

Leveled Talent - Executive Search

June 2023

Leveled Talent is a people-centered executive search and talent support firm that focuses on placing leaders of color in executive-level positions across the country. Our clients deeply believe that racial and cultural diversity at the senior level is critical to get the best results and have a greater social impact. Our approach to Talent Management is with the mission of building strong partnerships with clients to understand their culture, people, and practices that enable staff to do their best, and organizations to accomplish outstanding results for students, families, and communities. Through a rigorous process, we work to identify strengths and support the development of human capital strategies, organizational development, and serve as a thought partner and advisor throughout the engagement.

Partnering with Contra Costa School of Performing Arts

Founded with the belief in fostering a culture of excellence with the core values of rigor, relevance, resilience, and relationships; The Chief Business Officer search will start with exactly that —the history and values of Contra Costa School of Performing Arts. In every engagement, we emphasize the importance of diverse talent strategies, inclusive processes, and lasting results. The work of Leveled Talent begins with a thoughtful clarification of the competencies required for the position you seek and a robust understanding of the unique context of Contra Costa School of Performing Arts. The goal is a hands-on and high-touch approach. Every search has a focus on organizational capacity-building, so that clients may replicate the search process in future searches beyond our engagement. At Leveled Talent, we bring a thorough understanding of urban school systems, nonprofits, CMOs and a dedication to having a positive impact on students and families.

Alignment to values and mission of Contra Costa School of Performing Arts

Leveled Talent has a deep commitment to equity, community, being data-driven, and excellence. Each Leveled Talent team member has worked in education and/or education-adjacent environments and has seen the power of a meaningful education. We understand our clients work hard toward their mission and we incorporate their values in interview questions, and assessment rubrics, and ensure that advanced candidates have a strong alignment with the organization model.

Our firm has a specific focus on diversifying teams at the highest level so that executive teams model inclusion and reflect the community. Our team operates with a vision of leveling representation gaps across the county one hire at a time. Each search we engage in is approached by enhancing the client's ability to lead more internal searches that garner diverse hires. We work to build capacity with the board, hiring manager, and team members across the organization by conducting bias training, facilitating equity-centered debriefs, and providing safe spaces for feedback throughout the process. We show up as authentic leaders, we name when moments feel inequitable, and work toward finding better solutions. We care about getting the right hire, a person that can inspire, shows up as a learner, and leads with humility, and integrity.

Leveled Talent Network

Prior to starting Leveled Talent, our founder [Raven Woods](#), managed the CEO search work at The Broad Center, focusing on national recruitment of CMO, district, and state leaders at the executive level. Raven and the members of our firm have a wide reach specifically in nonprofits and public education. Growing up in Oakland, CA, and working in Atlanta, New York, Mumbai, Nong Khai, and Los Angeles, Raven has built critical partnerships and relationships with leaders who have a strong sense of community and a belief in excellence. We also believe in going beyond our network and often see a long list of leaders who are overlooked or simply committed to doing their day-to-day work and have not thought about their next steps. We find those leaders, and we vet, cultivate, and support them in engaging in our processes.

A few of our recent Charter clients have included: KIPP SoCal, Navigator Schools, Voices College-Bound Language Academies, Equitas Academy, E.L. Haynes Public Charter School, and CWC LA. Our searches have a wide range at the C-level, including CEO, Chief People Officer, Chief Equity Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director, and Chief Financial Officer.

Our Approach to Searches

- Our searches are grounded in equity and collaboratively executing an inclusive process
- We focus on hiring diverse leaders and leaders of color for executive positions
- We start each engagement with a cultural assessment, consisting of individual conversations with 5-8 key stakeholders and the board OR 2-4 group sessions with internal stakeholders and a parent engagement
- Our team has weekly check-ins with our clients, and we share a sourcing document so that teams know where we are at any point in the search
- We provide inclusive hiring training if needed for all current staff, board, and anyone on the hiring committee
- Typically, our searches have a pipeline of over 100 prospects, both applicants and sourced candidates, with a goal of 7-10 first-round interviews, and 4-6 second-round interviews, resulting in 2-3 finalists
- We support candidates throughout the process by providing feedback and prep calls
- Leveled Talent has a leadership competency model that we utilize to select critical competencies and create questions and rubrics throughout the process
- We provide candidate debrief training and facilitate debrief meetings for all stages of the hiring process
- We try to be as flexible as possible to what is already working in your hiring practices
- A recruitment strategy is created for each search based on the market, salary, location, current representation gaps, and desired profile
- The majority of our work is proactive recruitment, and we engage with both passive and active leaders

