

Engaging Search Firms in the Hiring Process for Division I Athletic Departments

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## **ABSTRACT**

NATALIE LUTZ: Engaging Search Firms in the Hiring Process in Division I Athletic  
Departments  
(Under the Direction of Barbara Osborne)

The trend of using search firms to assist in the hiring process for coaches and administrators has recently emerged in intercollegiate athletics. This study utilized institutional isomorphism for the theoretical framework. The purpose of this study was to explore the prevalence of search firms in intercollegiate athletics, pinpoint the reasons administrators cite for choosing whether or not to engage search firms, identify the investment associated with search firms, and examine the perceptions and experiences that Division I athletics administrators have with these firms. The response rate from these administrators was 24.96 percent. Descriptive statistics were tabulated, and t-tests, one-way ANOVA's, and a linear regression were performed to determine if administrators' responses were significantly different. Institutional isomorphism was found to be a factor in the decision, but several other factors were also present. The data collected provides a solid foundation of the current role of search firms in intercollegiate athletics.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

NCAA Division I athletics continue to grow, both in regards to revenues and expenses and in popularity across the nation. From 2008 to 2010, Football Bowl Division schools experienced a 15.9% increase in revenues and a 12.9% increase in expenses, while revenues and expenses at Football Championship Sub-Division institutions increased by 9.18% and 8.1%, respectively (Fulks, 2011). Administrators, coaches, and players are under tremendous pressure to succeed and are constantly searching for an advantage (Knight Commission, 2010). One trend that has become increasingly popular is the employment of search firms to assist in the hiring process of coaches and athletic directors (Doyel, 2006). Search firms, which have been used in the corporate world for the past few decades, require a significant financial investment, so it follows that decision makers must be ready to justify the expense of employing the firm (Parker, 2005). This signifies the importance of understanding and evaluating not only the services and benefits that search firms provide when assisting with the hiring of a coach or athletic director, but also the perceptions and experiences that other administrators within the intercollegiate athletics industry hold regarding these firms.

An article by Gregg Doyel of CBSSports.com in 2006 provides examples of colleges and universities who have recently employed search firms, as well as the often cyclical nature of the search firm engagement process. Missouri paid Eastman and Beaudine \$70,000, which led to the hiring of Mike Anderson. Both Indiana University and Oklahoma University engaged Baker Parker, now Parker Executive Search, for their searches, which

culminated in the hiring of Kelvin Sampson and Jeff Capel, respectively (Doyel, 2006). Parker Executive helped place Rick Greenspan at Indiana as the athletic director in 2004. So, Greenspan seemingly returned the favor when engaging them in his coaching search two years later. Another example of this cycle involves Mike Thomas. Thomas, the athletic director at Akron, used Eastman and Beaudine to hire a football coach in 2003. Eastman and Beaudine then were engaged by Cincinnati to hire a new athletic director, and Thomas was chosen as the right man for the job. Thomas then engaged Eastman and Beaudine to hire Coach Bob Huggins' replacement. The search produced former Cincinnati assistant Mick Cronin at a cost of \$50,000 (Doyel, 2006).

As mentioned previously, search firms have also been involved in the process of hiring athletic directors at various universities. The University of Michigan recently utilized consultant Spencer Stuart to assist with the hiring of their athletic director (Birkett, 2010). A spokesperson for the university stated that part of the reason for engaging this consultant was to keep candidates confidential. Mr. Stuart was responsible for “developing a search strategy, researching, screening, and evaluating prospective candidates, providing comprehensive reports on the most qualified prospects, and acting as a facilitator in the negotiation and reference-checking stages” (Birkett, 2010). Mr. Stuart was paid \$75,000 in retainer fees, \$25,000 in incentives, and \$23,545 in expenses. These expenses included \$7,621 for candidate background checks, \$2,779 for candidate hotel rooms, and \$2,319 for a banquet at the Hyatt Regency. The total cost of the search to the university was \$124,159 (Birkett, 2010). Ultimately, Dave Brandon, a former university regent at Michigan, was hired to become the athletic director.



The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill recently experienced the process of searching for a new athletic director, as Dick Baddour chose to step down in the final year of his contract. Two search firms presented their credentials to the thirteen-member search committee: Carr and Associates and Collegiate Sports Associates (Tysiac, 2011). Carr and Associates has assisted Duke University, Auburn University, and the University of Kentucky in finding an athletic director, while Todd Turner (head of Collegiate Sports Associates) was utilized by Kent State to hire their athletic director (Tysiac, 2011). Ultimately, Carr and Associates was chosen to present a list of candidates to the committee for a price of \$40,000 (Tysiac, 2011), and Tulsa AD Bubba Cunningham was eventually named the new Director of Athletics at UNC.

The Sports Business Journal wrote an in-depth article regarding the use of search firms in December of 2011. It was estimated that Division I schools conduct 35 to 45 searches each year with the help of an outside agency at a cost of \$30,000 to \$100,000 (Smith, 2011). Interviews with coaches, athletic directors, and search firm executives stressed the importance of added efficiency and productivity, maintaining confidentiality, and facilitating a process that is often seedy (Smith, 2011). Search firm executives discussed their major services, including working with coaches on interview techniques, meeting with coaches and administrators, collecting data to create a comprehensive database, presenting a list of candidates, and facilitating contact between the candidate and the prospective employer (Smith, 2011). Finding the “right fit” for a university was deemed paramount to the success of the hire, and the relationships and connections that these search firms have built allow for greater communication and access between both parties (Smith, 2011). In a survey of over 1,000 senior-level sports industry executives, 12% believed that utilizing

search firms was the next major business trend in collegiate athletics (Smith, 2011). Based on the growing number of search firms and the belief among administrators of their value, it seems this trend of engaging search firms is here to stay.

### **Statement of Purpose**

Some Division I athletic departments are paying thousands of dollars for the expertise of a search firm when hiring head coaches and administrators, but no research currently exists on the use of search firms in collegiate athletics. The purpose of the study is to explore the prevalence of search firms in collegiate athletics, pinpoint the reasons administrators cite for choosing whether or not to engage search firms, identify the investment associated with search firms, and examine the perceptions and experiences that Division I athletics administrators have when working with these firms.

### **Research Questions**

1. How prevalent is the use of search firms by Division I athletic departments over the past five years?
2. Why do Division I athletics administrator(s) choose (or not choose) to engage a search firm when hiring coaches or administrators, and how do the perceived benefits, risks, and drawbacks of engaging a search firm weigh in that decision?
3. How does the investment associated with engaging a search firm compare to the cost of conducting an internal search to hire a coach or administrator?
4. How satisfied are administrators with the entire search firm process, and how does that affect their likeliness to utilize search firms in the future?

## **Assumptions**

1. It is assumed that all respondents surveyed were truthful and accurate with their survey responses.
2. The completion of the survey is voluntary for all participants.

## **Delimitations**

1. This study is only representative of NCAA Division I institutions and cannot be generalized to Division II or III.
2. This study involves only NCAA Division I athletic departments who have hired coaches or administrators between 2005 and 2010.
3. This study only sought the responses from the athletic directors, senior woman administrators, faculty athletics representatives, and chief financial officers at Division I institutions.

## **Limitations**

1. Survey respondents may not be a representative sample of the Division I population.
2. Due to the voluntary nature of the survey and the resulting response rate, there may be a non-response bias
3. Survey respondents may not have knowledge of the answers to some questions and may answer inaccurately

## **Definitions of Terms**

Engage: To secure for aid or employment. This term is commonly used as a replacement for “hire” when discussing search firms.

Executive search firm: Type of employment agency that specializes in recruiting professional and managerial personnel for companies in various industries.

NCAA: The National Collegiate Athletic Association is a voluntary membership organization of colleges and universities that participate in intercollegiate athletics. The NCAA develops and maintains rules and regulations governing the athletic programs and activities of its member institutions.

### **Significance of the Study**

The financial stakes surrounding collegiate athletics continue to escalate at a rapid rate (Fulks, 2011). There is tremendous pressure associated with maintaining an elite athletic program while positively contributing to the university and community, and athletic directors are constantly faced with the struggle of how to increase success. Hiring the right coaches and administrators is of particular importance, especially due to the significant financial investment that these employees demand. Salaries and benefits accounted for thirty-three percent of operating expenses at the FBS level in 2010 (Fulks, 2011). Coaches, especially in Division I football and men's basketball, receive significant salaries and bonuses, including an average head coach salary of \$962,000 for men's basketball coaches and \$1,383,000 for football coaches (Fulks, 2011). In addition, athletic departments must also allocate funds to the actual process of hiring these coaches. More recently, a trend of utilizing search firms to assist with the hiring process for both coaches and administrators has emerged in intercollegiate athletics (Doyel, 2006).

This study aims to explore the current trends in the use of search firms by Division I athletic departments. Information related to the prevalence, perceptions, investment, and experiences that occur when engaging a search firm will be collected in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the search firm process in collegiate athletics. As this practice becomes more and more common, it is imperative for administrators to understand the

various dynamics that go hand in hand with engaging a search firm. By examining current views and experiences, a foundation of research may be established that can assist decision-makers if they are considering engaging a search firm.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

The following chapter will outline the existing literature regarding search firms. An overview of the search firm process, including current trends, best practices, and search firm categories will be given. Research regarding classifying professional service firms and the ways search firms position themselves in the market are also discussed. Relevant studies involving search firm use in the public and corporate sectors are outlined. Literature that involves the concerns and potential negatives that go hand in hand with engaging search firms are discussed, as well as the added value that search firms bring to companies, which indicates the somewhat conflicting opinions regarding engaging these firms. Institutional theory serves as the theoretical framework for this study by examining factors that influence the hiring patterns and decisions of various companies in the sport industry. As a whole, the following studies provide a foundation that will guide this exploratory study on the engagement of search firms in college athletics.

### **The Search Firm Process**

The practice of organizations engaging executive search firms to assist in the hiring process has existed in the corporate world for several decades and has steadily spread across a variety of other industries (Parker, 2005). By 1985, the number of executive search firms that serve private corporations had grown to over 2,000 (Ammons & Glass, 1988). Search firms promise to meticulously screen resumes, assist in developing a profile of various preferred various qualities and experiences, assemble a pool of candidates who fit this

profile, perform background checks on these applicants, and entice these prospects to interview with the search firm's client (Ammons and Glass, 1988).

Employment services as a whole have become increasingly popular in the last few years. Business and professional services are "one of the fastest growth sectors in economics worldwide, achieving double digit growth rates" (United Nations, 2004). The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 3.7 million people find jobs through employment services (Reina, 2010). It is estimated that 70% of all job openings are not formally advertised, and a large percentage of those that are not advertised are filled through employee referrals, personal networking, and executive search firms (Reina, 2010). Search firms are recognized as valuable sources of information because they have studied industry trends, salary levels for specific job titles, and the status and health of various companies. It is important for those seeking a search firms' advice to find a firm who has specific knowledge about that particular industry, who keeps up to date with the most current information, and who will talk honestly about their previous experiences and future goals (Reina, 2010).

Search firms are often hired to deliberately diversify management by adding someone outside the company who can assist in altering the chemistry, style and perspective of the company (Dvorak, 1982). These firms should be hired when the company cannot effectively complete the search, which normally occurs when those involved in the hiring process do not have adequate time and/or knowledge to complete the search. In some situations, the current leaders may have previously attempted to attract a new employee but were unsuccessful in their efforts (Dvorak, 1982).

An additional reason to engage a search firm is to preserve confidentiality when identifying candidates. Dvorak (1982) considers an executive search a marketing campaign,

especially if the executive being pursued is currently employed in another position and is not actively seeking employment. The search firm is responsible for “selling” the many attributes of the position, employees, and the company itself to potential candidates (Dvorak, 1982). The search firm must also have information regarding what the company desires, such as job responsibilities and authorities, technical skill and education, industry background, managerial skills and personal qualities, and compensation parameters (Dvorak, 1982). The search firm can then begin to gather background reports, references, and previous work results for each candidate that they believe could be a good fit. In regards to compensation, the search for executives normally requires paying a premium in regards to compensation in order to attract the most qualified and talented candidates. Search firms can assist both in the interviewing and negotiation process because they have the most familiarity with the candidate’s experience and qualifications, as well as the company’s resources and strategic goals (Dvorak, 1982).

