to approach passive and happily employed candidates who may not be interested in considering a new role until

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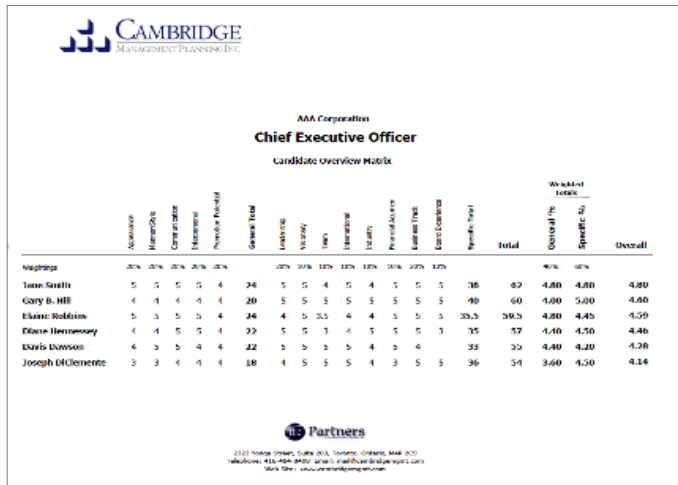
2323 Yonge St., Ste. 203
Toronto, ON, M4P 2C9
Phone: 416-484-8408
Fax: 416-484-0151
mail@cambridgemit.com
www.cambridgemit.com



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they learn more about its advantages. By acting as an advocate for your organization, helping to negotiate and overcome obstacles to moving, such as location or fear of change, a disinterested candidate can be turned into a motivated one.

Cambridge's Proprietary Candidate Assessment Matrix helps Selection Committees and Hiring Groups find consensus on the best candidate with a head-to-head comparison of weighted criteria.



Accurate **Assessment** is truly one of the core strengths of an experienced executive search partner. Insightful profiling of the requirements of the role, along with focused and consistent assessment tools can prevent misleading information from altering the course of a search in the wrong direction.

Cambridge offers clients an exclusive advantage in the recruitment process. Our proprietary **Candidate Assessment Matrix** provides an overview of all finalists on a criteria-by-criteria basis, to allow groups of hiring managers or committees to come to a hiring decision in a more efficient, less contentious manner.

Consensus is built through consistent measurement, weighting of specification

values, and a birds-eye perspective of the candidate field.

Psychometric Testing can be a valuable tool to affirm information gathered in a behavioural interview, but should never be

used in isolation. An experienced search consultant can provide perspective and insight into which tests are best for your purpose and how to interpret the results in a practical manner.

Reference Checking, when properly conducted by a knowledgeable professional who knows where to 'shine the light' can unearth highly relevant, useful information about the candidate's track record and personal history to help you make a better-informed decision.

Finally, **Public Relations** is often overlooked or undervalued when conducting a D-I-Y search. A well-executed search process can produce not just a successful hire for your current need, but also act as a marketing

and recruiting tool for your next search by enhancing the firm's reputation in the marketplace. A trusted search partner will promote your search with this in mind, working to protect your organization's reputation in the marketplace and helping to make it an 'Employer of Choice' in your industry.

Finding and hiring the best talent with the right combination of skills, experience and a compatible cultural fit is a difficult process, but one that pays for itself many times over - IF you do it right the first time.

Cambridge Management Planning provides a range of human resources consulting services, including pre-search team assessments and other recruitment support to assist you in "rounding out" your organization to successfully meet the challenges of today's global environment.

Call us to arrange a meeting, and we'll show you how we can leverage our 35 years of expertise in human capital management on behalf of your organization.

Cambridge Management Planning offers a full suite of services including Executive Search, Director Search, Interim Management, Executive Coaching and Career Transition services. Call one of our partners for more information:

- Graham Carver, President Ext. 203
- Elesha Browne, Partner Ext. 226
- James Hayes, Partner Ext. 209
- Rod Hower, Partner Ext. 207
- David Howes, Partner Ext. 210
- Kartik Kumar, Partner Ext. 225
- Chris Poole, Partner Ext. 205
- Peter Shrive, Partner Ext. 204
- Terry Wray, Partner Ext. 202

2223 Yonge Street, Ste. 203
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M4P 2C9
Telephone: 416-484-8408

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