



Association of Executive Search Consultants

The Worldwide Association for Retained Executive Search Consulting Firms

Dear AESC Member

AESC Member/Client Survey: What is important to clients of executive search?

In our latest Member/Client survey, we asked clients to consider 17 different services or attributes of a retained executive search partner and rate their importance. We then asked AESC members to place themselves in their clients' shoes and rate the importance of the same items.

Response to the survey was substantial, with a global body of respondents from both communities. We received 184 responses from AESC members, 41% European, 33% from North America, 16% from the Asia/Pacific Region, and 10% from Latin America. 158 clients of executive search participated in the survey, 41% European, 34% from North America, 15% from the Asia/Pacific Region and 10% from Latin America.

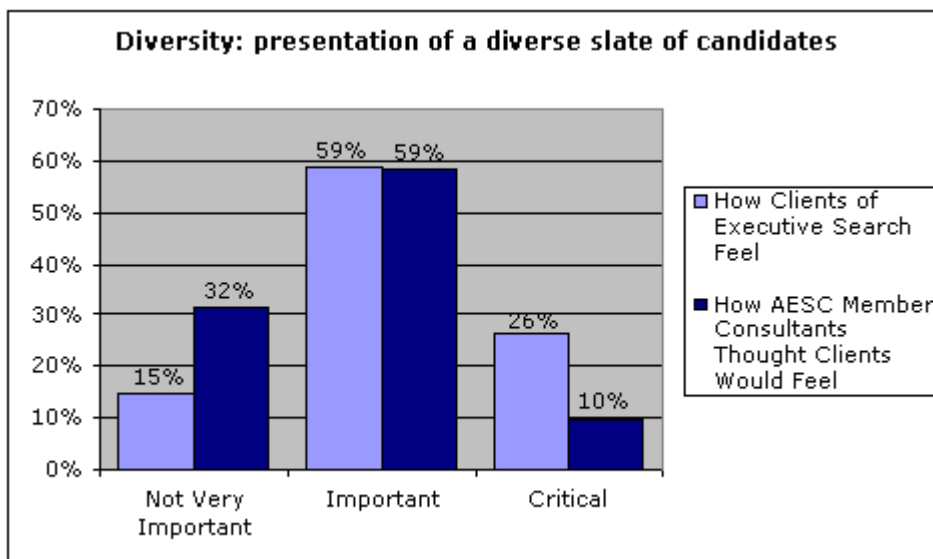
Client participation in this survey was bolstered by the participation of our strategic partner, HCI (Human Capital Institute), which sent the survey to their database of Executives who are clients of executive search, thereby doubling the number of responses we received from the client community.

The results show the differences, and similarities, between what the clients feel is important and what search consultants perceive to be important issues to clients.

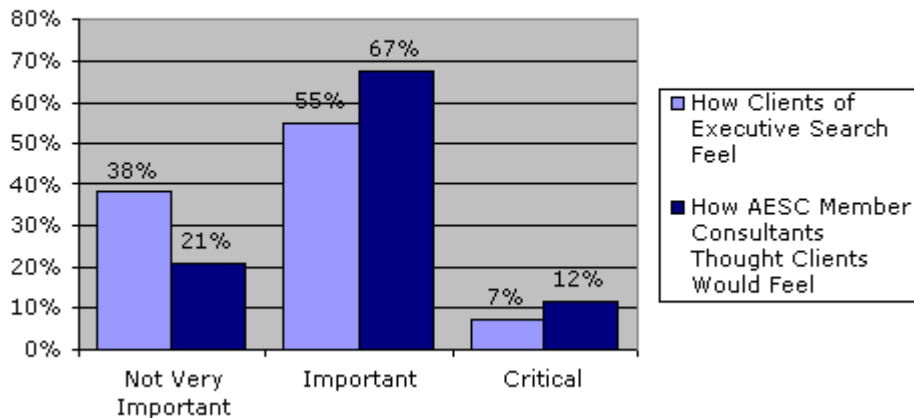
Some interesting points revealed by the statistic were:

- Diversity is even more critical to clients than AESC members knew:** Although about 60% of both search consultants and clients said that the presentation of a diverse slate of candidates was "important" to clients, the remaining 40% revealed a disconnect, with many of the remainder of clients saying diversity was 'critical' whereas AESC members expected more clients to rate the issue 'not that important.'
- Post Search Consultation, while relatively important, is less crucial to clients than search consultants thought:** 5% fewer clients said that this service was "critical" than members expected, and 12% fewer said the service was "important." Fully 38% of clients said follow up services were "not that important" – double the number of AESC members expected.
- Confidentiality is the most critical issue to clients, above and beyond what AESC members expected:** Neither clients nor AESC members gave any credit to the idea that confidentiality wasn't important (only 1% each checked 'not that important' as a rating). But four out of five clients rated the issue "critical", 14% more than AESC members expected. (AESC members rated "clear understanding of a client company's culture" as the most critical to clients, but it fell a few percentage points short of confidentiality).

