

# Hiring Insights

Grundmeyer Leader Services

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ADVICE STRAIGHT FROM  
THE CONSULTANTS  
LEADING THE SEARCHES



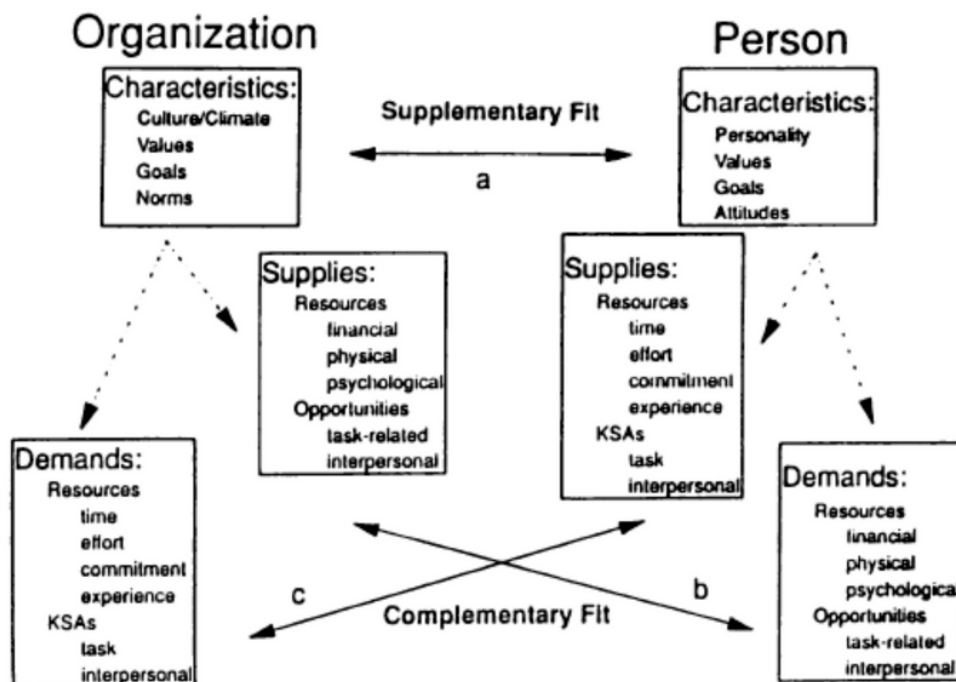
# Considering a job...

- Is your family supportive?
- How content are you with your current job?
- What are unique skills and experiences you can offer?
- What are you hoping to get in a new position?
- Are your skills and experiences a good FIT for the job you're considering?

