

## 3 TRENDS: IMSA Search thoughts and predictions for 2020.

JANUARY 30, 2020 | NEWS



### IMSA Search Top Trends for 2020



How to navigate the executive search business in times of constant change, when employees search for values, not just salary. When top talent is scarce and the tension between the economy and technology is stronger than ever. Welcome to 20's decade.

Last year IMSA Search members published a list of seven trends that shaped the face of how executive search and global companies worked in 2019. This year we suggest three general tendencies because predicting what the future brings is harder than ever. Most factors depend on the local market situation and geopolitical conditions. These factors are changing rapidly for almost every country. It's possible to spot some long-term trends, but what the global market will look like in the next six months is uncertain.

**The velocity and intensity of political and economic changes in every corner of the world is a fact no one can ignore.**

"The globalization process of business strategies in many countries will continue. The number of international and local conflicts is increasing. The implications of a trade war between China and the USA will be vast and is difficult to predict. The list can go on and on" points out Jerry Chang, IMSA China.

The business environment is changing, companies need to engage entirely new tactics: "Re-designing the organization structure and – accordingly – recruiting the right talent in this volatile world will be one of the biggest challenges C-level executives will face." explains Rajaram Agrawal, IMSA India.

What do the IMSA Search specialists see clearly? Here are the three most essential trends the executive search market needs to be ready for in the new decade.

### #1 The tension between economy, technology and demand for soft skills

With difficult economic conditions at a local level resulting in predicting the future challenging, IMSA Search global experts can be sure that:

- **Digitalization is here to stay and will be a necessity for all businesses.**
- **People with highly developed soft skills will be desperately needed.**

"The following year will be even more tech-sensitive than the previous one. Companies will embrace technology in almost every branch of their business. Innovation will be used to drive better sales margins and most C-level managers are aware of this tendency" explains Jerry Chang, IMSA China.

"The increasing changing rate of the various business variables like technological advancement, geopolitical dynamics, changing consumer behaviour or employee expectations will keep the C-level top talent on its toes" adds Rajaram Agrawal, IMSA India.

"Technology evolves very quickly. That's why the demand for agility, emotional and soft skills will grow consistently across all industries. Flexible, creative, and agile executives will be able to upskill and quickly adapt to new emerging roles," concludes Marianna Carbonnari, IMSA Italy.

The tension between economic factors, digitalization and the lack of managers with strong soft skills will define the dynamics of business in 2020.

### #2 Candidates are dictating employment terms. Money isn't always the priority.

The highly specialized workforce is, and still will be, desirable in the labour market. In many countries where the unemployment rate is low, unique experts can effectively negotiate terms and conditions during the interview process.

"Surprisingly, the salary is no longer the main driver among candidates. They prioritize the challenges that the position will give them, the work-life balance and the company values. This matches reports stating that over 80% of millennials only what to work for companies with social responsibility" says Jens Christian Jensen, IMSA Denmark.

"Candidates invest a lot of interest in self-development. For younger candidates, additional training must be organized to fulfil their needs. People want to develop themselves in their new job further and become experts in their field," explains Patrick Van Lijsebetten, IMSA Belgium.

"Young talent know their value. The situation when a younger employee dictates the date of their holiday and forces the senior partner to adjust their plans is not a fantasy anymore," confirms Jens Christian Jensen, IMSA Denmark.

If it comes to searching for new talent, companies will inevitably need to look among the representants of the new generation of employees. "One of the biggest challenges we are going to face in the near future will be embracing the zGen and iGen into the labour market. They will bring in a new culture, expectations and communication channels. We need to find a way to mediate between them and older generations" said Jerry Chang, IMSA China

### #3 Both client and candidates are seeking for people with related values

"In today's world, the culture of a company is far more essential than the vacancy itself" points out Patrick Van Lijsebetten, IMSA Belgium. Not money, not perspectives. Values. In a world of fast hiring and firing, linking the client with candidates who share the same values is crucial.

"Candidates love to work for companies where the values are well defined. When the company stresses its values and looking for people who sincerely share these, the recruiter's job becomes easier. It allows for avoiding mismatches from both sides. The risk of choosing the wrong employer decreases and the client avoids hiring the unsuitable candidate" adds Patrick Van Lijsebetten, IMSA Belgium.

"Also, candidates are pickier about their next career step but also more prepared to take calculated risks. They want to join companies that have a social profile or purpose. Candidates are not afraid to ask for proof of those values. During the interview process, we need to be prepared for being asked for references on the line manager(s) they will be reporting to. The future focus will be on emotional intelligence, people want leaders rather than managers" says Jens Christian Jensen, IMSA Denmark.

### 2020: unsure reality

Tendencies chosen by IMSA Search members are showing 2020 as a year of technological changes and social tensions. Navigating in such an unsure reality may be difficult, but necessary, especially when looking for the new C-level leader. According to the Gallup survey, managers will be the soil of the labour market of the 20's decade.

The study "Why Manager Development is a Top Goal for Leaders This Year" by Adam Hickman highlights that: "Managers have a disproportionate impact on organizational outcomes – they influence at least 70% of your employees' engagement and teams that have talented managers realize a 48% increase in profitability, 22% increase in productivity and a 30% increase in employee engagement scores."

How to find valuable management in such a complicated and rapidly changing world? IMSA Search Global Partners are prepared to face that challenge and find top quality talent, embracing and taking into account all the challenges the 20's will bring.