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Mining the Middle Ground

Presented by Integrated Healthcare Strategies
as authored by John Lenihan, Consultant

In the book, [Mining the Middle Ground: Developing Mid-level Managers for Strategic Change](#), author David N. Williams reported on a nationwide survey of companies that fell victim to the downsizing trend of the late 80s and 90s. Of the companies that downsized by removing middle managers, 66% found productivity declined, 49% found profits did not increase, and in 86% morale plummeted. In healthcare, middle management often provides the most important link between top management, operating staff, and patients. Yet this valuable resource is often stereotyped, overlooked, and left out of succession planning and key decisions – a potentially expensive and critical mistake.

In recent years, many healthcare organizations, including some of our clients, have made the difficult decision to downsize at the senior executive and middle management levels as a response to the current economic environment. Hopefully, we have learned from the experiences in prior economic downturns and staff downsizing that special attention must be paid to both recruiting and retaining strong leaders at the director level. Currently there are hundreds of position vacancies for directors in healthcare organizations across the country. These leaders are looking for opportunities where they can be a key contributing resource, valued for their knowledge, creativity, change leadership, and capacity to help drive strong results in quality, patient, and employee satisfaction and financial strength. In response to client need and demand, our MSA Executive Search practice introduced our MSA SearchDIRECT services. MSA SearchDIRECT consists of a team of experienced executive search consultants dedicated to providing a streamlined approach to director level searches.

Now is a prime time to take stock of who your director level leaders are and what you are doing to empower, cultivate, and retain these critically important leadership resources. Raise your sights, actively involve them, and be willing to make a change if they are not high performers.

If you do find yourself with an open director level management position and no internal candidates, we encourage you to approach the recruitment for these positions with the same professionalism, care, and attention to detail that you practice in executive recruiting.

About the Author

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About Integrated Healthcare Strategies

IHStrategies provides healthcare organizations with direct access to a comprehensive array of healthcare-specific services, delivered by professionals from the industry who understand the rigors of running a healthcare organization – from the lunchroom to the Board Room. Its client list is a “who’s who” of healthcare organizations including over 1,200 major healthcare providers, 1,800 hospitals and 700 independent and affiliated medical groups. Integrated Healthcare Strategies specializes in the areas of physician strategy and compensation, employee compensation, executive compensation, human capital solutions, labor relations, leadership transition planning, executive search, employee surveys, performance management and board governance solutions.

The MSA Executive Search practice of Integrated Healthcare Strategies has over 20 years of proven service in executive and director-level searches, and is exclusive to the healthcare industry. Clients have found the right CEO in our first slate presentation 100 percent of the time.