



## Know Your Recruiting Options

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The search for a new executive for your credit union is challenging whether you anticipated the search or not. If you go it alone, the task can be overwhelming as you evaluate advertising and sourcing mediums, screening and interviewing procedures, and the candidates themselves. It is no wonder there are businesses that help with this task. When looking for a company to assist you with your search, it is important to know your recruiting options.

A **staffing agency** is primarily focused on assisting clients fill lower level positions such as tellers and administrative staff. Often these firms specialize in temporary or temp-to-perm placements and may also do high volume recruiting. While these firms do fulfill a need, their methodologies are concentrated on positions that require limited skills and will differ greatly from those used to attract someone with the sophistication necessary to fill a senior management position. For example, CEOs are not likely to show up at a job fair or look through the local want ads or a broad-based career website when considering a new opportunity. Attracting good management talent requires different methodologies.

A **placement firm** acts as the matchmaker between employer and candidate and provides services to both. Candidates are assisted with resume writing, career counseling and training in interviewing skills. While the matchmaker concept may sound good on the surface, it is important to note that firms of this nature have a dual allegiance; they are looking to serve both sides of the hiring equation. As an employer, you may not want a pool of candidates that has been coached and had their resumes tweaked by the same people who are looking to place them into your credit union. The agency may also have a vested interest in placing its own candidates as opposed to investing in recruitment efforts on your behalf.

A **contingency firm** is a recruiting company that charges a fee only if a candidate is placed. This value proposition is often attractive to organizations that are looking to contain costs, and contingency recruiters can provide some value to the cost conscious credit union. The nature of the contingency arrangement, however, is often designed to capture the “low hanging fruit” – those candidates who are actively looking for positions or are posted in databases. These firms may also represent individuals seeking placement. In many cases, the “easy to find” candidates fulfill the need. In other cases, particularly positions that require a more sophisticated skill set, there is a real need to reach out to those people who might not be in the market for a new position. This need increases as the requirements for complexity and strategic leadership increase. It is the rare executive who possesses these qualities and is actively looking for a position.

As the name indicates, **retained executive search firms** operate on a retainer basis. The allegiance of a good retained firm is always solely to the client and never to the candidate. This helps to avoid any conflict of interests and enables the firm to focus on finding the right fit. Retained firms are also very research oriented. While they will use a broad range of methodologies to attract candidates, they do not rely on finding jobseekers, but instead invest most of their time in finding those persons who may not be looking. Typically, a retained firm will partner with the client in a very consultative fashion. A thorough



understanding of the position and how it fits into the organization is the key to identifying the potential candidate pool and attracting the passive candidate.

Knowing these options can help you make an informed decision as you endeavor to establish a successful recruiting relationship.

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