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Carpe Diem Global Partners

A Blueprint for Building Leadership Capability

The modern business landscape is a whirlwind of change. Agility is now the top behavioral competency requested by businesses. Staying ahead requires more than vision, culture, or ambition; it demands effective leadership. Specializing in executive acquisition, development, and advisory services, Carpe Diem Global Partners has a strong reputation for quickly and accurately building an organization's leadership capability.

In just five years, it has interviewed and assessed thousands of executives—from functional leaders to CEOs and board members—to help some of the

world's largest public and private companies build the capability of their leaders. The leadership development and organizational advisory arm excels in developing innovative approaches for screening culture, developing boards, accelerating onboarding, and linking leadership to the strategic direction of the business. Its commitment to driving measurable outcomes has earned Carpe Diem many accolades.

The firm's continued success is attributed to several factors, the main one being the expertise and operating experience of its in-house industry veterans.

"It's a combination of our collective operating experience coupled with best-in-class processes," says Jeff Defazio, founder and managing partner. "Working alongside executive search partners and leadership coaches, our clients continue to value the end-to-end solutions we provide for building their leadership capability. We get it. As former executive leaders, we have walked in their shoes and understand there is no silver bullet, but a range of tools, if acted on simultaneously, builds broader leadership capability."

This firsthand experience, along with deep insights into the internal and external dynamics of a client's business and market, coupled with its core values of transparency, accountability, and genuine collaboration, forms the strongest foundation of trust between Carpe Diem and its clients. This time-tested, unique combination of capabilities enables the firm to thoroughly understand how organizations operate, including fiscal objectives, cultural challenges, and internal-external structural shifts, to drive meaningful outcomes.

Filling Leadership Gaps Swiftly and Effectively

Carpe Diem's value creation goes beyond simply guaranteeing candidate quality. While many retained search firms offer a



Jeff Defazio,
Founder & Managing Partner

one-year guarantee, promising to replace candidates for free if issues arise, few address the importance of speed in the hiring process. In contrast, Carpe Diem provides swift service without compromising candidate caliber.

On average, it places candidates in just 34.6 days after the search begins, 80 percent of the time. As a result of its assessment rigor, the firm has never encountered the need to restart a search due to candidate underperformance or early departure.

Carpe Diem's curated pool consists of candidates from more diverse backgrounds than most search services offer. It even pioneered a candidate Net Promoter Score, an industry-first benchmark specifically for capturing insights on candidate experience throughout the engagement process, benefiting both prospects and the client's brand.

The level of speed and quality offered by Carpe Diem is crucial when placing CEOs and Chief Human Resources Officers. The model is designed to help its clients avoid financial setbacks and operational disruptions caused by prolonged leadership vacancies or underperforming positions.

For instance, a new CEO could increase the revenue of a \$500 million company by 10 percent, adding \$50 million annually, or about \$4.1 million every month the finalist is in the seat. For a \$75 million EBITDA business, a new CEO's 10 percent impact translates to \$625,000 each month. That's significant. The same approach can be applied to functional leaders. A CFO or Chief Marketing Officer might drive a 2.5 percent improvement in EBITDA, resulting in about \$1.875 million annually, or \$156,000 monthly.

This is the ethos of Carpe Diem. By partnering with executive search experts like Carpe Diem, businesses can secure high-impact, world-class leaders fast, fueling growth and enhancing competitiveness.

Speed Meets Quality

As an example, Carpe Diem's retained search expertise was recently put to the test when upgrading the executive leadership team of a Fortune 500 public organization. The firm was tasked with attracting, assessing, and retaining top executives, specifically a Chief Financial Officer, Chief Growth Officer, and Chief Human Resources Officer, to support the incoming CEO in charting a new course for growth. Team Carpe Diem stepped in, mapped the market, sourced, assessed, and benchmarked C-suite candidates.

They utilized psychometric surveys, conducted robust 360-degree references, and performed backdoor references to confirm their assessments. They also provided guidance and set expectations with the CEO, offering market feedback on candidates' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and provided support throughout the compensation negotiations and board engagement.

The result? The Chief Growth Officer finalist was identified in 27 days, the CFO finalist within six months, and the CHRO finalist within six days. Two of the three selected candidates were from diverse backgrounds. All three finalists remain in their roles today, averaging 5+ years. These results are one of the reasons why the firm has been selected as Leadership Advisory Firm of the Year.

changes, applying insights gained from previous clients facing similar challenges.

For example, Carpe Diem partnered with the board and CEO of a large retailer to address challenges in analytics, digital enablement, and customer experience—areas where the company was lagging. The Carpe Diem team developed an organizational structure aligned with key business metrics, particularly focusing on improving customer experience and digital interactions. They assisted in hiring a Chief Data and Analytics Officer and established clear accountability through functional reporting, data governance, and ownership of outcomes. The team also provided coaching and training on using data analytics for business decision-making and regularly reviewed performance against industry benchmarks.

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For us, the ROI of building an organization's leadership capability is measured through quality, rigor, speed, and impact. This ethos ensures a meaningful impact on a client's top and bottom lines, whether monthly or annually

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Core Values in Action

Complementing its retained search services, Carpe Diem's playbook includes innovative leadership development strategies and organizational guidance that drive measurable results. This addresses a common challenge clients face: consultants offering ideas without taking responsibility for outcomes. Carpe Diem is solving the accountability gap by evaluating its consultants and coaches at both the onset and conclusion of each leadership development project. Workshops are also measured.

"For us, ROI can be measured across all services. When done right, our clients experience firsthand that the ROI on executive acquisition, development, and advisory services becomes cost-effective and truly compelling," says Defazio.

The firm's efforts are highly beneficial for organizations navigating significant industry or technology disruptions, such as AI, or undergoing accelerated growth. Carpe Diem systematically guides CEOs and executive leadership teams through these

Similarly, Carpe Diem led an enterprise-wide leadership development initiative for a 3,000-associate company, beginning with the board and CEO down to the executive leadership team and middle management. The program included 360-degree performance assessments, 12-month coaching programs, talent reviews, succession planning, and the identification of high-potential leaders down to the director level. Carpe Diem ensured a strong leadership pipeline and the alignment of leadership performance with company goals at all levels. That's how its clients are using the firm to build enterprise-wide leadership capability.

These stories spotlight how Carpe Diem fuels organizational success while holding itself accountable with clear, measurable results. The firm weaves core values of transparency, collaboration, and accountability together with an emphasis on its organizational levers—people, processes, and performance. These are the reasons and evidence that drove our decision to name Carpe Diem Global Partners Leadership Advisory Firm of the Year. **HR**