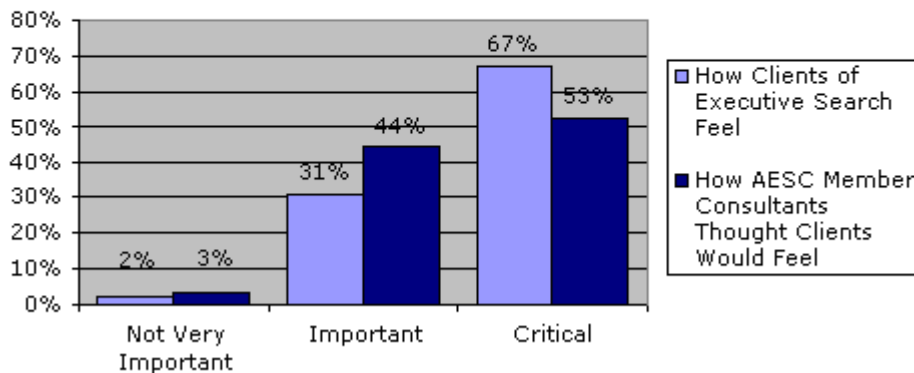
The seventeen points in question, with responses from both AESC members and clients of executive search firms, are listed below. Issues that showed the most disparity the two groups' responses begin the list, and issues where search consultant perception was nearly dead on with the clients' actual views come last.



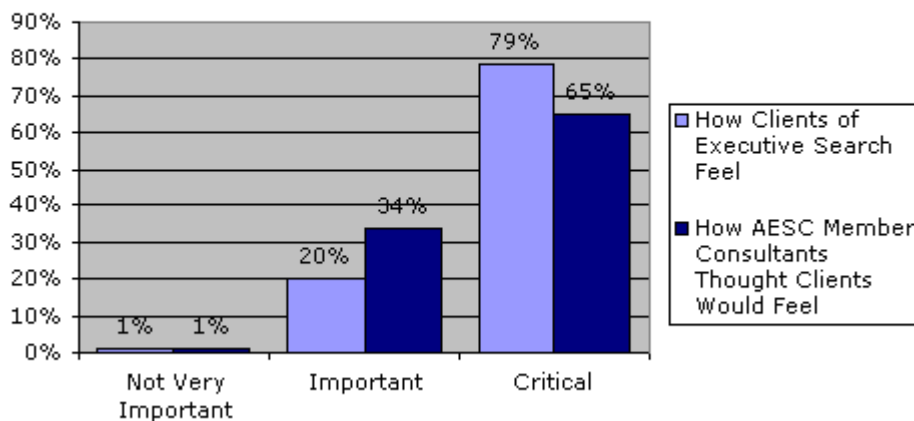
Post-search consultation at regular intervals with the client and placed candidate



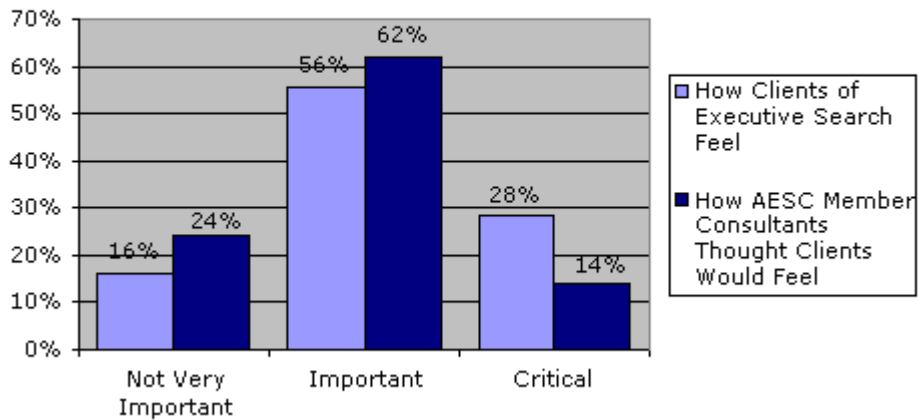
Market intelligence on the availability of candidates and comparative assessment of those candidates' compensation levels and how the client's company is viewed in the market