Competent search firms look for talent who can support the employer today and contribute in the future as conditions change. Companies generally pay search firms a percentage of the candidate’s first year’s compensation package in exchange for attracting that top talent (Nazmi, 2006, p. 42). Two of best aspects about search firms are their confidentiality and an increased level of confidence that the candidates are suited for the position. The firms’ reputation would drastically decrease if they recommend an unsuitable candidate, so they are normally not willing to suggest a candidate that they do not have full confidence in, even if it would give them some immediate commission (Nazmi, 2006). Firms do thorough research and dig deep into the professional and personal lives of candidates to ensure that the person they recommend is of a high quality and has much



experience. In addition, search firms also offer candidates insights into the company and the current job market in order to give the prospect a sense of the job he/she would be completing (Nazmi, 2006). From the company's viewpoint, choosing executives from reputable companies through search firms legitimates the search process and produces defensible candidates (Hamori, 2010).

Bauman and Gelinne (1998) further outline the process for maximizing the use of outside consultants. Before hiring an external consultant, "buy-in" should be obtained from internal stakeholders. Employees in the company should be informed as to why the search firm is being utilized in order to decrease confusion and increase confidence in the management of the company. It is common practice to solicit three bids for each project. These bids should outline the cost of the project, timelines for completion, and "deliverables" (Bauman & Gelinne, 1998). The authors found that, in general, smaller consulting firms allow more opportunities for interaction and therefore quicker responses to changes in environment or any problems that arise (Bauman & Gelinne, 1998).

Once a particular firm has been engaged, it is of the utmost importance to outline a project agreement that specifies expectations, timelines, and fees (Bauman & Gelinne, 1998). A confidential disclosure agreement should also be signed, and often, a code of ethics is included to ensure that the consultant is indeed working on behalf of the client's best interests. The client should provide background materials that include essential information about the company, a goal for the consulting project, and anything else that could be of value. Approximately 80-90% of the information sought on various issues is available within the organization itself, but the remaining 10-20% is the reason why consultants are hired (Bauman & Gelinne, 1998). It is important for the client to maintain an active role in the

consulting process in order to avoid duplication of tasks, help speed up the work process, save costs, and improve the quality of the product. It is most helpful to maintain contact with the consultant who is directly involved with the project, as opposed to a project manager who may not be as hands-on (Bauman & Gelinne, 1998). Written reports with the consultant's findings are beneficial, and having a conversation regarding the findings can further supplement the quality of the project. Bauman and Gelinne (1998) emphasize that it is ultimately the responsibility of the client to evaluate the information provided by the consultants rather than simply accepting their conclusions at face value.

Hamori (2010) defines three types of search firms: contingency search firms target professionals and managers and are compensated only when a placement is made; temporary placement firms staff temporary projects; and executive search firms fill mostly permanent positions, target director-level and above jobs, and are frequently hired when a difficult-to-find executive position is available (Hamori, 2010).

### **Defining a Professional Service Firm**

A few studies have examined the common characteristics that professional service firms share. These studies serve to identify the basic qualities and attributes of professional service, and specifically executive search, firms, which is crucial to understanding how these firms operate and why various companies engage them.

Executive search firms fall into the broader classification of a professional service firm. A 2010 article by Andrew Von Nordenflycht focuses on defining and categorizing professional service firms (PSF's). The general lack of clarity and definition of this term has led to many problems. There is little research on professional service firms, and the research that has been done focuses on a small number of industries such as law and accounting. The

“asymmetry of expertise” between the consultant and client makes evaluating the quality of services performed difficult. It is also difficult to test existing theories for professional service firms because the term is so broad -- it is problematic to specify which types of firms should be analyzed by which theories (and if theories that apply to law firms would apply to firms in other industries). The central quality of a professional service firm is that they have a particular expertise or knowledge base, so they could also be identified as knowledge-intensive firms (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Von Nordenflycht developed three characteristics of PSF's: knowledge intensity, low capital intensity, and a professionalized workforce. It is not necessary to have all three characteristics to be classified as a PSF; rather, a PSF must have at least one of these qualities in some degree. A taxonomy is developed that, “varies in the degree of professional service intensity, which is based on variation in capital intensity and workforce professionalization” (Von Nordenflycht, 2010, p. 157).

The three characteristics of PSF's were chosen because they can be easily defined, they are considered distinctive characteristics, and they have been referenced in the literature as challenges to management or outcomes for organizations (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Knowledge intensity is considered the most fundamental and basic characteristic that distinguishes PSF's. Success of the firm relies on a body of complex knowledge that consultants have about a particular topic. This focus on people's intellectual skill can be deemed human capital intensity. There are two subsequent challenges that arise due to knowledge intensity. The first is cat herding, which is the problem of retaining, pleasing, and instructing the employees of a consulting firm (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Their knowledge and skill-sets give them huge bargaining power, and these types of people usually prefer to

be their own boss and dislike formal rules and regulations (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). The combination of those two factors makes managing this population challenging.

The second problem that arises with knowledge intensity is opaque quality, which is relevant in situations where the expert's output is difficult for non-experts to evaluate even after the project is complete (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Several mechanisms arise from this problem in order to signal quality and include bonding, reputation, appearance, and ethical codes. Bonding involves creating organizational features that ensure quality by enacting penalties for low quality work. Reputation is a common way to signal high quality, and appearance of the firm and the personal attributes of its employees is also a way to show competence. Finally, ethical codes require consultants to follow a set of rules and regulations designed with the goal of maintaining the client's best interests (Von Nordenflycht, 2010).

The second determining PSF factor is low capital intensity. This term points to firms whose production does not require great amounts of non-human assets or materials, i.e. factories and equipment (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). This means there is less of a chance to generate firm-specific capital because of the lack of nonhuman assets. Low capital intensity also reduces the need to obtain investment funds because of low capital requirements, so outside investors may not be needed (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). This indicates that all of the equity in the firm could be returned to employees in some form of compensation.

The final characteristic of PSF's is a professionalized workforce (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). There are three key features of a profession (Torres 1991). The first is a particular knowledge base, which was already captured by the concept of knowledge intensity. The second is regulation and control of the specified knowledge base such that the profession has a monopoly on the use of that knowledge base. The final feature is an ideology, which refers

to the codes of ethics and norms that govern appropriate behavior. One of these commonly held norms is that professionals have a responsibility to promote the best interest of the client, which goes against the general business norms of commercialism, competition, and self-interest. McKenna (2006) made note that management consulting firms have preferred to rely on firm-specific reputation instead of professionalizing by having a body that licenses and certifies firms, but they can still be considered professional service firms. Professional service firms often enjoy muted competition for the various reasons mentioned previously. This can lead to higher levels of organizational slack, inefficiency, and lower quality products (Von Nordenflycht, 2010).

Von Nordenflycht (2010) created a taxonomy of professional service firms that categorizes based on degrees of professional service intensity. Firms that meet all three characteristics have the highest degree of professional service intensity and are labeled “Classic PSF’s”. “Professional Campuses” are more capital intensive than Classic PSF’s and have a more specialized physical infrastructure. The third type of PSF has a non-professionalized workforce and is deemed a “Neo-PSF”, which is the best way to categorize management consulting firms. The final type is labeled “Technology Developers” and contains knowledge intensity but neither of the other characteristics (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Neo-PSF’s contain knowledge intensity, low capital intensity, face the problems of cat herding and opaque quality, and respond by using alternative compensation and having autonomy and informality (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). This study ultimately concluded that professional service firms all share similar types of distinctive organizational features, but the intensity of these features varies across different industries.

A study was undertaken in Australia that examined how professional services compete and position themselves in the market (Amonini, McColl-Kennedy, Soutar, & Sweeney, 2010). This survey sampled 37 senior employees at professional service firms. In-depth interviews were conducted with each and a content analysis was utilized in order to identify themes and patterns. The most important and frequently mentioned competitive positioning goals were related to a firm's ability to differentiate itself from competitors through long-term relationship building, service quality, value, and a brand with a strong reputation (Amonini et.al., 2010). These factors were the most important because of the people-intensive work performed by these service firms. PSF's require a great deal of client trust and credibility, so personal contact, personal relationships, and client interactions on an informal and formal are crucial for the success of the firm (Amonini et.al., 2010). These qualities are especially important in athletics, where the concept of "who you know" often becomes the most important factor in the job search process, and relationship building is often a prerequisite for success. When considering service quality, characteristics such as responsiveness, communication, competence, courtesy, and understanding were thought to be essential, and recruiting the best staff available was also mentioned (Amonini et.al., 2010). Value positioning was accomplished either through increasing the benefits offered (which goes along with a premium price) or lowering the cost of services. A positive, strong brand image was considered crucial for professional service firms because of the perceived risk of hiring the firm and the possibility of making an incorrect decision. Strong brand image was accomplished through traditional communications such as advertisements, press releases, and websites (Amonini et.al., 2010). While the current study will not focus specifically on search firms' positioning strategies in collegiate athletics, views and opinions of the administrators

who engage them will be examined. It will be interesting to see if the positioning strategies found in the Amonini study are also present in the world of college sports and if the administrators who engage the search firm recognize these types of strategies and communicate them in their responses.

### **Use of Search Firms in the Public Sector**

In an effort to analyze how search firms are employed in the specific industry of intercollegiate athletics, it is important to understand the previous literature associated with how search firms have been utilized in the public sector. The following studies each utilized a unique perspective and contained different goals for the research (Ammons & Glass, 1988; Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979). Taken together, these studies provide a fairly comprehensive depiction of the role of search firms in the public sector, although it is evident that additional research in this area needs to be conducted as current trends have altered the landscape since these studies were pursued.

Ammons and Glass completed a survey in 1988 that addressed the issue of executive search firms being employed in the public sector. The authors polled 116 chief elected officials and newly appointed chief executives who used search firms and 149 cities and counties from the remaining jurisdictions who did not use a search firm in order to analyze the two groups' opinions (Ammons & Glass, 1988).

Ammons and Glass also discussed the public sector's tendency to be more reluctant to employ the services of a search firm. First, salaries are often lower in the public sector, and the cost of a search firm is often substantial. Local governments may not have the resources to employ search firms or may not feel that it is worth the large investment in order to attract a quality candidate (Ammons & Glass, 1988). In addition, those in upper-level

management are often reluctant to use search firms because they believe that they have much more knowledge about the open position's responsibilities, challenges, and benefits than a search firm that may not be aware of these important issues. There is always the fear that a worthy candidate will be left out by a search firm if they do not meet some specific "criterion" or if the firm fails to identify them as a potential candidate at all (Ammons & Glass, 1988). Further objections include the possibility of a conflict of interest for the firm, the client, and the prospect. Others also assert that search firms may actually control the selection process and override the authority of those ultimately responsible for making the hire. Some believe that the hiring of employees is one of the most important tasks for those in management positions, and outsourcing to another firm is a way of skirting responsibility to another party (Ammons & Glass, 1988,).

The survey assessed attitudes toward the use of search firms in the hiring processes, and the responses did vary based on whether the interviewee had previous experience with search firms. Those with experience with a search firm mostly agreed that search firms facilitated communication between the candidate and the council and made it more likely that councils would develop a consensus regarding city needs, characteristics of the employee, and community goals (Ammons & Glass, 1988). Those who had no experience with a search firm were less likely to agree that the firms facilitated communication or assisted in developing a consensus regarding city issues, and there was a more divided response with more having mixed feelings or disagreeing (Ammons & Glass, 1988). Managers who had previously worked with a search firm mostly disagreed that the amount of control the council has in the hiring process decreased when a search firm is hired and that hiring a search firm was a breach of city council responsibility (Ammons & Glass, 1988). Those who had not



worked with a search firm had had a greater tendency to agree that the council lost significant control, but only slightly more of these people agreed that hiring a search firm was a breach of responsibility (Ammons & Glass, 1988). Overall, the results showed that those with previous experience with a search firm had more positive views and greater trust in search firms than those with no experience. Those without search firm experience were also more divided on the issue and had a wider variety of responses.