Potential Full-Day Assessments:

Monday, July 17, 2023

Friday, July 21, 2023

*Additional Availability provided per request

The typical approach includes the following steps:

1. Broad Management, Candidate Profile, and Job Description

We review any job descriptions already created and facilitate conversations with key stakeholders to clarify and confirm the most important competencies required of the position, and those traits that contribute to a successful team culture within Contra Costa School of Performing Arts. Based on this assessment, we create/refine the candidate profile, explicitly describing the leadership attributes most important for the role. Our goal is to have every stakeholder have a full understanding of the ideal candidate and be able to describe the most crucial part of the role including any regional context that might be important for this person to succeed in the position.

2. Recruitment Strategy and Execution

Based on the role clarification, we will research the local and national market and craft a recruitment strategy, with recommended sources to recruit top candidates, and will develop a network contact list for personal outreach to help spread the word about the position and pursue recommendations of high-potential candidates. We will then partner with Contra Costa School of Performing Arts leaders and/or the hiring committee to build a pool of potential candidates and monitor the results of recruitment efforts.

3. Interview Scripts and Assessment Tools

In addition to designing the recruitment strategy, we will propose the steps of a screening process for the role and if needed, draft all interview tools. Decisions will include which internal team members and/or stakeholders should be engaged in the screening process, key roles in the interview process, and the sequence of steps from the first screen to the final hiring decision. This will also include the creation of performance tasks to assess the competencies required for the role. The purpose is to minimize bias at every step in the process and keep the process focused on assessing the skills most important for the position.

4. Monitoring of Talent Pool and Initial Calibration of Top Candidates

This stage involves monitoring incoming applications together with the client and will work proactively to ensure a strong pool of candidates. As part of this effort, I will meet with the hiring manager or search lead weekly to review progress and will provide reports with clear metrics to understand the strength and diversity of the pool and the

status of candidates in the process, including the number of candidates at each step (e.g. first screen, second screen, rejections, etc). We will carry out first-round interviews via Zoom and recommend candidates for second-round interviews to be completed by the hiring lead. Candidate profiles will be provided for interviewed candidates summarizing strengths, questions, and recommendations on whether to advance.

5. **Finalist Interviews**

Stakeholders at Contra Costa School of Performing Arts will facilitate in-person/Zoom interviews and debrief based on competency-driven interviewer feedback. I will continue to calibrate on desired competencies and strengthen pre-screening along the way until the client finds the chosen candidate and has an accepted offer.

6. **Knowledge Transfer**

We will engage in a debrief call following each search and will provide a final write-up to advise on which practices and lessons learned for this process can be applied to the organization's long-term approach to executive succession planning and hiring.

Summary of Outcomes Delivered in a Typical Full Search

- Discussion and confirmation of competencies required for the role
- Candidate profile and job description
- Documented recruitment strategy
- Documented screening process with supporting interview protocols and materials for each round of the process and drafted interview guides for stakeholder interviews
- Posted job description and proactive sourcing as broadly as possible to produce ideal applicants for the role
- Review and monitoring of incoming interest
- Materials and support for facilitation of finalist round interviews
- Post-search call, including sharing of search stats and lessons learned

Budget and Invoicing Schedule

We charge a fixed fee for **full** searches, with a total budget of \$55,000. Costs are inclusive of all expenses associated with the project, including a full day on-site or Zoom assessment. Work completes when a successful candidate is hired, which we expect will be within 2-3 months of the project launch, however, will continue until the search is complete. We propose the following invoicing schedule for the Chief Business Officer search:

- 20% (\$11,000) upon delivery of job description and recruiting strategy, estimated within 3 weeks of project start. Clients will be billed 30% of the first deliverable at the launch of the project (\$3,300).
- 30% (\$16,500) upon delivery/completion of the first set of first-round screens, and first set of candidates delivered, typically 4 to 5 weeks following recruitment launch.
- 35% (\$19,250) when second round screening materials are delivered and satisfactory delivery of the finalist candidate pool, typically 8 to 10 weeks after search launches, and runs through completion of the interview process.
- Final payment of 15% (\$8,250) when selection/offer decision is made, typically within 2-3 months, but can be longer.

Our clients have a strong commitment to social justice and the majority work in public education and nonprofits. We specialize in recruiting C-suite executives, Superintendents, State Commissioners of Education, Chief Academic Officers, COO's and CPO's and have close partnerships with talent teams in multinational impact-driven companies.

Read what people say about our work [here](#).

References available upon request.