

WHAT OUR SEASON ACTUALLY MEASURED

35 searches aren't the story. 35 leadership decisions are.

Fall 2025 to Spring 2026: one search season, 35 completed searches. That's not enough to call it a study, but the patterns showed up again and again, closely enough that they're worth putting on the table.

OCTOBER 2025 – MAY 2026 35 COMPLETED SEARCHES

35

SEARCHES COMPLETED

8.1 wks

AVERAGE TO FIRST SLATE

6.5 wks

LEADERSHIP SEARCHES TO FIRST SLATE

22.7 wks

AVERAGE EXECUTIVE SEARCH TO FILL

3

CLIENTS WHO RAN MULTIPLE SEARCHES

WHAT THE SEASON POINTED AT

The numbers point somewhere. Here's where.

THE HANDOFF

The handoff is here.

#1 search this season The top seat — ED & CEO roles outnumbered every other category combined.

That tracks with a wave the sector has been bracing for: founder and long-tenured-leader transitions arriving more or less at once. When the person who built or stabilized an organization steps away, **the board isn't filling a job — it's navigating an organizational moment.**

The profile that fits the founder rarely fits the successor. The organizations that struggle most are the ones hunting for a clone instead of asking what the next chapter actually requires.

THE REAL WORK

A patience problem, not a speed problem.

Across our searches, the funnel ran roughly twenty first-round interviews down to about two finalists — a nine-to-one cut. That ratio isn't achieved quickly.

Generating a strong field isn't the constraint. Rigorous discernment is: weighing each candidate against the role the organization needs now, not the one it needed five years ago. That evaluation takes the time it takes.

A board that asks for a tidy short list of three early in the process is often trading rigor for convenience, right when rigor matters most.

→ To Read: From Candidate to Placed Leader

- Pave HER Way Announces Irene Shih as Founding CEO
- Brianna Robinson Named President & CEO of Opportunity Junction
- KIPP St. Louis Welcomes New CEO Dr. Nathalie Henderson

THE HORIZON

The top seat takes longer than almost anyone plans for.

Our completed searches this season averaged **between five and six months to fill** — and leadership-tier roles moved meaningfully faster than CEO-level ones. The practical takeaway: succession is a nine-to-twelve-month horizon, not a fire drill.

SUCCESSION HORIZON

9–12 months · plan while the seat is still filled

ACTIVE SEARCH

– the search is only the tail end

The organizations that emerge strongest from a transition started planning while the seat was still filled — not after it emptied. Treating leadership transition as a standing capability, built before you need it, is quietly becoming one of the clearest dividing lines between organizations that compound momentum and ones that keep resetting it.

→ To Read: The Importance of Succession Planning for Mission Driven Organizations

WHO WE SERVED

Thirty-five organizations, across the mission-driven map.

Charter Networks

Education Nonprofits

School Districts

Foundations

Social Impact Organizations

BEYOND THIS SEASON

One season is a snapshot. The pattern is the proof.

Our track record across years of searches for mission-driven organizations:

95%

OF SEARCHES LED TO A SUCCESSFUL HIRE

80%

OF PLACEMENTS STAY 2+ YEARS

65%

OF CLIENTS RETURN FOR MORE

73%

OF PLACEMENTS IDENTIFY AS PEOPLE OF COLOR

70%

OF PLACEMENTS IDENTIFY AS WOMEN

Thirty-five organizations set up for success.

These aren't just placements. They're leaders who'll shape where these organizations go next. Thirty-five boards bet that the right leader is worth the rigor it takes to find them. If your organization is facing its own handoff, we'd like to help you make that same bet.

Let's talk about your search

Learn more about our work



CHRISTINA GREENBERG 
FOUNDER & CEO, EDGILITY SEARCH
Edgility Search is a women-owned, women-led firm.