The survey also gauged the frequency of which search firms are being employed based on the population of the city or town. In 1986, cities with populations of 200,000 or more used search firms in every hiring decision. Those with 50,000-199,999 used firms approximately 50% of the time, and those with 10,000-49,999 employed firms 25% of the time. Overall, the larger the town, the greater the percentage of hires being handled by a search firm (Ammons & Glass, 1988). These numbers had steadily increased from 1978-1986, seemingly indicating that search firms are becoming more acceptable and popular in the public sector. Regional trends were also analyzed, and it was found that the Northeast and the West most frequently employed search firms, with the North Central and the South showing increases over time as well (Ammons & Glass, 1988). This is most likely due to those regions having the largest populations, which makes sense given the population data given above.

Ammons and Glass (1988) also found that four national firms dominated the majority of business in local governments, with these four obtaining 54% of the business in 1986. The authors also concluded that three factors contributed to the expanded presence of search firms. These include a perception of increased complexity in regards to hiring and managing the government, a bandwagon effect that indicates people are more likely to try something

once others have done it, and the increased marketing that leads governments to believe that “everyone” is using search firms (Ammons & Glass, 1988).

In 1979, Rosenblum and McGillis undertook an additional study that examined the role of search firms in the public sector. The authors identified several reasons that consultants are called in to assist the public sector. The first is the limitations on hiring civil servants. Even though the federal budget has increased, that is not necessarily the case for the number of employees. Congress often sets limits on the number of authorized staff positions in an agency, but funding for its various programs may increase tenfold. So, it logically follows that these agencies have to contract out in order to handle the increased workload (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979). The second reason for contracting out is the need for special skills that current employees may not possess. Evading Parkinson’s law is the third reason that consulting firms are engaged. Parkinson (1957) stated that bureaucratic expansion moves towards growth, expansion, and maximization. However, increasing personnel and positions are not necessarily accompanied by increases in productivity. So, even after a project is implemented and completed, the budget, staff, and workload continues to expand. Consulting firms are actually designed to perform specific tasks on a short time span, and the team eventually dissolves or re-forms in order to perform a different task (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979). Rapid project turnaround is the fourth advantage of hiring a consultant company. Specific deadlines are placed on projects, and consulting firms are willing and able to go the extra mile in order to complete tasks on time. Finally, it is assumed that consultants have assumed objectivity and are viewed as “disinterested third parties who can weight the issues in an area on their merits rather than in the light of political considerations” (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979, p. 221).

The procurement process for government contract bids is multifaceted. There are some who believe that the decision-making process regarding bids has little to do with the actual merit of the consulting firm. The fact that the decision making process is also costly and time-consuming may prevent some contractors from even submitting a bid. Another issue with the consulting process is that often times, stakeholders have varying ideas about what the major purpose, focus, and goals of the project should actually be (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979). Consultant projects also have extremely short deadlines, which can negatively impact the quality and meaningfulness of the results. Unforeseeable circumstances can also derail a project. Finally, political pressures can also impact the effectiveness of consulting agencies. The monitor of the contract may have his or her own self-interest in mind, and problems could arise if the results of the project do not align with the desires of the one who hired the firm (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979).

The type of task being performed, the time constraints available for implementation, the availability of alternative information sources, and the credibility of the consultant with the agency also influence the impact that consultants can have on various agencies (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979). The type of task performed by the consultants is possibly the single most important factor influencing impact. A scale is suggested, with hardware development tasks having the greatest chance for high impact, management assistance, training, etc. at the middle, and research studies having the lowest impact (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979). Since the present study is focused on management, it is important to note that the level of impact is predicated on the degree to which administrators are open to the changes and suggestions of the consulting firm. In regards to time, consultants are likely to have greater impact when the agency must act quickly because the information provided by

the consultant firm will be very valuable and timely. If other information sources are restricted, the influence of consultants will also increase because they in a sense have a monopoly on their area of expertise (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979). It is also beneficial when consultants have a positive (and long-standing) relationship with the association. Employees are more likely to trust and respect the recommendations of the firm if this is the case. From the consultants' perspective, firms who do not perform quality work can stigmatize the entire industry. This is partially due to contractors not keeping records of performance and the fact that firms are often hired based on personal connections or reputation and not based on objective criterion. Time constraints and unclear project outlines are cited as issues that can lead to budgeting problems and could be a reason why consulting fees are often different than originally agreed upon (Rosenblum & McGillis, 1979).

### **Use of Search Firms in the Corporate Sector**

The following section addresses the use of search firms in the corporate business world. These studies are valuable to the foundation of this study as they provide a starting point for comparison between the corporate world and college athletics.

The corporate world is well acquainted with engaging search firms. In 2003, the International Association for Corporate and Professional Recruitment (IACPR) estimated that search firms filled 54% of all positions with annual compensation above \$150,000 (IACPR, 2003). The Association of Executive Search Consultants reported that revenue in the employment services industry is growing three times faster than the United States economy overall (Association of Executive Search Consultants, 2008). Revenues from management consultants have risen from \$3 billion in 1980 to over \$150 billion in 2005

(Parker, 2005). Khurana (2002) found that executive search firms favor a highly visible and narrow group of executives.

Hamori's study utilized a database with 2,000 executives in the financial services sector to examine the influence of executive search firms in the hiring process (2010). Forty-four in-depth interviews were used to collect data. The first question asked involved whether or not the pool targeted by the search firms was different than a random pool of executives. The population targeted was highly educated, with 53% having a master's degree. Over 70% of search firm placements were in the level of executive VP, senior VP, and C-level (i.e. CEO, CFO, COO) (Hamori, 2010). The interviews conducted and the data collected showed that search firms first look at successful companies when identifying candidates and subsequently make lists of employees they believe are qualified based on their experience at those prospering organizations. Thirty-six percent of employees targeted worked for a Fortune 500 or Forbes 500 company, and these companies had higher Return on Assets and Return on Investment than the average company in their industry (Hamori, 2010). This indicates that executive search firms favor employees who came from firms with above-average financial performance and a positive overall reputation (Hamori, 2010). Search firms were shown to negotiate higher starting salaries candidates because of their negotiating experience and because their reputations for attracting the best quality candidates translates into greater willingness to invest more into the new employee (Hamori, 2010).

Hamori's study also analyzed the type of jobs that search firms candidates were placed. Search firms placed 54% of candidates into larger organizations, which was statistically significant with  $p < .001$ , as compared to 24% of executives who changed employers without the use of a search firm (Hamori, 2010). No statistically significant

differences existed regarding the candidate receiving a promotion in job title between executives hired with search firms and those who did not. However, 36% of placements did include a promotion and job change to a company of equal or larger size (Hamori, 2010). The most common type of move (31%) was to a larger organization without moving up the organizational hierarchy (i.e. a similar job title with similar responsibilities), but a significant 23% of moves facilitated by search firms indicated a step up in the hierarchy and a move to a larger employer (Hamori, 2010). One-fourth of the moves mediated by search firms involved lateral or even downward moves to a smaller or similar sized organizations. Candidates placed by search firms were no more likely than those not placed to move into a new job function, but placements were more likely to move across industries than others who were not placed by a firm (Hamori, 2010).

Bergh and Gibbons (2010) also examined the role of search firms in the corporate sector by evaluating the stock market's reaction when an announcement is made regarding the engagement of a management consultant. The population of interest was firms who publicly announced the engagement of management consulting firms. These companies were all publicly traded, and a final sample of 118 companies who hired consulting firms was analyzed. Independent variables for the study included client firm financial performance level and the brand-name reputation of the consulting firm (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010). Return on assets and Tobin's q were used to indicate financial performance level. Brand-name reputation was coded as either a "1" or "0" depending on whether or not a firm had the highest reputation. This variable was coded six different ways, and ratings of consultant firms were gathered from a variety of industry sources. Control variables were also used to generate more accurate results. Since the study analyzed hiring announcements that occurred

over several years, the study accounted for year-specific effects that could be explained by economic cycles or other factors. Organizational slack was also taken into account by including the debt/sales ratio in the analysis. A logarithm of the client's number of employees was used to control for firm size. The type of project that the consultant was hired to perform (i.e. operational or strategic) was also taken into account (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010). The dependent variable was the stock market return of the client firm. An estimated rate of return was calculated using a common financial formula. Then, the estimated stock return was compared with the actual rate of return associated with the trading day that the announcement occurred. "Abnormal returns" were also calculated, which identify any significant differences between the expected and actual returns (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010). To analyze the data, ordinary least squares regression was used. A ten day window was examined: five days prior to the announcement until five days after the announcement.

Signalling theory is used to provide a framework for this study. This theory involves the process of how decision-makers interpret and respond to situations where information is incomplete and unequally distributed among parties in a transaction. This theory is founded on the premise that one firm has complete information and external parties are reliant on the information that the seller is willing to share with the public (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010). A way to reduce the uncertainties and risks is to identify observable and alterable characteristics that could affect performance. This is known as a signal, which is also defined as an activity or attribute that alters the beliefs or provides information to others. In order for signals to be effective, they must be costly enough to differentiate selling firms, and external parties must believe there is a positive correlation between the signal and the source's underlying quality (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010).

Engaging a consultant firm causes information asymmetry for external parties, such as stock market investors. Signalling theory suggests that these investors would use signals to evaluate the hiring of the consultant. One signal that is often used is the client's financial performance. A high performing firm is likely to have stronger internal resources, greater absorptive capacity, and a positive halo effect. A lower-performing client's decision to employ a consulting firm could be signaling that it needs help to improve its situation or that it is incapable of tackling the issue on its own (Bergh and Gibbons, 2010). A second signal that is often used is the brand-name reputation of the consulting firm. Brand reputation can have tremendous value, is difficult to replicate, is a composite of internal and external factors, and may have a spillover effect when the firm partners with other successful companies (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010).

Results showed that substantive changes in stock price occurred mostly at the event date itself (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010). Most firms experienced a positive mean abnormal return on the event date. The abnormal returns for the day prior to the announcement to the announcement day and the announcement day to the next day were positive and significant. Client financial performance was related positively and significantly for all three abnormal return windows (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010). Therefore, stock market reaction to the hiring of a consultant firm was higher when the financial performance of the client is higher, and vice versa. Brand-name reputation of the consulting firm did not significantly impact the stock market return. So, client firms who engaged the most reputable consultants did not realize a greater gain in market value than those firms who engaged consultants who do not have the highest brand-name reputation (Bergh & Gibbons, 2010). This study indicates that investors in the stock market tend to rely more on signals that are objective, such as financial



performance, rather than subjective signals such as brand reputation when a company chooses to engage a consulting firm. In athletics, there are many external stakeholders who analyze decisions made by the athletic department. It is important for the leaders of the department to realize the impact that the announcing of a search firm can have on these stakeholders' opinions. This study showed that firms with higher financial performance had an increase in market value when the announcement was made, and firms with lower performance did not show this increase in market value. In athletics, this would translate into the more powerful, i.e. BCS, schools receiving more positive feedback when engaging a search firm when compared to non-BCS universities. This may not be an accurate depiction of the decision, but it may be a reality that universities must address.