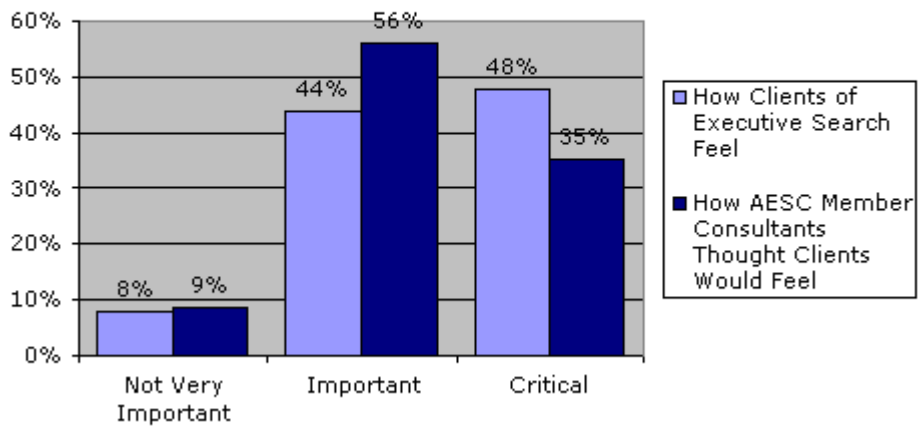
Confidential treatment of information exchanged during a search engagement



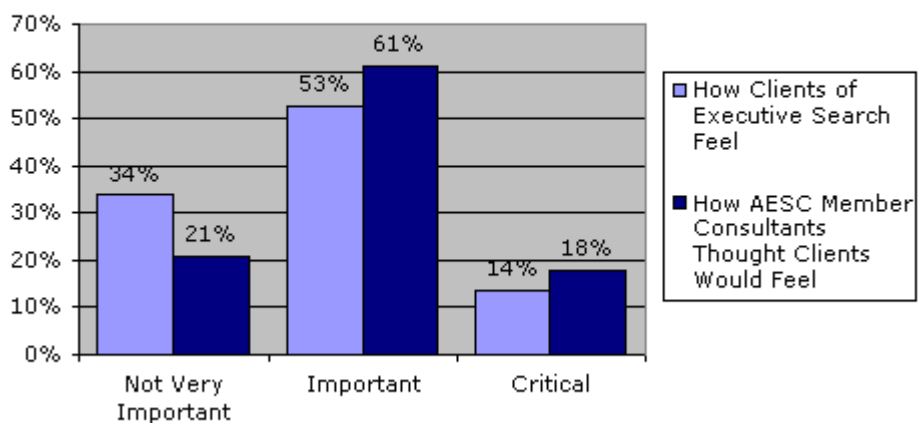
In-depth knowledge of technological qualifications required for a position



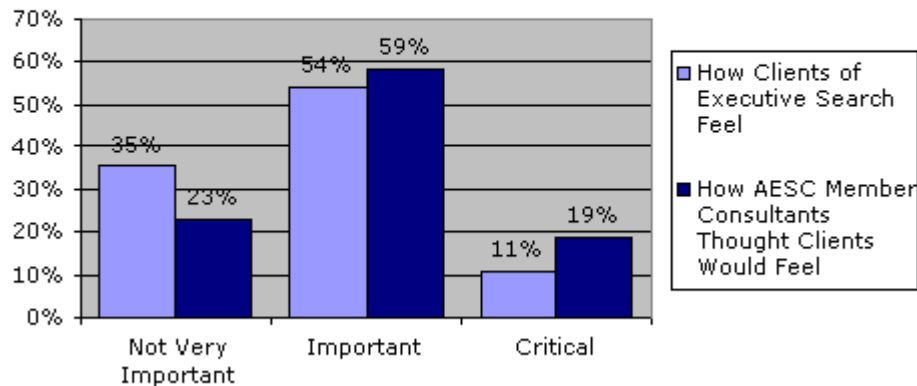
A guarantee that if the chosen candidate leaves within a prescribed period of time they will be replaced at no additional professional fee



