Article, in part, as it appeared in Business Week October 4, 2005

Talent: Whether Born or Made, Executive Search Firms Find It

By definition, *talent* is in the eye of the beholder. Joe Reid, Chairman of Capitol Bancorp Ltd., defines talent as "the ability to accomplish objectives with minimal or no support." Vic Adamo, President of ProAssurance Corporation, agrees with author Jim Collins that talent is "building enduring greatness through a paradoxical combination of personal humility plus professional will." For other leading CEOs, another definition of talent is "the creative application of ability to achieve outstanding results."

Successfully finding top talent is not a roll of the dice or gut instinct. What it should be is a combination of carefully defined organization requirements matched to the available market of talented candidates.

"Successfully finding top talent is not a roll of the dice or gut instinct. What it should be is a combination of carefully defined organization requirements matched to the available market of talented candidates."

Whatever the definition, top talent increases an organization's success. In a recent study by McKinsey & Co., *War for Talent,* hiring high performance employees at top levels of management increased profits by 49 percent.

Identifying talent, therefore, is crucial to your competitive edge and will allow your organization to forge ahead to attain the next level of organizational effectiveness.

When hiring a key executive, ask these questions: Do we have the time and expertise needed to search out candidates, network for the best in the business and follow up with multiple prospects? Do we have time to sell top candidates on why the organization is the best cultural match to their skill set? Do we need an outside expert to bring integrity to the process? Most importantly are we critical enough of ourselves to consider candidates that take us beyond where we normally venture?

If your organization needs independent insight or can't devote the time and expertise, a *search firm* could be your personal "talent scout." They furnish a value-added link to the talent world and have an extensive network of unrivaled contacts. In today's environment of Web sites and cyber technology, local and regional firms can conduct national and global searches with the click of a mouse. Small boutique firms have the same advantages as the larger firms – so bigger isn't necessarily better.

When choosing a search firm, concentrate on their process including how they build your position profile, how they determine an organization's culture and the resources devoted to advocate on your behalf. Once a candidate is identified, do they assess candidates using personality and leadership instruments understanding what constitutes success in your organization? Finally, do they negotiate the final offer, which is when many searches fail?

"Time and again organizations set hiring parameters and use processes that produce the perfect average candidate. Taking a chance on someone with a glint of being gifted and perhaps out of the mainstream takes leadership and guts," says Senior Partner Tom Barnes from Varnum, Riddering Schmidt & Howlett, LLP. So don't leave your talent search to chance and don't hire an average candidate – hire a talent scout trained to find the best match for your organization.

For more information and other related topics, visit the Knowledge Center at www.hiringsolutionsllc.com.

HIRING SOLUTIONS LLC

Hiring Solutions LLC provides executive search services to clients throughout the Great Lakes business region. Firm President, Sandy Rich, has a wealth of experience recruiting top talent, and holds a Master's degrees in Labor and Industrial Relations from Michigan State University.

At Hiring Solutions LLC, each individual search begins with a careful assessment of the organization's short and long term goals, talent needs and corporate culture. A customized advertising campaign is developed using a combination of strategies and techniques to attract and recruit the very best candidates. All executive searches include a placement guarantee to ensure clients' complete satisfaction. Clients have come to rely on Hiring Solutions' expertise and comprehensive services to fill both middle and upper management positions.

Hiring Solutions LLC excels in executive search and placement, helping find and hire top management and executives. We locate top candidates through a variety of sources in order to ensure a strong cultural match.

Hiring Solutions' clients represent diverse organizations including manufacturing, finance and banking, insurance, health care, construction, and education. They serve small and mid-level organizations in addition to large corporate entities.

Contact: Sandy Rich, President

517 347-0590

www.hiringsolutionsllc.com