### **Concerns Regarding Search Firms**

While search firm engagement has increased over the years, there are still concerns and issues regarding their use. This section examines three articles written on the subject of search firm weaknesses. Issues addressed include common complaints regarding search firms, the reasons search firms fail to deliver the expected results, potential bias in candidate identification and selection, and the impact that discourse, cultural norms, and associated pressures can place on the person who engages the search firm. As a decision-maker, it is beneficial to have an awareness and understanding of the potential weaknesses and risks associated with engaging a search firm in order to make the choice that will benefit his or her company the most.

In 1971, John Burns surveyed 80 presidents of various companies (all under 40 years of age) with \$1 million or more in sales volume. The Management Survey and Search Corporation compiled statistics, and it was found that 44 of the 80 hired executives in the

past year, and 18% hired two men in the \$20,000 plus salary bracket (Burns, 1971). The survey also found that management was dissatisfied with its hiring practices and personnel policies. Four reasons were cited for why executive searches had failed to result in hires. These were: poor talent available, the company couldn't attract the best candidate, the job definition was incorrect, and the company identified a better candidate within its own employees (Burns, 1971). Frustration with search firms arose from the fact that the time frame needed for the search was too long. Search firm's engagements ranged from 6-24 weeks, and the average was 11 weeks in order for the hiring process to be complete (Burns, 1971). The survey also discovered reasons why companies chose not to engage in search firms, with the main reason being that the jobs to be filled were in lower salary brackets where the cost of the search firm was not worth the benefit to the company. Other reasons cited were that their fees were too expensive, a previous negative experience, or internal methods were preferred (Burns, 1971).

A 1996 article by John Wareham also identified additional concerns with using search firms. One president from an international corporation cited a 40% failure rate by executive search firms who had been hired to complete ten assignments. This can be troublesome for companies because many search firms will only accept a job after their full fee has been settled in advance, regardless of whether or not a candidate is found (Wareham, 1996). This article suggests four main reasons why search firms often fail to deliver quality results. The first is the pursuit of a "wild goose" candidate (Wareham, 1996). The foundation for any basic search is to develop realistic executive profiles. Sometimes these profiles contain requirements that are too ambitious and not likely to be found in the candidate pool. The clients will indicate to the search firm that their executives are fit of a certain mold, and

everyone is innovative, ambitious, hard-working, and intelligent. There is no true assessment of the needs of the particular job, and the company instead paints an ideal but unattainable picture of the candidate they have in mind. Search firms also often pursue candidates who would never even consider working for the current client (Wareham, 1996).

The second reason Wareham (1996) outlined that search firms can be unsuccessful is the inability of the firm to make all of the contacts (Wareham, 1996). Since search firms specialize in recruiting candidates from a specific industry, and this can lead to difficulties in regards to reaching out to various candidates. Firms can only inquire about candidates from companies with whom they have no prior relationship. If a search firm has completed a search for one company, the firm is unlikely to “poach” an employee when completing a different search in order to maintain successful relationships (Wareham, 1996). So, as the search firm grows, the list of candidates who are “off-limits” also continues to grow.

The third reason search firms are not successful is due to a failure to properly appraise executive candidates (Wareham, 1996). The search firm compiles its list of top candidates and then is often asked to provide an opinion on which is the “best” one. This can be difficult because firms are asked to, in effect, criticize and reject the candidates they just recommended. Separating the search from the appraisal could be a way to decrease the potential conflict of interest encountered by search firms (Wareham, 1996).

Another reason that candidates are not always hired when search firms are involved is because of a breakdown in final negotiations between the candidate and the company (Wareham, 1996). Often, presidents/leaders of a company do not understand what is needed to entice a candidate to switch companies. The client needs to feel wanted, be offered various incentives, and feel welcomed into the company. Those who hire sometimes take a

hard stance and their egos do not allow themselves to ingratiate new hires. If search firms are present in the negotiations, they can be a successful go-between and assist in finding the balance and solutions that each party desires; however, search firms are often not involved in this final step of the hiring process (Wareham, 1996).

A final weakness to take into consideration is the diversity of candidates that executive search firms identify and recommend. A study by Judge, Cable, Boudreau, and Bretz (1995) found that 97% of the people in the database of one of the world's largest executive search firms were white and 93% were male. This obviously indicates both racial and gender underrepresentation. A recent article in BusinessWeek provided solid evidence that 73% of the world's leading search professionals are white males (McCool, 2008).

Clerkin, Dreher, and Lee undertook a study in 2011 to examine the potential bias that search firms may have towards white male candidates. Data was gathered from the Association of Executive Search Consultants using a web-based survey, and a sample of 600 was collected to analyze. Demographically, 89.3% of respondents were male, 87.9% were white, 70.7% were from middle-income white-collar socioeconomic backgrounds, 32% had bachelor's degrees, and 31.6% had graduate degrees (Clerkin, Dreher, & Lee, 2011). The average years of work experience was 23.9 years, and the average annual compensation was \$241,700. White males were 78% of the respondent group. A survey by Clerkin was used in order to measure the extent of the contact that candidates had with executive search firms, including how often they are contacted by search firms or if they have contacted search firms. Networking behaviors, including maintaining contacts, engaging in professional activities, and community/church activities, were also analyzed. The number of job changes was defined as how many times employees had changed companies during their years of

employment. Control variables were used in order to provide more accurate results. These included socioeconomic status, education level, international work experience, work experience, career interruptions, networking behaviors, organizational size, industry, functional area, and manager/executive initiated contacts. Hierarchical regression modeling was used to test the hypotheses (Clerkin, Dreher, & Lee, 2011).

The study's results indicated that white males tend to benefit more from search firms than their minority and female counterparts (Clerkin, Dreher, & Lee, 2011). First, it was found that executive search firms were more likely to contact white males than their female counterparts. Additionally, individuals pursuing an external labor market strategy (i.e. changing jobs and companies) experienced a compensation advantage over individuals pursuing an internal strategy (i.e. changing jobs within a company) such that this advantage was greater among white male managers than among their minority and female counterparts. White male managers were the only group to benefit significantly in regards to an increase in compensation when changing employers. Finally, search-firm initiated contacts were found to moderate the relationship between external mobility and compensation such that the compensation advantage for externally mobile candidates was greatest among those who have experienced more extensive contact from search firms (Clerkin, Dreher, & Lee, 2011).

White male search professionals could be more likely to favor white male candidates because they feel confident in their ability to make predictions about the qualifications and behavior of socially similar people (Clerkin, Dreher, & Lee, 2011). These professionals may deem it less risky to propose a socially similar individual as a candidate because this person would more easily fit in with the established culture. It may also be the case that white male search professionals are less aware of and knowledgeable about female and minority

candidates due to a lack of presence in informal social networks (Clerkin, Dreher, & Lee, 2011). These conclusions are important in the realm of athletics as departments attempt to increase diversity and attract the most qualified candidates for the job, regardless of their gender or race.

The research by Clerkin, Dreher, and Lee contradicts a previous study regarding the presence of gender bias when search firms are involved. Coverdill and Finlay (1998) conducted thirty-four semi-structured interviews with search firm employees in the southeastern United States and completed over 300 hours of fieldwork that involved observing and speaking with search firm employees who were on the job. Their results indicated that candidate fit with the company and candidate skill in regards to the open position was imperative for candidate selection (Coverdill & Finlay, 1998). Based on the interviews conducted, it was found that contingency search firms do not disadvantage female or minority candidates and that no direct evidence exists for links between gender or race and assessments of candidate fit (Coverdill & Finlay, 1998). However, these conclusions were based on in-depth interviews and not evidence from actual candidate placements. The Clerkin, Dreher, and Lee study (2011) provides a more quantitative analysis in regards to gender and racial bias of search firms, but more research may need to be done in order to determine if firms are intentionally or unintentionally disadvantaging minority candidates.

Engaging a search firm can also be a stressful process for the client company. Backlund and Werr designed a study in 2008 with two premises that addresses this issue. The first is that the engagement of management consulting services is a stressful and emotional activity, which in turn triggers psychodynamic and socio-psychological pressure. Previous interviews have shown that managers are weary of using consultants because they

are fearful that their peers could be viewed as a sign of dependence or incompetence (Backlund & Werr, 2008). The second premise is that discourse is used to arrange and normalize our social worlds, which means that some ways of speaking and acting are more “legitimate” than others (Backlund & Werr, 2008). Therefore, the authors felt that the hiring of management consultants needs to be understood in context based on the normal discourse of management. The study had two objectives: to explore the various ways of discourse that management consultants construct “subject positions” for their clients based on their websites and to study how the subsequent subject positions are related to the management themes of bureaucracy and post-bureaucracy (Backlund & Werr, 2008).

For this study, the authors chose to study the websites of four consultant companies in 2002. McKinsey and BCG represented the global strategy firms, and Acenture and KPMG represented the auditing firms. All text was downloaded from the website and then coded into the categories of “the offer”, “the consultant”, and “the client” using the NVivo software system. The main questions addressed were how the client was referred to, i.e. the subject positions offered to the client. There were determined to be two types of services. The first is the “organization and strategy” type (McKinsey and BCG), and the second is the “network” type (Accenture and KPMG) (Backlund & Werr, 2008).

Backlund and Werr identified two pressures associated with hiring management consultants. The first is the psychodynamic pressures related to internal fears of dependence and of losing control (Backlund & Werr, 2008). Since many countries place an importance on self-reliance and autonomy, asking for outside help can be seen as a weakness. The socio-psychological pressures involve the reactions of the outside world when a manager chooses to engage a search firm (Backlund & Werr, 2008). Peers may be skeptical of the

effectiveness of consultants and may even refuse to cooperate if they do not “buy in”. The topic of discourse is used to frame this study. Foucauldian concepts are utilized, which state that discourse is knowledge on a specific topic that can categorize what is normal and acceptable in society. The reverse is also true, and discourse can also limit or restrict certain actions, speech, or thoughts based on what society believes are appropriate. Discourses can also dictate subject positions, which are defined as identities that are shaped by certain ways of speaking (Backlund & Werr, 2008). So, discourse regarding consulting management services is a part of overall management discourse regarding what is acceptable.

Two common “truth regimes” are also discussed. The first is bureaucracy, which is known for hierarchies and specified structures that must be followed (Backlund & Werr, 2008). The second regime, post-bureaucratic, is recognized as a network where flexibility and adaptability are valued. The authors state that the world is in transition between bureaucracy and the post-bureaucracy, so the discourse is still being defined. A new term that has emerged is entrepreneurial management, which emphasizes the importance of idea generation, outside the box thought, and the manager being a facilitator of internal and external information (Backlund & Werr, 2008).

When analyzing the websites of the two types of consultants, the “network” consultants’ sites contained a great deal of information, and the feel of the website was more akin to entering an information portal rather than a promotional page (Backlund & Werr, 2008). Both sites emphasized that innovation and willingness to change are important factors for success. The missions of both companies were broad and lofty and included phrases like “help clients create their future” (Backlund & Werr, 2008, p. 764). There was a focus on delivering applicable solutions in addition to broad ideas, and the consultant company is



willing to become actively involved in operations and take responsibility for decisions made. The knowledge base of the company is developed by networks of consultants who utilize their own research and expertise in combination with outside information to allow for creative, modern solutions. The actual consultant is not prominent on these pages. Additionally, the client is referred to as the entire organization, not as the individual manager who may be doing the hiring (Backlund & Werr, 2008). The presentations of these two companies create a subject position that is acceptable within the post-bureaucratic regime. There is no real distinction between the internal knowledge/employees in the company and the external expertise/outside consultants. The engaging of consulting services is recognized as an organizational decision rather than a managerial one, which implies less pressure on the individual manager. The discourse uses “normalization” that makes the engaging of consultant services seem like the norm without need for justification or rationalization, which is well-aligned with the ideas of a post-bureaucratic world (Backlund & Werr, 2008).