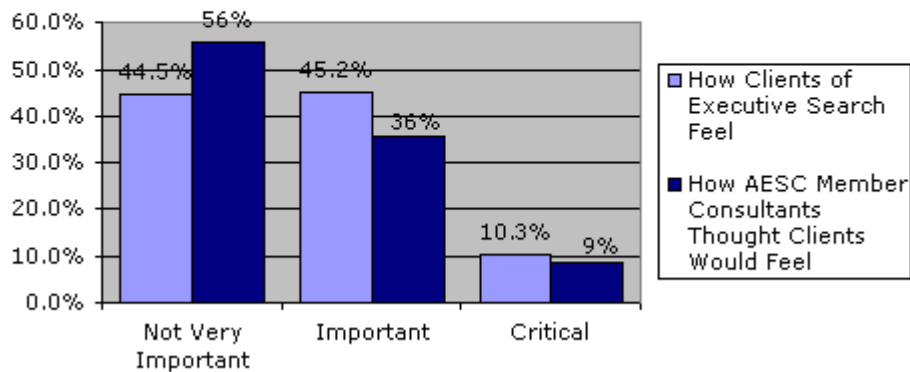
Assistance with structuring and negotiating an employment package



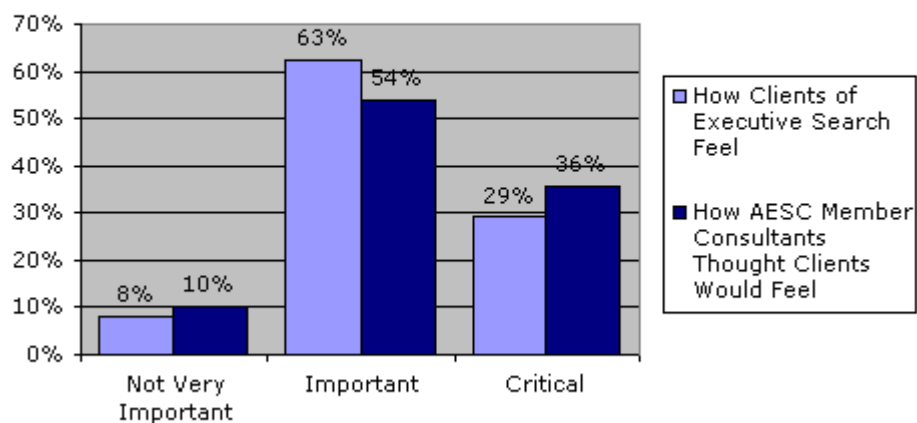
Benchmarking consultation to determine the level of internal talent vs. the talent on the market identifying gaps or areas of weakness in internal talent



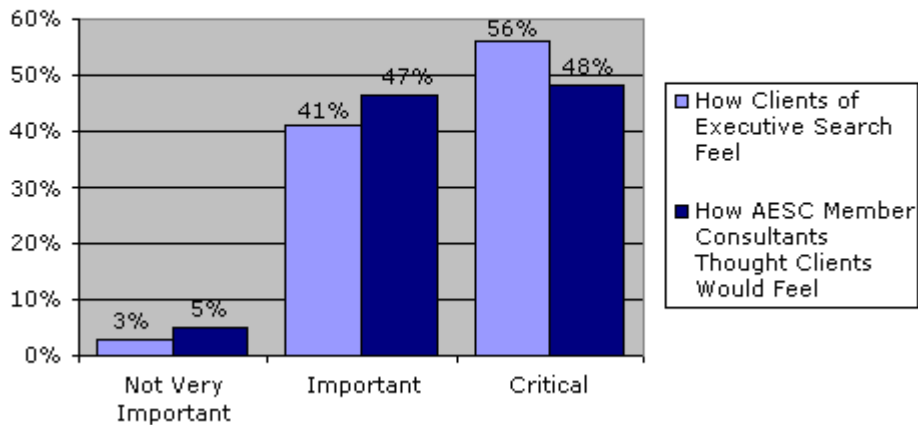
Proactive search of highly qualified candidates well suited to a client's organization on an ongoing basis regardless of whether the firm is currently retained for an active search



