



Higher Education

New Leaders for New Challenges



RUSSELL REYNOLDS ASSOCIATES



New Leaders for New Challenges

Leadership roles in today's colleges and universities have become increasingly demanding and complex. Senior academic leaders must balance the needs of numerous constituents—needs that require a cross section of skills far beyond the traditional set of scholarly and research accomplishments. Those who lead today's universities are CEOs of publicly scrutinized institutions with requirements to fundraise, balance budgets and satisfy numerous demands with scant resources. They compete for students, for faculty and staff members, and for rankings. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the average length of tenure in these roles is decreasing, and there is a growing need to attract and retain quality talent that can adjust to the unique challenges and aspirations of each educational institution. And while the senior leaders at colleges and universities contend with these expanded challenges, there is also growing demand for professional endowment leadership at many of these institutions, as pressure from today's capital markets makes meeting target investment returns increasingly difficult.

Russell Reynolds Associates' global Higher Education Practice is composed of a cadre of former senior university officers, tenured professors and professional university staff, along with traditional business leaders, who work together to guide search committees through an orderly, transparent and thoughtful search process to fulfill key leadership positions. We draw upon our firm's, as well as our own, extensive international network of senior contacts to create a dynamic and diverse pool of candidates for each search. We work collaboratively with large search committees of trustees, faculty, staff and students, balancing divergent interests while driving understanding and consensus. We strongly encourage search committees to speak with our existing clients to gain a true sense of our approach to executing these critically important searches.

“Change is never easy; contemplating leaving one institution you love for another you may not know can be especially hard. I was fortunate that Russell Reynolds Associates guided me through the search with a gentle hand and provided me with information, wisdom and respect. I remain grateful for the opportunities they showed me and the help they offered during the search and during my transition.”

– Brian Casey
President, DePauw University

“We at Bucknell University were extremely pleased to work with Russell Reynolds Associates. They were comprehensive, competent, careful and aggressive, which enhanced the pool and brought to the university an outstanding choice in Dr. Michael Smyer as our new provost. Russell Reynolds Associates understood its role and the importance of this search to us and behaved accordingly.”

– Brian Mitchell
President, Bucknell University



“Russell Reynolds Associates was our trusted partner in our search for a world-class college president. They took the time to understand our unique college community. The Russell Reynolds Associates team wrote and refined the job description, launched a nationwide search and helped us recruit an outstanding college president who is leading our institution to greater heights.”

– Sally Susman, Co-Chair
Connecticut College Presidential Search Committee



“My experience with Russell Reynolds Associates was very positive—from the professionalism of the team to the seamless working of the firm with the client and the support of the firm in ensuring that all my concerns and needs were dealt with. Everything was handled extremely well. I was also very happy with the level of transparency provided by the Russell Reynolds Associates team. They weren’t just trying to fill a job, they wanted to make sure it would work out—and it has.”

– Frank Brown
Dean, INSEAD

Our Proven Track Record

Representative successful higher education assignments include:

President and Provost of internationally recognized research university

President and CEO of a prestigious international research institute

Provost, Vice President of Health Sciences and multiple Deanships of AAU flagship state university campus

Vice Chancellor of Research and multiple Deanships of AAU state university campus

Provost, Dean of Medicine and multiple Deanships of AAU university

Presidents of small, private liberal arts colleges

Provosts and Deans of liberal arts colleges

Dean of a leading European business school

Principal of a constituent college of a large academic university in the United Kingdom

Principal and Vice Chancellor of a leading university in Canada

Chief Executive Officer of a non-profit educational institution in Asia

Chief Investment Officers for both college and university endowments and foundations

One Size Does Not Fit All

At Russell Reynolds Associates, we strongly believe that institutional fit is a key component for identifying and selecting the right successful candidate. Colleges and universities have their own distinct DNA, and the individual selected to play a leadership role must intrinsically understand and respect that what works well for College A may not resonate at University B. Whenever we execute a search, we begin with this premise.

While every search is tailored to meet each institution's unique culture, timeline and decision-making requirements, we work within an overarching structure that ensures high candidate quality and provides the foundation for an orderly, timely and successful search process.

Our Process

Each client we serve is unique, and the precise approach to conducting the search will vary accordingly. We begin the process of identifying candidates with a thorough briefing, to ensure we are completely aligned with our client in our approach and objectives. Subject to this discussion, we proceed as follows:

Introductory review—We begin with an in-depth review of the context of the search, the expectations of the search committee and other key members of the university, and pertinent factors that define the environment. This gives us a deeper understanding of both the aims and values of a particular university as well as the type of candidate who will be successful in the environment. At this point, we also agree on a precise date for the search committee interviews so that potential candidates can be informed of the likely timing for the process.

Position specification and qualification matrix—Our findings are distilled into a document specifying the position's responsibilities in detail, as well as the corresponding qualification matrix that serves as a benchmark against which potential candidates are measured. We will discuss with you any particular issues that would affect the search strategy.

Research and candidate identification and screening—Drawing upon our extensive database, engagement histories and network of contacts, we develop a list of qualified, viable candidates. If required, we place advertisements in appropriate publications (both online and hard copy). We have extensive experience in advertising senior roles and can offer advice on the most effective media to employ.

We screen and evaluate the credentials and experience of all those who respond to an advertisement. In addition, and most importantly, we actively seek out candidates with the leadership skills the university requires.

In our experience, often the best candidates are those who may not have been contemplating a move, let alone responding to an advertisement, but who respond to a reasoned approach from us.

Candidate evaluation and selection—We interview selected candidates in order to determine a preliminary degree of interest and fit. We prepare a long-list report of candidate files for your review that includes the curriculum vitae and our assessment of each prospective candidate and his/her market reputation. We meet all of those whom we include in this long-list.

Working closely with the search committee, we confirm the candidates to be interviewed by the committee on the agreed dates.

Referencing—For the final candidates, we conduct an extensive referencing process. If required, we can offer more in-depth executive assessment services for these final candidates, conducted by our specialist team.

These assessments, which include psychometric profiling, can be a valuable additional source of information on the candidates in this critical phase of the process.

Recommendation—Following the interviews of short-listed candidates by the search committee, we work with you to achieve a final recommendation. As appropriate, we continue to support the recruitment process through to the successful candidate's acceptance of an offer. We also manage the provision of detailed feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

Follow-up—It is our practice to remain in contact with successful candidates during any period between offer and commencement of a new role. Additionally, we will follow up periodically with you and the successful candidate to ensure that expectations on both sides are being met.

Diversity

The Higher Education Practice is committed to ensuring that in each search, every effort is made to recruit a diverse pool of candidates. In addition, the Russell Reynolds Associates' Diversity Practice draws upon an extensive track record and focused resources and networks to identify and recruit candidates of all demographics and backgrounds.

About Russell Reynolds Associates

Leadership. In today's ever-changing global business environment, success is driven by the talent, vision and leadership capabilities of senior executives.

Russell Reynolds Associates is a leading global executive search and assessment firm with more than 300 consultants based in 39 offices worldwide. Our consultants work closely with public and private organizations to identify, assess and recruit senior executives and board members to drive long-term growth and success. We value teamwork, serving our clients with a collaborative approach that spans our international network of sector and functional experts.

Our in-depth knowledge of major industries and our clients' specific business challenges, combined with our understanding of who and what make an effective leader, ensure that our clients secure the best leadership teams for the ongoing success of their businesses. For more information, please visit us at www.russellreynolds.com.

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