The sites of McKinsey and BCG were similar to what one would find in the traditional, bureaucratic business world. The images of people and offices make one think of the headquarters of a global company, and the sites serve as brochures of the company’s services. Here, the sites offer services to individual managers, rather than the organization. It is also stressed that managers must have the relevant analytical, intellectual, and creative abilities in order to successfully implement the ideas produced by the consultant firm. The use of consultants is only suggested when managers have difficult problems that they cannot solve on their own (Backlund & Werr, 2008). There is a clear delineation of duties between the consultants and the organizations, and individual consultants play an important role when working with the more creative consultants. So, consultants have a much larger role in this

type of website. McKinsey specifically states that the clients are the ones who make decisions and therefore deserve all of the credit or blame for the results. The subject positions are more applicable to the bureaucratic world. Clients turn to consultants because of complexities, not for opportunities. Managers are assumed to be intelligent and rational employees with clearly defined job responsibilities. Consultants assist with idea generation and knowledge growth, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the client. A clear boundary is also drawn between the client as an individual and the client as an organization, which reflects the hierarchal structure of the bureaucratic regime (Backlund & Werr, 2008). It is in this model where the various pressures emerge for the client because it is not the “norm” for managers to seek external advice, and it is seen as a sign that the problem is too large to be handled internally. It is therefore necessary to explain and justify the need for these external consultants, which is known as “rationalization” (Backlund & Werr, 2008).

This study has important implications for those engaging search firms. The type of truth regime and discourse that is present in the athletic department can have an impact on the one who ultimately decides to engage the search firm. While these theories may not impact the organization as a whole, they do provide explanations as to what the manager in the company goes through depending upon the culture of the organization where they work. Organizations should at the very least understand which truth regime they fall under and recognize the consequences that this culture can have on its employees when the choice of engaging a search firm or handling the matter internally arises.

### **Added Value of Search Firms**

There has been little research done on the actual value that outside consultants add to companies. However, one study by Solomon (1997) attempted to discover if the engagement

of a search firm resulted in an increase of the value of the firm. Stock prices were the tool used for measuring added value, which makes sense given the importance of stock prices to corporate companies.

Solomon gives several reasons for the current lack of research on the value-added or long-term effects that search firms have on companies. This may be that isolating a cause and effect relationship between hiring consultants and the value increase of companies is hard to discern (Solomon, 1997). Measuring value-added is also difficult, and acquiring data to perform research can also be problematic since consultants are not required to provide information regarding their clients. The sample in this study came from the database of an international accounting firm, and the consultants are mostly concerned with improving business operations (Solomon, 1997). A consultant completed a survey each time a specific project concluded. The sample was limited to companies that are publicly traded, only used the consultants once, and completed projects from 1992-1993, so a total of twenty-six companies were analyzed. Two assumptions were used for this study. The first is that, “the stock price of a company is equal to the expected net future cash flows from that stock, and the second is that an accurate measure of the expected future price of a stock can be calculated using the capital asset pricing model” (Solomon, 1997, p. 68). Solomon chose to analyze the data for the six months before and after the end of the consulting engagement. The capital asset pricing model was used to obtain the expected prices of the stock, which were then compared with the actual stock price during that time period. A correlation was found between the consulting engagement and the differences between the actual and expected stock prices (Solomon, 1997).

The results indicated that consultants do add value to companies that pay for services (Solomon, 1997). Five months before the project was completed, stock prices were 1.25 points below expected. The differences in prices grew smaller until the actual price became larger than expected (on average). There was a trend of increasing stock prices until three months after the project was complete. The difference peaked at an average of 1.45 points (Solomon, 1997). The difference between actual and predicted stock prices was then calculated on a percentage basis, and these results indicate that from the period of two months before the project is complete until three months after the engagement is over, companies can expect to see an increase in their value. On average, companies experienced a four percent rise in value six months after the engagement was completed (Solomon, 1997). Finally, it was discovered that less-costly engagements, relative to client size, resulted in larger increases in actual stock prices when compared with expected prices. This indicates that smaller engagements could add more value to firms than larger, more expensive engagements. Overall, these results indicate that hiring a consultant can increase a company's value, but it is important to remember that this was a relatively small sample of only twenty-six firms.

### **Making Hiring Decisions Using Institutional Isomorphism**

In order to pursue a study on the use of search firms in intercollegiate athletics, it is important to first understand the underlying reasons that companies have for choosing to engage specific search firms in order to attract and hire qualified candidates. Previous literature indicates that environmental and social factors, in addition candidate characteristics, are considered in the decision-making process. Organizational hiring behavior has mainly focused on the matching of candidates' personal attributes, such as past

performance, test scores, and biographical data, with the needs and philosophies of hiring organizations (Brass, 1995). In addition, it is often difficult to locate and attract qualified employees from external sources because their knowledge and abilities are difficult to measure. As a result, assessment devices such as interviews, cognitive tests, and personality inventories are often used to evaluate candidates (Williamson & Cable, 2003). It has been noted that there is a need for human management research that takes contextual factors into account. Rynes (1991) stated that hiring decisions are often affected by environmental factors, organizational characteristics, and institutional norms.

Institutional theory, also known as institutional isomorphism, states that organizational decision makers are motivated to monitor and evaluate the decisions of other organizations in their field when faced with an ambiguous situation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This is done in an effort to find better solutions to the identified problem. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identified three mechanisms through which institutional isomorphic change occurs. The first is coercive isomorphism, which originates from political influence and the issue of legitimacy. This process results from informal and formal pressures placed on organizations by peer organizations, as well as from societal and cultural expectations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These pressures often arise from a governing or legal body or from regulations imposed by the industry in which the firm operates. Mimetic isomorphism, the second mechanism, stems from responses to uncertain situations. When an organization finds itself in an uncertain environment, it is extremely common for that organization to imitate and model itself after other organizations. This modeling process may occur intentionally or unintentionally, but organizations almost always model themselves after similar firms in the industry that are perceived to be more successful and credible (DiMaggio

& Powell, 1983). The third type of institutional isomorphism is normative, which is associated with professionalization. In this context, professionalization is defined as members of an occupation joining forces to outline the conditions and processes of their particular line of work in order to increase the legitimacy of the firms as a whole. Professionalization requires employees to have formal education and also places importance on networks that can assist in developing organizational norms and values. Normative isomorphism also encourages a filtering of personnel, almost to the point where candidates and employees contain almost identical characteristics, education, experience, and qualifications (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Research by Haunschild and Miner in 1997 built upon the DiMaggio and Powell study by proposing three types of organizational imitation, i.e. institutional isomorphism. Frequency-based imitation involves imitating actions that have been taken by a large number of other organizations (Haunschild & Miner, 1997). The use of a particular method by several organizations increases the perceived effectiveness and legitimacy of that decision. This sometimes causes organizations to follow the leader instead of undertaking further rational evaluation. Trait-based imitation involves organizations replicating practices that certain firms with specific traits have used in the past. Firms often imitate actions of large, successful organizations as a way to increase their own status and prestige. Large firms generate more publicity and scrutiny, and as a result, their behaviors are available for others to replicate. This theory suggests that leaders may reduce uncertainty by imitating the hiring patterns of larger firms (Haunschild & Miner, 1997). One potential issue with trait-based imitation is the fact that the traits of these high-status companies influence actions of others whether or not the methods used by the organizations that possess those traits actually result

in benefits. Finally, outcome based imitation involves mimicking practices that produced the most positive results for other firms. If a firm takes a certain action and positive consequences result, other firms will be more likely to emulate those actions, and the opposite would occur if a firm experienced negative results due to a particular action. This type of imitation is linked more to technical processes, rather than social influence processes, and is a type of vicarious learning for certain organizations (Haunschild & Miner, 1997).

In order to test these theories regarding institutional isomorphism, a sample was collected of 539 acquisitions in the investment banking industry from 1986 to 1993 (Haunschild & Miner, 1997). Logistic regression was used to model the probability of a given investment banking firm being selected by a company. A positive and statistically significant relationship was present between the number of firms using a particular investment firm during the previous years and whether the current firm used it for their acquisition (Haunschild & Miner, 1997). A positive relationship also existed between the size of the acquisitions of a particular investment firm and whether the acquiring firm chose to hire that particular banker (Haunschild & Miner, 1997). These results indicate that frequency and trait imitation were present when acquiring firms made the decision to hire an investment banking firm. The model did not support outcome-based imitation, as the cost of the investment banker was not related to the probability that the acquiring firm would hire that particular banker (Haunschild & Miner, 1997). However, an interesting note from the model is that firms are significantly more likely to hire investment bankers that other companies have used in the past when uncertainty is present. This study highlights the importance that social factors and conditions can have on companies' decision-making processes and proposes three distinct types of institutional isomorphism.

Williamson and Cable (2003) expanded Haunschild & Miner's research by analyzing hiring decisions made by Fortune 500 companies between 1990 and 1994 for positions above the vice president level. Their focus was on the impact of contextual and social factors on the hiring process. The study sample included a total of 505 Fortune 500 firms. The dependent variable was the organization's hiring pattern, which was defined as the sources of an employer's hire. Independent variables included network ties, frequency imitation, trait based imitation, and outcome imitation (using ROA). Control variables such as industry similarity, source size, social prestige, past financial performance, industry diversification, and past hiring pattern were used to produce more accurate results. A negative binomial regression model was used to analyze the data (Williamson & Cable, 2003).

It was predicted that firms would be more likely to hire candidates from firms with which they share inter-firm network ties than from firms they are not tied with, and a significant and positive relationship was found between network ties and organizational hiring patterns (Williamson & Cable, 2003). A second prediction was made that the greater the number of firms who have hired employees from a particular source in the past, the greater the likelihood that the current organization will hire a candidate from that source, i.e. that frequency-based imitation would be present. Again, a significant and positive relationship existed between the frequency variable and organizational hiring patterns. Trait-based imitation was also supported via a significant and positive relationship that existed between the average size of the firms that had hired from a source previously and the current firm's likelihood of hiring from that source. So, the greater the size of the firms that have hired candidates from a given source in the past, the greater the likelihood that the current firm will hire candidates from that same source (Williamson & Cable, 2003). The final



prediction made was that the better the financial performance of organizations who have hired from a given source in the past, the greater the likelihood that the current firm will hire candidates from that source. The average ROA (or financial performance) was not significantly related to the firms' hiring decision, which indicated that outcome-based imitation was not a factor for these organizations (Williamson & Cable, 2003).

This study showed that social environmental factors do influence hiring decisions made by organizations. However, only a small amount of the variance in hiring patterns was explained by the factors examined (less than 10%). Other factors (both internal and external) apparently exist when managers make hiring decisions and should be further analyzed.

The ideas of institutional isomorphism are especially relevant to the hiring process. Due to the importance of hiring qualified employees who will add value to the company, companies often look to their peer institutions for comparison to reduce uncertainty in the decision making process. As a larger number of schools, as well as larger and more prestigious universities, choose to engage search firms, institutional isomorphism posits that many more schools will follow suit and also choose to engage search firms to assist in hiring coaches and administrators. This study will utilize the principles of institutional isomorphism to guide the survey content in order to determine the overall landscape regarding search firm use in collegiate athletics.

The review of literature did not identify any published research that involved the use of search firms in intercollegiate athletics. Further, this author was only able to find one study that analyzes the long-term results of search firm hires (i.e. the candidate's success or quality of work performed). However, the previous studies do provide insight into the world of search firms and can provide an opportunity for comparison once data is collected.

Studies regarding perceptions of search firms, underlying reasons that companies engage search firms, the investment required for search firms, and the search firm process will serve as the foundation from which the current study will be based. Hopefully, this study can bridge the gap and serve as a basis for comparison and contrast between research completed in other industries and the lack of research that currently exists in the realm of intercollegiate athletics regarding search firms.

### **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

In order to examine the engagement of search firms in hiring process at NCAA Division I institutions, an exploratory study was conducted to provide an overview of the search firm landscape as it relates to college athletics. Questions regarding the prevalence, perceptions, investments, and experiences in regards to search firms were answered by utilizing an online survey.