**MAKE SURE YOUR FAMILY IS ON BOARD WITH YOU APPLYING.**

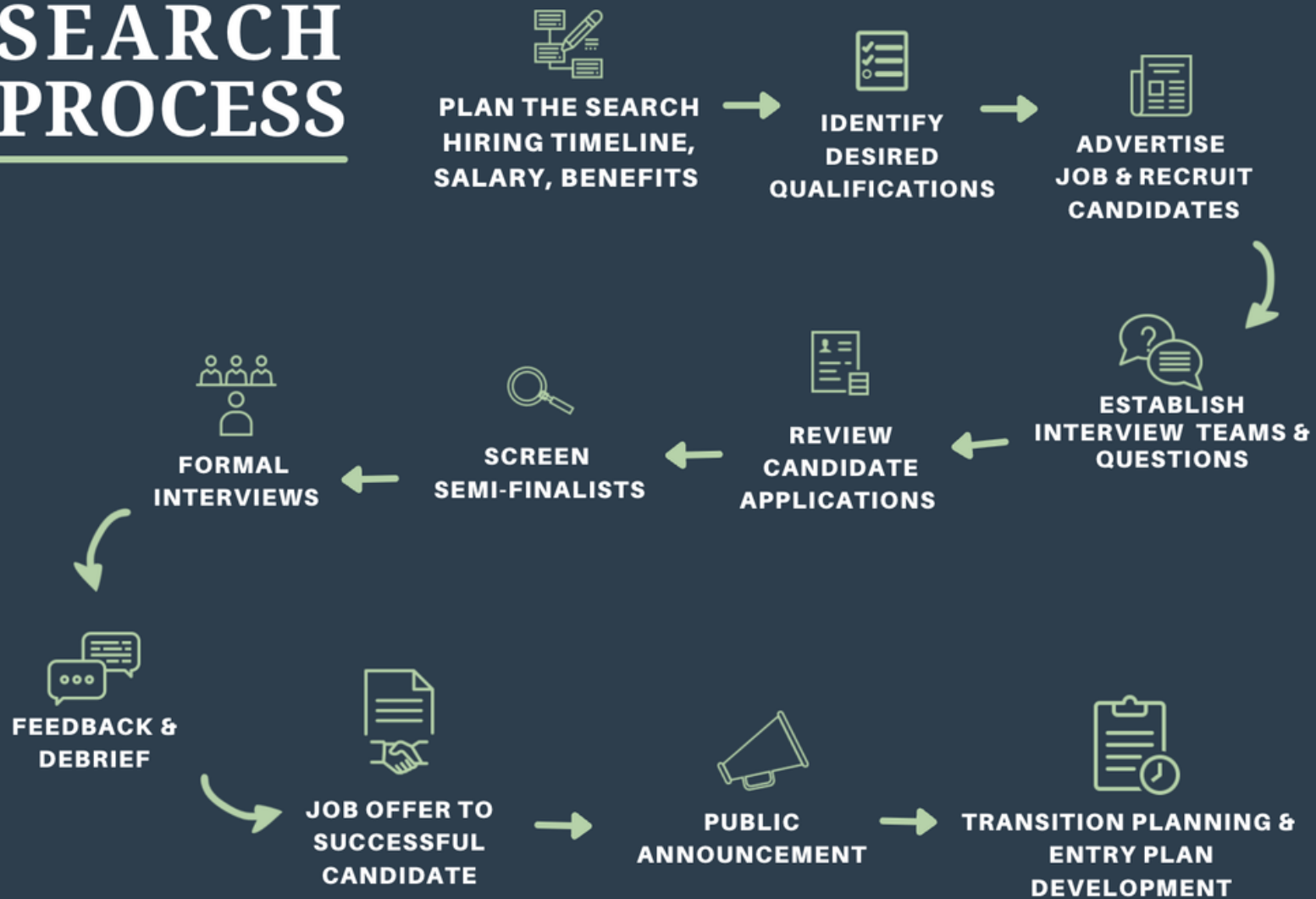
***"The best candidates are the ones not looking for jobs!"***

## IT'S ALL ABOUT FIT



*"Do your homework before you even apply. Know the district's data and consider a visit to town. Don't apply unless you are ready to pursue the position with everything you have."*

# SEARCH PROCESS



## Remember...

- A search firm is working for the school board
- Each firm has their own unique processes
- A search firm helps make the hiring more objective
- The consultant cannot share information from closed session meetings
- The search firm wants to land the top candidate for the board

**"An interview is simply a professional conversation. Be yourself and try not to get too nervous."**



**"The candidate's success is our success as a search firm!"**

# Cover letter....

"USE THE SAME HEADER ON YOUR COVER LETTER AND RESUME."

*Make the letters personal to the district to which you are applying. Talk about the great reputation of that school district and why you would be a great fit as their next leader to continue the legacy of that school system.*

- Focus the letter on desired qualifications for the job
- Keep it clean
- Don't just restate your resume
- Customize it to the district (mission, goals, key qualifications)

**"It's ok to call and ask questions about the position and application process before you formally apply."**

**"Make sure the cover letter does not have misspellings or is addressed to the wrong district!"**

## Resumes...

"Don't have a bunch of white space on your resume. Try to fit it on full pages."

- Headers are first perception
- Education section should be first
- Positive data gets noticed
- Community involvement is valued
- No gaps in employment history

**Review your social media accounts before you start applying for jobs. Most employers will check. Take care of anything that could be perceived as unprofessional. If something negative comes up, get ahead of it.**

## Choosing your references...

- Current evaluators
- Can speak directly to your skills and abilities
- Consider picking a reference to call/email on your behalf
- More references are not always better
- References are contacted when you submit your application

"Do your homework before applying so you can help the district see how you fit what they are looking for in a candidate."

