

Going for the **Gold**

Five steps to finding the right executive for your medical group

By Rose Wagner, RN, M.H.S., FACMPE

Recruiting the right executive to your medical group is one of the most important tasks of any organization. Identifying qualified candidates is not an easy endeavor. While there may be an abundance of candidates, there are typically few with the requisite skills, demeanor, and experience. Partnering with an executive recruitment firm can be beneficial in this process, given their ability and expertise at both candidate identification and candidate screening. Typically, executive recruitment firms have developed a strong network and broad reach, so that they can capably attract top tier candidates for any search.

For medical group executive roles, whether in independent or integrated groups, it is extremely

important to partner with a firm that works specifically with medical groups, rather than health care in general, since general hospital or healthcare executives don't always make good medical group executives and vice versa. Having a sound understanding of and experience with the complexities and current challenges of the medical group environment will ensure your recruitment firm is seeking the right type of leaders.

Many times, a medical group search committee has a specific type of candidate or a specific background in mind—whether it is someone who currently has a like title, an individual from a similar-sized medical group, or a person in the same market. When organizations limit the potential candidates to such a degree, they

can eliminate candidates who would be exemplary leaders even before a search begins. By consulting with an executive recruitment firm, they can get reality-based guidance, as the right firm will have a very sound understanding of the actual talent pool and of the candidate's availability for the specific position. Many times, qualified candidates are outside of the group's too narrow focus, but available within the firm's network.

Being open-minded to diverse backgrounds, skills, and a firm's access to true talent is critical, especially when identifying candidates for high-level, complex positions. Examining these five steps before initiating a search will position your medical group for greater success in finding the right executive and the right fit for your organization.



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1 Define your culture.

What types of individuals have been most successful in your organization? What types of attributes do they possess? And, conversely, what types of individuals have not been successful in your environment? Think about your mission, vision, and values, as well as what key attributes are aligned with them. Are there components of your culture that need to change? Do you need a change-agent to usher in new aspects of culture or more of a maintenance approach that is consistent with your current culture?

2 Know and articulate your short- and long-term goals.

Different skill sets are needed for different phases of the life cycle of the medical group. Where your medical group is today and where you want to see it in the future will help inform the background and experience needed in your next executive. Again, the questions of how much change you can tolerate and at what pace are important.

3 Don't limit yourself to your local or regional market.

The right individual may not be in your backyard. In addition, you may not want to limit yourself to someone who is only familiar with your market. Instead, you may want to find someone who has performed well and has been successful in other markets and environments. For example, if your medical group is moving toward value, you may want someone who has been in a market that is further along in the shift from volume-based to value-based payment than your group.

4 Be willing to look at up-and-comers and individuals from different types and sizes of medical groups.

No one started at the top. Focusing on the skill set and past performance of an individual can



AMGA Executive Recruitment

In 2020, AMGA launched AMGA Executive Recruitment, a personalized service dedicated to finding experienced professionals for critical medical group roles, including CEO, CFO, COO, CMO, CHRO, CIO, and Vice President-level positions.

With AMGA Executive Recruitment, experienced consultants will help your medical group build a successful leadership team—recruiting the right talent to fill your financial, operational, and clinical executive leadership positions.

As former healthcare executives with decades of industry experience, AMGA Executive Recruitment has firsthand knowledge of the challenges facing medical groups across the United States, both in independent practices and in integrated healthcare systems.

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help you gauge if the candidate is ready for the next step in their career and if they have the background needed to be successful in your organization. Limiting yourself to only those who have been in the exact same role or within the same size medical group may eliminate good candidates who are ready for advancement. In addition, as organizations have a stronger focus on diversity and inclusion, they need to be open to, and consider, individuals who have different backgrounds and experiences and can be successful within their environment. Many times, up-and-comers may be better suited for ushering in change than candidates with decades of experience inside one or two different, stable organizations. Your executive recruitment firm can help to discuss such pluses.

5 Be transparent.

Share the good, the bad, and the ugly. Candidates need to know what they are getting into if they are offered the job. Limiting information up front can create a rocky start and could impact long-term retention. Rather, share the current situation and when interviewing, ask candidates what their approach would be to the situation.

Although there may be a plethora of candidates available in the marketplace for medical group

leadership positions, the way in which you highlight your group culture and articulate your goals will lead to greater success in finding the “true” candidates, who will be the right match for your organization. Being open to candidates who desire to advance their career and being receptive to diverse backgrounds and experiences will ensure that you have positioned yourself for the greatest success. 

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