#### **Subjects**

The population of interest was Division I administrators who were involved in the process of hiring a new employee and in the decision-making process of whether or not to engage a search firm between the years of 2005 and 2010. Several parties from each Division I institution were surveyed in order to answer questions of interest, including the athletic director (AD), senior women's administrator (SWA), faculty athletics representative (FAR), and chief financial officer (CFO).

#### **Instrumentation & Data Collection**

Instrument development was based upon a thorough review of literature in order to compile a data-set responsive to the developed research questions. Throughout the development process, a panel of experts, including two sport administration professors, one UNC Department of Athletics senior-level administrator, and an expert in survey design from the Odum Institute, was consulted to aid in the format, structure, and wording of various questions. In an effort to further enhance the construct validity, a pilot study was conducted by having a select sample of athletic administrators complete the survey in order to ensure

that the questions were clear and easy to comprehend, inclusive enough to capture the opinions and experiences of the respondents, and reflective of the goals of the study.

The survey questions were distributed online via Qualtrics using the email addresses of the designated recipients, which were collected using institutional websites. The email contained a brief overview of the survey, as well as a link to the site where the survey could be completed. Demographic information, such as gender, age, years of experience, and job title were asked in order to identify characteristics of the respondents. The survey contained questions that were presented in a variety of formats, including multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, “check all that apply”, Likert scales, and open-ended responses. These survey questions were designed to answer each of the four research questions and to provide a comprehensive overview of the search firm experience in the collegiate athletic setting.

Survey responses were collected anonymously in order to encourage honest answers. Names of respondents and their institutions of employment were not asked in order to maintain confidentiality. The email sent to survey respondents stressed that their answers would only be used for the purposes of this study.

### **Data Analysis**

After the surveys were returned, quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS in order to tabulate descriptive statistics. These statistics serve to provide a solid foundation of the current environment in regards to search firm engagement in college athletics and could provide a basis for future research. Additionally, t-tests, one-way between subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA's), and one-way within subjects ANOVA's were used to compare the responses of the various survey recipients in order to determine if significant differences exist between the opinions and experiences of the different administrators at various

institutions and to determine if significant factors existed within a particular group of answer possibilities. A linear regression was completed in order to determine how the satisfaction of the administrator in regards to the search firm process affected their likelihood of engaging a search firm in the future.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

The survey was sent to 1,358 NCAA Division I Athletic Administrators, and a total of 339 participants responded to the survey, which equates to a 24.96% response rate. It should be noted that participants were informed that they could skip any question at any time, so some respondents chose not to answer various questions. Subsequently, only 243 participants fully completed the survey, so the “N” for some questions does differ. The results are organized by research question, with the tables and charts intended to illustrate and supplement the data collected.

### **Demographic Information**

Several questions were asked pertaining to the respondents’ demographic characteristics in order to obtain an understanding of the collected sample. In regards to race, there were 253 white respondents (87.85%), twenty-nine black respondents (10.07%), two American Indian respondents (0.69%), three Hispanic respondents (1.04%), and one Pacific Islander respondent (0.35%). Males made up 55.71% of the sample (n=161), while females accounted for 44.29% (n=128). There were eighty-three responses by Athletic Directors (29.75%), ninety-four responses by Senior Woman Administrators (33.69%), fifty-five responses by Faculty Athletic Representatives (19.71%), and forty-seven responses by Chief Financial Officers (16.85%). These administrators were wide-ranging in age, years employed by their respective institutions, and years of overall athletics experience. Tables 1 - 3 below summarize the respondents’ information in regards to these questions.

Table 1: Age of Survey Respondents

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
<b>Number</b>	11	34	90	93	54	6
<b>Percentage</b>	3.82	11.81	31.25	32.29	18.75	2.08

Table 2: Years Respondents Have Been Employed by Current Institution

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	40+
<b>Number</b>	72	39	26	13	15	11	11	10	4
<b>Percentage</b>	35.82	19.4	12.94	6.47	7.46	5.47	5.47	4.98	1.99

Table 3: Respondents' Years of Experience in NCAA Division I Athletics

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	40+
<b>Number</b>	34	40	55	56	34	25	18	11	4
<b>Percentage</b>	12.27	14.44	19.86	20.22	12.27	9.03	6.5	3.97	1.44

Respondents are employed by all classifications of Division I institutions, including eight-seven at the Football Bowl Subdivision level (37.34%), eighty-six at the Football Championship Subdivision level (36.91%), and sixty at the non-football level (25.75%).

### **Prevalence of Search Firm Use**

The first research question aimed to discover the prevalence of the use of search firms by Division I athletic departments over the past five years. Between the years of 2005 and 2010, 305 schools (89.97%) conducted a search for a head coach or senior athletics administrator, while thirty-four (10.03%) did not. Of those respondents who conducted a search, 149 considered hiring a search firm (50.17%), and 148 did not consider the use of a search firm at all (49.83%). Of those who considered hiring a search firm, 113 administrators (76.35%) hired a search firm to assist in the hiring process of a head coach or administrator. When all administrators who conducted a search for a coach or administrator

between 2005 and 2010 are considered, a total of 37.05% of administrators engaged a search firm to assist with the process. Fifty-nine FBS administrators engaged a search firm (58.42%), twenty-two FCS administrators engaged a search firm (21.78%), and twenty non-football administrators engaged a firm (19.8%). A one-way between subjects ANOVA yielded a p-value of .086, which indicates that a significant difference does not exist between the three classifications of Division I schools in regards to the number of schools who engaged a search firm, however the substantial mean difference between FBS and non-FBS administrators is noteworthy. Out of the 113 administrators who reported engaging a search firm, only 34.55% of respondents were personally involved in the decision-making process of whether or not to engage the firm, so the remaining 65.45% were not directly involved with this decision.

In regards to the number of hires that the search firms assisted with between 2005 and 2010, fifty-seven schools used a search firm for one hire (53.77%), thirty-six schools used a firm for two hires (33.96%), and thirteen schools used a firm for three hires (12.26%). The number of hires did not differ significantly by classification, as a p-value of .207 was computed for the one-way between subjects ANOVA. Table 4 indicates the breakdown of hires by the position assisted.

Table 4: Positions Search Firms Assisted With in the Hiring Process

	<b>Men's Basketball Coach</b>	<b>Women's Basketball Coach</b>	<b>Football Coach</b>	<b>Men's Olympic Sport Coach</b>	<b>Women's Olympic Sport Coach</b>	<b>Athletic Director</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Number</b>	39	8	46	2	4	51	4
<b>Percentage</b>	25.32	5.19	29.87	1.3	2.6	33.12	2.6



The most common position that search firms assisted with was the Athletic Director, followed by the football coach and men’s basketball coach. The other four positions made up a total of 11.69% of the hires that search firms assisted with.

**Reasons for Engaging or Not Engaging Search Firms**

The second research question addressed why Division I athletics administrators choose (or do not choose) to engage a search firm when hiring coaches or administrators. Those administrators who did not engage a search firm were asked to rate the importance of several factors that weighed in their decision, and they were also asked to rate the importance of the perceived benefits of engaging a search firm. Those administrators who did engage a search firm were asked to rate several factors in regards to their importance in the decision-making process, as well as to rate the perceived risks and/or drawbacks of engaging the firm. Each of these questions used a 5-point Likert scale, with Extremely Unimportant (EU=1), Somewhat Unimportant (SU=2), Neither Important nor Unimportant (N=3), Somewhat Important (SI=4), and Extremely Important (EI=5) being the possible responses. Tables 5 - 7 depict the results from these questions.

Table 5: Importance of Factors to Those Not Engaging a Search Firm

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
Cost of Firm	3.99	1.05
Hiring is Responsibility	3.76	1.08
Desired Control of Process	3.97	.97
Lack of Confidence in Firm	2.96	1.04

Table 6: Importance of Perceived Risks to Those Engaging a Search Firm

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
Cost of Firm	3.66	0.97
Lack of Control in Process	3.02	1.14
Quality of Firm Results	3.98	1.03
Others’ Negative Perceptions	2.70	1.12

Table 7: Importance of Benefits of Engaging a Search Firm

Benefits	Did Not Engage a Search Firm		Did Engage a Search Firm	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Firm Expertise	4.41	0.97	4.02	1.37
Candidate Identification & Evaluation	4.10	1.00	4.09	1.28
Confidentiality	4.28	1.03	4.11	1.47
Time Saved	3.76	0.99	3.73	1.02
Outside & Unbiased Perspective	3.68	1.12	3.49	1.31
Success of Other Searches	4.00	0.98	3.75	1.12

In addition to those descriptive statistics that are shown in the above tables, one-way within subjects ANOVA's were run to determine if significant differences existed between the importance of factors or risks when deciding whether or not to engage a search firm.

Those who did not engage a search firm did have significant differences in regards to the importance of the various factors that were considered in the decision-making process. A p-value of  $<.0005$  was calculated for the within subjects ANOVA, and several pairwise comparisons were also significant. The difference in means of firm cost and lack of confidence in search firm were significant with a p-value of  $<.0005$ . Desired control of the process and lack of confidence in the firm also had significant differences in means with a p-value of  $<.0005$ . Finally, the belief that hiring is the administrator's responsibility and lack of confidence in the firm had significant differences in means based on the p-value of  $<.0005$ . The data clearly shows that lack of confidence in the firm was much less important in the decision of whether or not to engage a firm when compared to the other factors.

The within subjects ANOVA that was run for the perceived benefits of engaging a search firm by those who did not engage a firm also yielded a significant p-value of  $<.0005$ . Firm expertise and confidentiality were clearly the most important perceived benefits based on the data, while time saved and an unbiased perspective were the least important. The

significant pairwise comparisons for this data, each significant at the  $p < .01$  level, include: firm expertise and time saved, firm expertise and candidate identification and evaluation, firm expertise and outside and unbiased perspective, firm expertise and success of other searches, time saved and candidate identification and evaluation, time saved and confidentiality, candidate identification and outside and unbiased perspective, outside and unbiased perspective and confidentiality, outside and unbiased perspective and success of other searches, and confidentiality and success of other searches. However, these significant differences may not be meaningful when looking at the overall picture because the differences in means are all less than one. .

The perceived risks and drawbacks of engaging a firm by those who did engage a firm had a significant p-value of  $< .0005$  when a within subjects ANOVA was run for this data. The mean importance of the cost of the search firm differed significantly with lack of control in the search process (p-value =  $.001$ ) and negative perception by others (p-value =  $< .0005$ ). Quality of search firm results had a significantly different mean than lack of control in the process (p-value =  $< .0005$ ) and than negative perception by others (p-value =  $< .0005$ ). The quality of the firms' results and the cost of the firm had the highest means, while having a lack of control in the process and negative perception by others were less important to the administrators who completed the survey.

The importance of the various factors for those who engaged a search firm was significant when a one-way within subjects ANOVA was conducted, and an overall p-value of  $< .0005$  was found. There were several significant differences in means of these factors. The mean of the importance of time saved by engaging the firm was significant when compared with the mean for confidentiality (p-value =  $.031$ ). The firm having an unbiased

perspective significantly differed with expertise of the firm (p-value = .019), candidate identification and evaluation (p-value = <.0005), and confidentiality (p-value = .003). Survey respondents deemed confidentiality and candidate identification and evaluation the most important factors, and an unbiased perspective and the time saved were not a priority when choosing to engage a firm.

Independent sample t-tests were conducted with the data presented in Table 7 in order to determine if significant differences existed between those who did not engage a search firm and those who did engage a search firm for each of the listed benefits. Only one benefit had a significant p-value: firm expertise, with a p-value of .043. It is interesting to note that those who did not engage a search firm rated this benefit significantly higher than those who did engage a firm. The results indicate that, with the exception of firm expertise, there are no significant differences in the importance of the various search firm benefits when comparing those who have engaged a firm with those who haven't.