*"Make sure the references you list will give you a positive recommendation."*

# Screening Interviews...

*"Practice answering questions in front of a mirror. You can find several superintendent of schools interview questions, so prepare with those in mind. If you are given questions in advance, have those answers ready and polished. Time yourself while answering those questions and work within your allotted time frames. Stakeholder survey responses might be made available to help you understand the needs of the hiring district."*

- Get comfortable with the technology
- Create a camera-ready space that's organized
- Check lighting
- Do some test videos
- Pay attention to energy and posture
- Look at the camera
- Master your introduction and expected questions

**"Be clear on what you want them to know during a short screening interview. The time is usually short."**

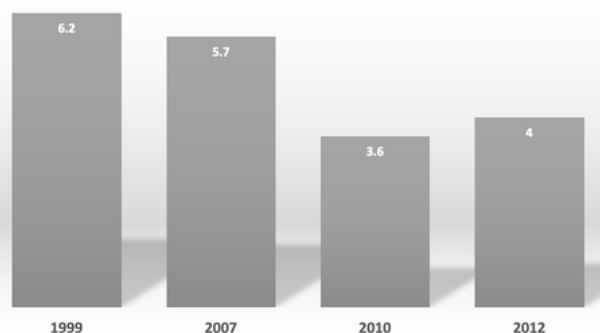
The smaller the district and the further away from a metro area the more important it tends to be for the school leader to move to the community. Candidates need to understand that."

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The tenure trending down since 1999 for superintendents across the U.S. according to data from:  
(Thomas, 2001)  
Glass and Franceschini (2007)  
(Council of Great City Schools, 2010)  
Iowa Department of Education (2012)

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**AVERAGE SUPERINTENDENT TENURE IN A DISTRICT**



# Formal Interviews...



- Know the schedule
- Know what they are looking for
- Know what you can offer
- Prepare artifacts
- Customize your entry plan
- Prepare questions for the district
- Leave it all on the table
- Anticipate certain questions & have silver bullets

**"IF YOU NEED TO PULL OUT OF A JOB, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A GOOD REASON... ESPECIALLY AFTER YOU ARE NAMED A FINALIST!"**

**IT'S ALL ABOUT CONNECTIONS!**

# Tough Interview Questions...

- Of the learning that takes place in a classroom, what percentage is the responsibility of the student and what percentage is the responsibility of the teacher?
- Our mission statement is... How does your philosophy of education align with our mission?
- How do you balance your personal and professional responsibilities?
- Describe a mistake you have made in the last year and what you learned from it?
- What sets you apart from other candidates?
- What decisions do you seek input and what decisions will you make on your own?
- What is the biggest challenge you have had in your life so far?
- What three things do you want us to remember about you as a candidate for this position?

## TOPICS TO NEGOTIATE MAY INCLUDE:

- **Salary**
- **Contract term**
- **Insurance**
- **Sick days**
- **Vacation days**
- **Cell phone**
- **Travel**
- **Continuing education**
- **Relocation allowance**

"Once in place, it is possible that the expectations of the board change, particularly if there is a change in the school board membership. Just as with a new superintendent, the restructured school board needs to make clear that the expectations may be different from the previous board. Doing so, with new or an experienced superintendent, will greatly improve the likelihood that those expectations will be met."

(Klamfoth, 2013)



"It is always a nice touch when candidates send a follow-up thank you after the interviews."

# Transitioning to a New Job...



- Take care of your family first
- Learn from the hiring process
- Use available resources
- Listen to outgoing leader
- Ask questions
- Be visible
- Have an entry plan
- Use first year goals for permission to learn

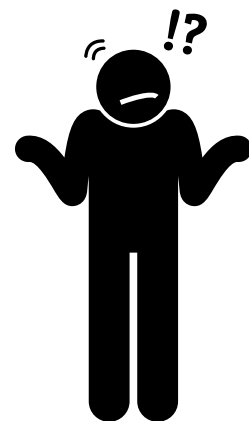
## TOP 3 EXPECTATIONS FOR NEW SUPERINTENDENTS (KLAMFOTH, 2013)

1. Act with integrity
2. Lead by Example
3. Communicate

**"The most important thing you can do for a smooth transition is to take care of your family and personal responsibilities so you can fully focus on the job once your contract officially starts."**

"BEING VISIBLE IN YOUR NEW DISTRICT ALLOWS OTHERS TO GET TO KNOW YOU AND MAKES PEOPLE LESS ANXIOUS ABOUT A LEADERSHIP TRANSITION."

"Have a plan to get started in your new role. This ensures you spend your time meeting with the right people and on the right work."



## Do NOT...

- Contact school board members or interview committee members directly before interviews
- Show up at school board meetings or school events without a clear purpose
- Badmouth your current district or supervisor
- Complain about the interview schedule or process

RECRUITING CANDIDATES LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY

TRANSFORMING  
EDUCATION

→ *One Leader at a Time*