



Let's get right to the point...

It's Time to Marshall the Right Resources

The business landscape may be shifting erratically but we can't keep changing our executive staff to accommodate it. What are the key qualities needed by leadership to navigate ever shifting conditions – to take us through these tough times, a repositioning, and later the inevitable opportunities for sustained growth?

We must be certain we have smart and agile leaders who can quickly adapt. IBM Consulting's 2008 Human Capital Study provides a pretty good yardstick for us to measure executives' long term fit. Do they each have:

- A varied business background
- Success in diverse economic climates
- The capacity to understand the future
- The make-up to manage uncertainty
- The resilience to tolerate turbulence

Add to these attributes business acumen and the talent to communicate and inspire. This combination of traits will define the leaders who will win in these times, and beyond.

“Looking at each of your company leaders as if they were external candidates for their jobs today, would you hire them?”

In light of what the times demand, consider what role each of your leaders needs to play. Your sales leader needs to be more than a schmoozer, and your finance leader needs to be more than a scorekeeper. Your operations leader needs to be more than a fireman and your human resources leader needs to be more than an administrator. Your legal counsel needs to be more than a hand wringer and your CEO needs to be more than a facilitator. Your Board needs to be more than a figurehead. In addition to expertise in their specialty each needs to understand and engage in the business of the overall enterprise. There is no other way for them to know if their functional contribution is the right contribution for the enterprise.

Looking at each of your company leaders as if they were external candidates for their jobs today, would you hire them? That may be a tough question to

answer. What does your answer, or your hesitation to answer, tell you? These are the people who must get the job done. Though they're good people, are they now the right people? If not, your options will be defined by whether you have:

- the time and resolve to transform the leaders you have into the leaders you need or
- the commitment to hire the right leaders or
- the capacity to run successfully with these positions unfilled
- and the fortitude to risk making any change; or no change at all?

This won't likely be a year for record profits, but it will be the best one to get positioned for the years that follow. Remember that you're not in this alone. Your customers, suppliers, employees, communities and creditors all know your strengths (and, whether you recognize it or not, probably also know your shortcomings). They also have a stake in your success and, if embraced, will be supportive of the actions you may need to take.

One TowerHunter client in a current CEO search explains that now is the right time for new leadership – “to take our business through a difficult year, re-position it for the upturn and come out ahead of our competitors”.

Copyright © 2009 Stanley H. Davis, TowerHunter Executive Search and TowerHunter, Inc. All rights reserved. sdavis@towerhunter.com

Through its nationwide presence and its European alliance, TowerHunter's six Principals apply over 175 years of collective expertise, working with our clients to engage great senior leaders in Manufacturing, B2B Services, Healthcare, Technology and Financial Services.

Call us to discuss your business:

Washington, DC, Providence, RI, Wakefield, NH: 877.234.7711

Phoenix, AZ: 602.652.8600

Pleasanton, CA: 925.734.8755