In order to determine if significant differences exist between the factors and/or risks that were important when deciding whether or not to engage a search firm based on the classification of the institution, one-way between subjects ANOVA's were conducted for the factors for those engaging a search firm, risks for those engaging a search firm, factors for those not engaging a search firm, and perceived benefits for those not engaging a firm. There were three possible classifications: Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) and Non-Football (NF). Only two factors were found to have significant differences in means by classification when the between subjects ANOVA's were run: firm cost and lack of control in the process for those who did not engage a search firm. Table 8 shows the results for these significant ANOVA's.

Table 8: Significant Important Factors by Classification

Classification	Firm Cost				Lack of Control in Process			
	#	Mean	S.D.	Overall P-value	#	Mean	S.D.	Overall P-Value
<b>FBS</b>	33	3.61	1.321	.047*	32	4.31	1.061	.046**
<b>FCS</b>	56	4.09	0.996		56	3.75	1.083	
<b>Non-Football</b>	35	4.2	0.833		35	4.11	1.022	

\*FBS & Non-Football: p-value = .065 (approaching significance)

\*\*FBS & FCS: p-value = .055 (approaching significance)

Based on the data collected, classification does not seem to cause significant differences in the reasons that administrators engage or do not engage a search firm. Only two of the twenty possible factors had significant differences when organized by classification, so it can be inferred that administrators tend to rate the importance of the various factors, benefits, and risks very similarly when making the decision of whether or not to engage a search firm.

The final aspect involved in answering research question two is related to institutional theory and the influence that peer institutions have on decision-makers at other universities. Administrators were asked to rate the influence that other schools engaging a search firm had on their decision of whether or not to engage a firm, i.e. was it important that other schools had also engaged a firm in the past. The results are depicted in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Influence of Other Schools Engaging a Search Firm

	Not at all Influential (1)	Somewhat Influential (2)	Moderately Influential (3)	Very Influential (4)	Extremely Influential (5)
<b>Number</b>	96	24	71	20	7
<b>Percentage</b>	44.04	11.01	32.57	9.17	3.21
<b>Mean</b>	2.17				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.184				

This data indicates that the majority of administrators find it between somewhat and moderately influential that other schools have engaged search firms in the past. When a between-subjects ANOVA was run to compare results by classification, a non-significant p-value of .106 was found. While FBS schools did have a higher mean (2.43) when compared with FCS institutions (2.08) and Non-Football institutions (2.05), there were no significant differences in the amount of influence that other schools engaging a search firm had on the decision for the administrators of the three different classifications.

### Search Firm Investment

The third research question for this study strived to determine how the investment associated with engaging a search firm compares to the cost of conducting an internal search to hire a coach or administrator. In order to answer these questions, survey respondents were asked questions regarding to the cost of hiring a coach or administrator internally versus with a search firm and the amount of time spent hiring a coach or administrator internally versus with a search firm. Administrators were also asked to quantify the maximum amount they would pay a search firm to assist with a variety of positions.

Table 10 depicts the cost of hiring various coaches and administrators internally, without search firm assistance, and the cost of engaging a search firm. Descriptive statistics, as well as the results of independent sample t-tests, are shown for both options.

Table 10: Cost of Hiring Internally vs. Cost of Engaging a Search Firm

	Number	Mean	S.D.	Dollars	P-Value
<b>Athletic Director</b>					
<b>Internal</b>	148	2.02	2.02	30,300	.001*
<b>Firm</b>	22	3.55	1.77	53,250	
<b>Football Coach</b>					
<b>Internal</b>	141	1.89	1.72	28,350	.000*
<b>Firm</b>	22	3.64	1.56	54,600	

<b>Men's Basketball Coach</b>					
<b>Internal</b>	154	1.83	1.66	27,450	.013*
<b>Firm</b>	21	2.81	1.81	42,150	
<b>Women's Basketball Coach</b>					
<b>Internal</b>	156	1.63	1.50	24,450	.518
<b>Firm</b>	7	2.00	1.16	30,000	
<b>Men's Olympic Sport Coach</b>					
<b>Internal</b>	155	1.25	.79	18,750	.788
<b>Firm</b>	6	1.33	.52	19,950	
<b>Women's Olympic Sport Coach</b>					
<b>Internal</b>	158	1.23	.78	18,450	.502
<b>Firm</b>	5	1.00	.00	15,000	

\*Significant at an alpha level of .05\*

The mean for the cost of hiring each of these coaches or administrators internally averages between \$15,000 and just over \$30,000. While there are certain survey respondents who stated the costs as much higher, the large majority of these respondents designated the cost to be no more than \$30,000. A between subjects ANOVA was run for each of these positions based on the classification of the respondent's institution. There were no significant differences in the means of the cost of hiring internally for any position based on the classification of the institution. This suggests that the costs of hiring an administrator or coach remain relatively similar regardless of the type of NCAA Division I institution.

The cost of engaging a search firm is certainly different based on the position being hired. The cost of a search firm for an Olympic Sport Coach is \$15,000, while the cost for a Football Coach or Athletic Director is over \$50,000. It is logical that the cost for engaging a more high-profile position such as an AD or Football Coach would cost much more than engaging a Men's or Women's Olympic Sport Coach, and the survey responses support this data. Table 11 shows the range of costs of engaging a search firm for each position.

Table 11: Range of Costs of Engaging a Search Firm

<b>Position</b>	<b>Cost Range</b>
Athletic Director	\$0 - \$120,000
Football Coach	\$0 - \$120,000
Men’s Basketball Coach	\$0 - \$90,000
Women’s Basketball Coach	\$0 - \$60,000
Men’s Olympic Sport Coach	\$0 – \$30,000
Women’s Olympic Sport Coach	\$0 - \$15,000

There was a significant difference in the cost of hiring internally and the cost of engaging a search firm when hiring an Athletic Director, Football Coach, and Men’s Basketball coach. There was a much smaller number of respondents who engaged a search firm when compared with the number who hired internally, so a larger sample of those engaging a firm might be needed in order to truly compare the differences in cost.

Respondents also answered questions pertaining to the time spent in the hiring process for coaches and administrators. This was a fill-in-the-blank question, so respondents did not have a list of options to choose from. Table 12 compares the total time spent by all involved individuals, including search committee members, in the hiring process for various positions if no search firm was engaged to the total time spent by all involved individuals, not including search firm representatives, when a search firm was engaged. It should be noted that the number of respondents who engaged a firm for each position is very small in comparison to the number who responded regarding the internal time investment.

Table 12: Time Spent Internally vs. Time Spent With a Search Firm

(Mean & S.D. in Hours)

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>P-Value</b>
	<b>Athletic Director</b>			
<b>Internal</b>	109	170.12	240.20	.911



<b>Firm</b>	20	176.50	192.63	
<b>Football Coach</b>				
<b>Internal</b>	114	143.37	226.77	.748
<b>Firm</b>	21	160.24	184.71	
<b>Men's Basketball Coach</b>				
<b>Internal</b>	124	150.72	228.11	.753
<b>Firm</b>	20	133.75	192.35	
<b>Women's Basketball Coach</b>				
<b>Internal</b>	123	124.02	188.01	.758
<b>Firm</b>	13	141.15	209.05	
<b>Men's Olympic Sport Coach</b>				
<b>Internal</b>	124	87.35	171.80	.978
<b>Firm</b>	11	85.91	109.06	
<b>Women's Olympic Sport Coach</b>				
<b>Internal</b>	126	85.12	170.35	.988
<b>Firm</b>	11	85.91	109.06	

When hiring internally, the most time is invested on hiring the positions of Athletic Director, Football Coach, and Men's Basketball Coach. When a within subjects ANOVA was conducted (N=88), a significant p-value of <.0005 was calculated., which indicates that significant differences exist in the time spent on the hiring process when no search firm is engaged. Table 13 below shows the pairwise comparisons for this within subjects ANOVA. Significance occurs at an alpha level of .05

Table 13: Pairwise Comparisons - Within Subjects ANOVA for Time Spent Hiring Internally

<b>Position 1</b>	<b>Position 2</b>	<b>P-Value</b>		<b>Position 1</b>	<b>Position 2</b>	<b>P-Value</b>
AD	FB	.060		FB	MOSC	.000*
AD	MBB	.005*		FB	WOSC	.000*
AD	WBB	.000*		MBB	WBB	.012*
AD	MOSC	.000*		MBB	MOSC	.000*
AD	WOSC	.000*		MBB	WOSC	.000*
FB	MBB	1.00		WBB	MOSC	.000*
FB	WBB	.096		WBB	WOSC	.000*
				MOSC	WOSC	1.00

Those who engaged a search firm indicated that the greatest time investment is required for hiring the positions of Athletic Director, Football Coach, and Women's Basketball coach. The time spent hiring a men's basketball coach was slightly less than a women's basketball coach, which is a different result than the other questions relating to cost and time investment where the men's basketball coach position required greater resources. A within subjects ANOVA yielded a significant p-value of .023, which indicates that there is a significant difference in the amount of time spent on the hiring process for various positions when a search firm is engaged. However, there were no significant pairwise comparisons (i.e. significant differences between two positions) when the data was further analyzed. Therefore, there is an overall significant when all six positions are examined, but no specific differences exist between any two positions.

When independent sample t-tests were run to compare the time investment of an internal search versus the investment when a search firm is engaged, there were no significant differences in the amount of time spent in the hiring process for any position. In the cases of the Athletic Director, Football Coach, Women's Basketball Coach, and Women's Olympic Sport Coach, the time spent on the hiring process actually increased when a search firm was engaged. The data shows that engaging the search firm does not decrease the amount of time that must be spent on the hiring process for coaches or administrators.

The amount of time spent and the cost of the hiring process was also analyzed by classification of the institutions by running a between subjects ANOVA. There were no significant differences in cost or time spent for any of the coach or administrator positions for those who didn't engage a search firm and those who did engage a firm. The ANOVA run for the cost of hiring an Athletic Director by those who engaged a search firm did approach

significance, with a p-value of .061. FBS institutions had a mean of 4.13 (\$61,950), while FCS institutions had a mean of 2.50 (\$37,500) and Non-Football institutions had a mean of 2.00 (\$30,000). While there are technically no statistically significant differences, there are real differences between the three classifications in regards to the cost of hiring an Athletic Director. The difference in means is \$7,500 between FCS and Non-Football institutions, and it is \$24,450 between FBS and FCS institutions. A similar situation exists for the cost of hiring a firm for a Men’s Basketball Coach. FBS institutions had a mean of 3.2 (\$48,000), FCS institutions had a mean of 2.67 (\$40,050), and Non-Football Institutions had a mean of 1 (\$15,000). There is a “real” difference in means between FBS and Non-Football institutions of \$33,000 when hiring a men’s basketball coach. However, when looking at the overall picture, it seems that the classification of the institution does not alter the cost of hiring a coach or administrator and the time spent hiring a coach or administrator.

Administrators were also asked to provide the maximum amount that they would pay a search firm to assist with the hiring process for various positions. Both those who engaged a search firm and those who did not engage a firm had the opportunity to respond to this question. Table 14 depicts the descriptive statistics for both groups of administrators for each position.

Table 14: Maximum Amount Administrators Would Pay for a Search Firm

Position	Those Who Engaged Search Firm			Those Who Did Not Engage Search Firm		
	Mean	S.D.	Monetary Value	Mean	S.D.	Monetary Value
<b>Athletic Director</b>	4.49	2.30	\$52,350	3.04	2.19	\$30,600
<b>Football Coach</b>	4.54	2.54	\$53,100	2.18	1.68	\$17,700
<b>Men’s Basketball Coach</b>	4.06	2.21	\$45,900	2.32	1.74	\$19,800
<b>Women’s Basketball Coach</b>	3.02	2.05	\$30,300	1.79	1.29	\$11,850

<b>Men's Olympic Sport Coach</b>	1.73	1.79	\$10,950	1.19	.65	\$2,850
<b>Women's Olympic Sport Coach</b>	1.73	1.79	\$10,950	1.19	.65	\$2,850

The means for those who engaged a search firm are all higher than the means for those who did not engage a search firm in the past. When independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare the maximum amount that those who engaged a search firm would pay with the maximum amount that those who did not engage a firm would pay, the results were significant for all positions. Significant differences existed between those who engaged and those who did not engage a firm for Athletic Director (p-value = .001), Football Coach (p-value = <.0005), Men's Basketball Coach (p-value = <.0005), Women's Basketball Coach (p-value = <.0005), Men's Olympic Sport Coach (p-value = .042), and Women's Olympic Sport Coach (p-value = .041). Those who have engaged a firm in the past are willing to pay significantly more for a search firm than those who have not previously engaged a firm.

