

Executive Search During The Coronavirus Pandemic



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In the current situation, we get a lot of questions from companies and candidates. We would like to answer the most common of them in this information sheet.

Are companies still recruiting managers in the current situation?

All of our mandates that started prior to the pandemic and the resulting restrictions have been continued. So far, none of the ongoing executive searches have been discontinued or interrupted due to the coronavirus pandemic.

However, we are observing that new executive search assignments are being postponed because companies have a considerable need for internal clarification and coordination.

Manufacturing companies are struggling to keep up business because of extensive and ever-changing travel restrictions as well as the closure of kindergartens and schools. In addition, there are the challenges arising from the partial switch to working remotely. Similar measures as in Western Europe are now also taking effect in the Eastern European countries, Russia, India and the Middle East, especially in Iran.

On the other hand, filling key managerial positions is sometimes urgent and cannot be postponed. This applies, for example, to the Country Manager, Country Director or Plant Manager positions. We therefore expect that companies will pursue such topics again as soon as the current situation has consolidated somewhat.

How are ongoing executive search assignments handled? Are personal interviews still taking place?

We currently refrain from personal interviews. Conversations with candidates and clients are conducted exclusively online, through phone and video calls. Travel restrictions as well as quarantine regulations make it necessary to avoid personal interaction. However, switching to phone and video communication does not endanger the successful execution of executive search assignments in any way.

It gets more complicated when it comes to organizing interviews between candidates and clients. Typically, the company representatives are located in the Western European company headquarters, while the candidates live in the respective target country - for example, in Poland, India or Russia. As long as cross-border travel is not possible, everybody is restricted to remote communication.

Initial interviews via video are common practice in international recruitment processes even in normal times, but the second round interviews are usually held in person, in most cases, at the company's headquarters. Neither candidates nor company representatives are usually willing to sign employment contracts without prior interaction in person.

Given the current implementation of travel bans, quarantines, and social distancing, in most cases, executive search processes are put on hold when they reach this point. At the moment, we can only hope that the travel restrictions will be lifted soon.

How will the demand for executives develop in your markets in the near future?

At this point, some companies are postponing their recruitment plans due to acute operational issues. However, the need for executive personnel - CEOs, General Managers, Senior Directors and Senior Managers - has not disappeared. Hence, recruitment processes will definitely resume as soon as the situation normalizes. We therefore expect the job market to pick up significantly in a few weeks or months, when companies start recruiting again.

For more information on current job opportunities, please visit our [website](#)