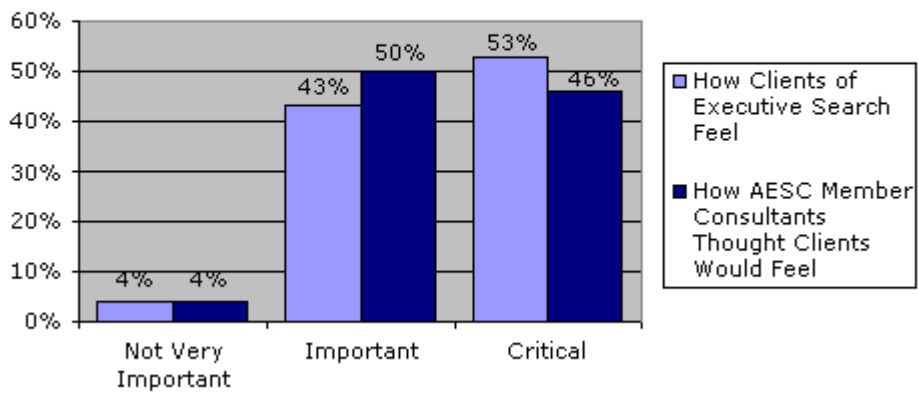
Provision of detailed written and verbal reports of each candidate's profile and assessment



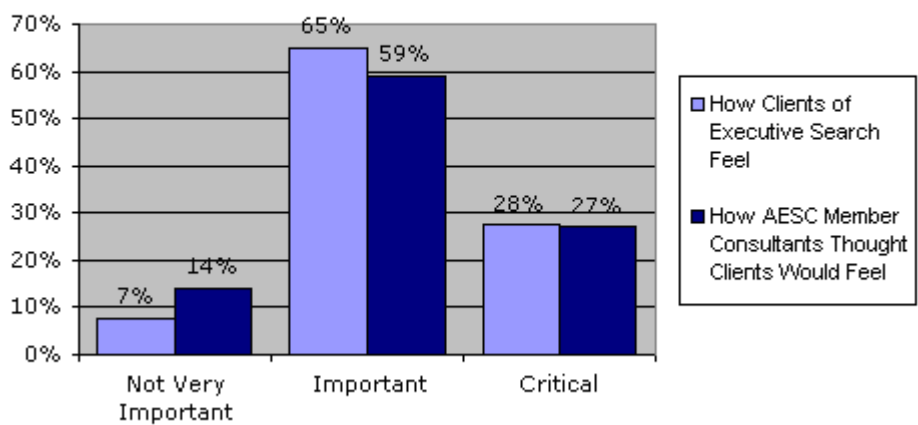
Comprehensive knowledge of the industry in which the search will be conducted



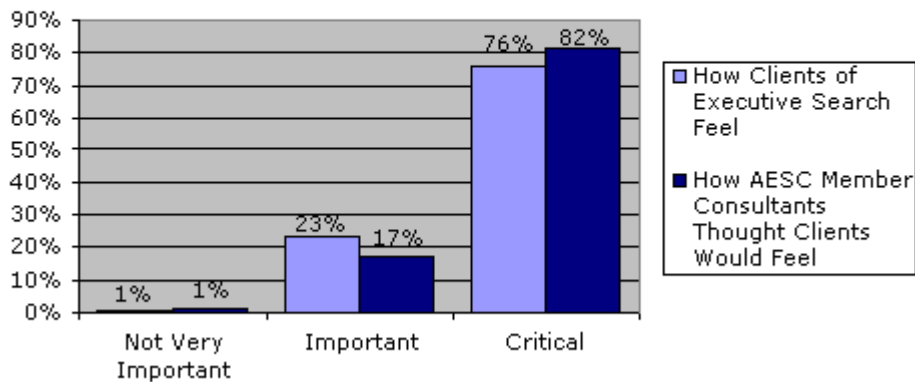
Close consultation with key decision makers both in initial analysis of the company's needs and in the process of assessing candidates



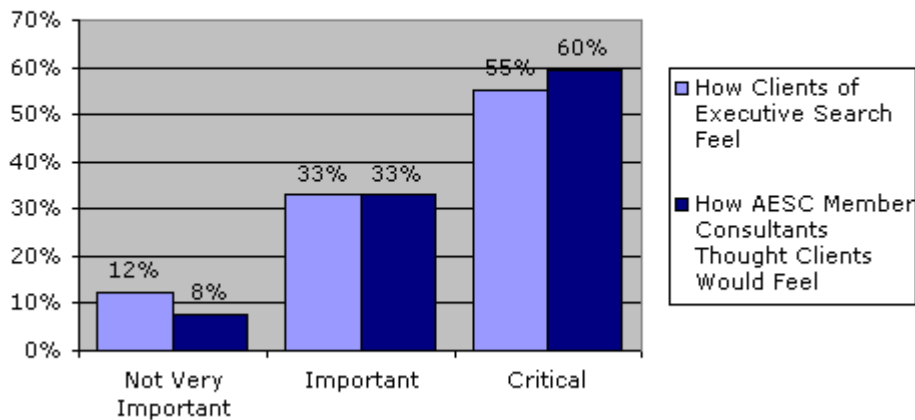
Regular detailed status reports of the progress of the search



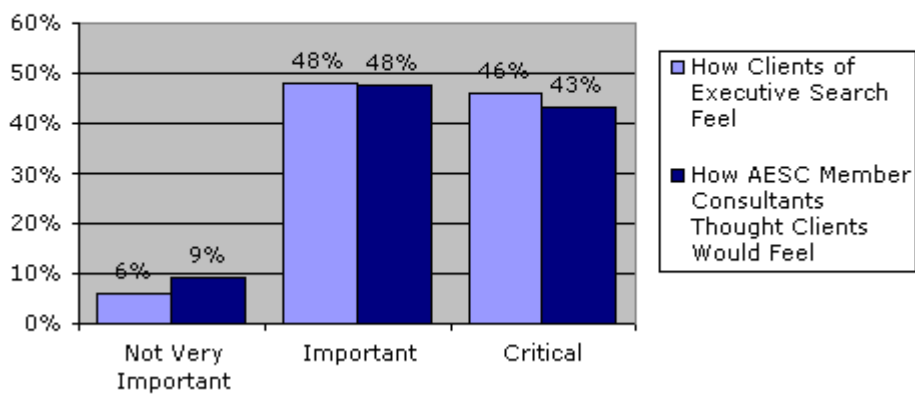
Clear understanding of client company's culture the position to be filled the required background and experience and competencies that are reflected in a position specification

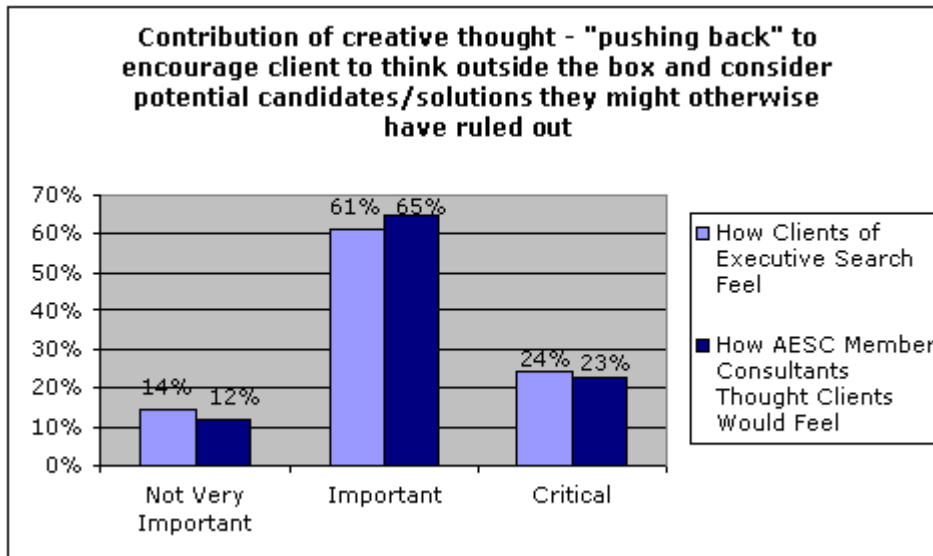


A policy of not recruiting from the client company for a prescribed amount of time after search is performed



Broad reference checking which reaches beyond career history into a candidate's competencies character and potential





A Special Workshop from our Partner, The Human Capital Institute



Sydney Finkelstein, Tuck Business School professor and author of the acclaimed book "Why Smart Executives Fail", will conduct workshops in Chicago and Washington, D.C. November 16th and 17th. This is a powerful topic for search professionals, the executives they place, and the clients they serve. You'll hear the stories of great business disasters and learn the specifics ways of how executives regularly make themselves vulnerable to failure. The result is a truly indispensable, practical course that explains the mechanics of executive breakdowns, how to avoid them, and what to do about them if they happen. Special pricing and underwriting opportunities are available for AESC HCI members. [Workshop Information and Registration.](#)

Best,

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