### **Experiences and Opinions Regarding Search Firms**

The final research question of this study aimed to discover how satisfied administrators were with the entire search firm process and how that satisfaction will affect their likeliness to utilize search firms in the future. Survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction about several aspects of the search firm process, including how satisfied they were in regards to the candidates presented by the search firm. Only those administrators who had employed a search firm answered the questions related to candidate satisfaction. These questions were in a five-point Likert Scale format, with Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, Satisfied, and Very Satisfied being the answer options. Table 15 provides a summary of the results.

Table 15: Satisfaction With Candidates Presented by the Search Firm

	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>
	<b>Candidate Experience</b>				
<b>Number</b>	0	3	3	25	17
<b>Percentage</b>	0.00	6.25	6.25	52.08	35.42
<b>Mean</b>	4.17				
<b>S.D.</b>	.808				
	<b>Candidate Qualifications</b>				
<b>Number</b>	0	3	3	23	19
<b>Percentage</b>	0.00	6.25	6.25	47.92	39.58
<b>Mean</b>	4.21				
<b>S.D.</b>	.824				
	<b>Candidate Reputation</b>				
<b>Number</b>	1	1	6	26	14
<b>Percentage</b>	2.08	2.08	12.50	54.17	29.17
<b>Mean</b>	4.06				
<b>S.D.</b>	.836				
	<b>Quality of Diverse Candidates</b>				
<b>Number</b>	5	0	12	18	9
<b>Percentage</b>	11.36	0.00	27.27	40.91	20.45
<b>Mean</b>	3.59				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.168				
	<b>Quantity of Diverse Candidates</b>				
<b>Number</b>	4	1	13	20	8
<b>Percentage</b>	8.70	2.17	28.26	43.48	17.39
<b>Mean</b>	3.59				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.087				
	<b>Quality of Female Candidates</b>				
<b>Number</b>	4	1	14	8	3
<b>Percentage</b>	13.33	3.33	46.67	26.67	10.00
<b>Mean</b>	3.17				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.117				
	<b>Quantity of Female Candidates</b>				
<b>Number</b>	2	1	14	9	3
<b>Percentage</b>	6.90	3.45	48.28	31.03	10.34
<b>Mean</b>	3.34				
<b>S.D.</b>	.974				

These results show that administrators were most satisfied with the qualifications of the candidates presented by the search firm and least satisfied with the quality of female candidates presented. However, overall administrators were “satisfied” with all aspects of the candidates presented, as all of the means were between 3.5 and 4.5. A one-way within subjects ANOVA was run to determine if significant differences existed in the means of the different aspects of candidate satisfaction, and the resulting p-value of  $<.0005$  was significant. There were several pairwise comparisons between two specific satisfaction factors that were also significant. Candidate qualifications differed significantly with quantity of female candidates (p-value = .017), quality of female candidates (p-value = .006), quantity of diverse candidates (p-value = .044), and quality of diverse candidates (p-value = .044). Candidate experience also differed significantly with quantity of female candidates (p-value = .009), quality of female candidates (p-value = .003), quantity of diverse candidates (p-value = .009), and quality of diverse candidates (p-value = .009). Finally, candidate reputation differed significantly with quantity of female candidates (p-value = .026), and quality of female candidates (p-value = .021). From an overall perspective, administrators were significantly less satisfied with the quality and quantity of minority candidates than they were with the other candidate factors of reputation, experience, and qualifications.

Each of the candidate satisfaction factors was also analyzed by classification of institution. Only one factor had a significantly different mean based on school classification: quantity of diverse candidates, with a p-value of .017. FBS institutions had a mean of 3.67, FCS institutions had a mean of 2.75, and Non-Football institutions had a mean of 4.4 in relation to satisfaction. FCS & Non-Football institutions had a significant p-value of .02 when directly compared. This indicates that those at Non-Football institutions are

significantly more satisfied than the administrators at FCS schools with the quantity of diverse candidates. It is important to note that the sample size for this data was relatively small, since only those who engaged search firms answered these questions and several of those administrators did not respond to these particular questions.

Survey respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the search firm process as a whole. Table 16 below illustrates their responses.

Table 16: Satisfaction With Overall Search Firm Process

	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dis-satisfied</b>	<b>Neither Dissatisfied Nor Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>
<b>Number</b>	2	6	8	26	12
<b>Percentage</b>	3.70	11.11	14.81	48.15	22.22
<b>Mean</b>	3.74				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.049				

The data reflects that administrators are slightly more than neutral and approaching satisfied with the search firm process overall, as the mean response of 3.74 is just shy of the “4” that would be required to be “satisfied”. Satisfaction was also analyzed by classification of institution, but the p-value of .651 was not significant, indicating that level of satisfaction is similar for all types of Division I institutions.

All administrators were also asked about their likelihood of engaging a search firm in the future when they are making new hires, regardless of whether or not they had engaged a search firm in the past. Tables 17 - 20 show this data analyzed in several different ways.

Table 17: Likelihood that Administrators Will Engage a Search Firm in the Future

	<b>Very Unlikely</b>	<b>Unlikely</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Likely</b>	<b>Very Likely</b>
<b>Number</b>	71	43	49	22	13
<b>Percentage</b>	35.86	21.72	24.75	11.11	6.57
<b>Mean</b>	2.31				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.247				

These results indicate that the overall sample of administrators is somewhat unlikely to hire a search firm in the future, since the mean of 2.31 is between “Unlikely” and “Undecided”. Since this question included those who had not hired search firms in the past, it is not surprising that this likelihood is somewhat low.

Table 18: Likelihood of Engaging a Search Firm by Classification

	Number	Mean	S.D.	Classification P-value
<b>FBS</b>	67	2.82	1.38	.002 *
<b>FCS</b>	63	2.08	1.11	
<b>Non-Football</b>	38	2.21	1.19	

\*FBS & FCS: p-value = .003\*

\*FBS & Non-Football: p-value = .05\*

This table shows that there are significant differences in likelihood to engage a firm in the future based on the institution’s classification, since a p-value of .002 was found when a one-way between subjects ANOVA was run. FBS institutions are significantly more likely than both FCS and Non-Football institutions to engage a search firm in the future. Given the amount of resources available to these institutions, this finding seems logical.

Table 19: Likelihood of Engaging a Search Firm in the Future – Those Who Considered Hiring a Firm

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Undecided	Likely	Very Likely
<b>Number</b>	12	15	28	15	12
<b>Percentage</b>	14.63	18.29	34.15	18.29	14.63
<b>Mean</b>	3.00				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.247				

This table shows the descriptive statistics for the likelihood of engaging a firm in the future only for those who administrators who considered hiring a search firm in the past five



years. The mean of 3 for this group is higher than the mean of 2.31 calculated for all administrators. An independent samples t-test was run in order to compare the difference between administrators who did consider hiring a firm and those who did not consider engaging a firm and a significant p-value of <.0005 was found. This indicates that those administrators who at least considered hiring a search firm are significantly more likely to hire these firms in the future.

Table 20: Likelihood of Engaging a Search Firm in the Future – Those Who Hired a Firm

	<b>Very Unlikely</b>	<b>Unlikely</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Likely</b>	<b>Very Likely</b>
<b>Number</b>	5	8	19	12	12
<b>Percentage</b>	8.93	14.29	33.93	21.43	21.43
<b>Mean</b>	3.32				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.223				

Those who actually hired a search firm were also more likely to engage a firm in the future. A mean of 3.32 was calculated for those administrators who previously engaged a search firm, which is one full point higher than the mean calculated for the survey respondents as a whole. The mean for those who did not hire a firm was 1.91. An independent samples t-test conducted between those who hired a search firm and those who did not hire a firm confirmed that the difference in means between these two groups is significant and yields a p-value of <.0005.

Those who answered that they were “Likely” or “Very Likely” to engage a firm again were also asked if they would be likely to engage the same search firm in the future, and these responses are depicted in Table 21.

Table 21: Likelihood of Engaging the Same Search Firm in the Future

	<b>Very Unlikely</b>	<b>Unlikely</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Likely</b>	<b>Very Likely</b>
<b>Number</b>	1	0	9	14	8

<b>Percentage</b>	3.13	0.00	28.13	43.75	25.00
<b>Mean</b>	3.88				
<b>S.D.</b>	.907				

These results show that it is likely that administrators will hire the same search firm when filling a new position in the future. Respondents were not asked why they were likely to engage the same firm in the future, so further research will need to be conducted in order to determine why this is the case.

Those who were “Undecided”, “Unlikely”, or “Very Unlikely” to engage a search firm in the future were asked to rate the importance of the various reasons for why they made that decision. Table 22 shows the descriptive statistics for the various reasons why administrators are unlikely to engage a search firm in the future.

Table 22: Reasons Administrators are Unlikely to Engage a Firm in the Future

	<b>Extremely Unimportant</b>	<b>Somewhat Unimportant</b>	<b>Neither Important nor Unimportant</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>
	<b>Poor Experience with Search Firm Representatives</b>				
<b>Number</b>	11	4	49	8	14
<b>Percentage</b>	12.79	4.65	56.98	9.30	16.28
<b>Mean</b>	3.12				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.142				
	<b>Cost of the Search Firm</b>				
<b>Number</b>	7	6	11	20	64
<b>Percentage</b>	6.48	5.56	10.19	18.52	59.26
<b>Mean</b>	4.19				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.216				
	<b>Lack of Quality Candidates Presented</b>				
<b>Number</b>	8	9	37	19	16
<b>Percentage</b>	8.99	10.11	41.57	21.35	17.98
<b>Mean</b>	3.29				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.150				
	<b>Search Process Took Too Long</b>				
<b>Number</b>	11	7	38	20	11
<b>Percentage</b>	12.64	8.05	43.68	22.99	12.64

<b>Mean</b>	3.15				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.147				
	<b>Desired Candidate Not Hired</b>				
<b>Number</b>	11	4	48	12	8
<b>Percentage</b>	13.25	4.82	57.83	14.46	9.64
<b>Mean</b>	3.02				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.059				
	<b>Other</b>				
<b>Number</b>	7	1	35	4	15
<b>Percentage</b>	11.29	1.61	56.45	6.45	24.19
<b>Mean</b>	3.31				
<b>S.D.</b>	1.195				

For these administrators, the cost of the firm was the most important factor in deciding not to engage a search firm in the future. It is the only reason to have a mean above 4.0, and the rest of the means are within 0.29 of each other.

These reasons for not engaging a firm were also analyzed by classification of institution. Cost of the firm was significant with an overall p-value of .02. When pairwise comparisons were analyzed, FBS & Non-Football were found to be significant with a p-value of .016. This makes sense given that the mean for FBS institutions was 3.73 and the mean for Non-Football institutions was 4.68, which indicates that the real world cost of the firm was more important to those Non-Football institutions. The “Other” option was also significant when analyzed by classification with a p-value of .006. Once again, FBS and Non-Football differed significantly with a p-value of .004. However, in this case, FBS schools had a mean of 4.0 and Non-Football schools had a mean of 2.64, which indicates that there must be another important reason that was not addressed in this study as to why FBS institutions would choose not to engage a search firm in the future.

Finally, a linear regression was conducted in order to determine how satisfaction with the search firm process affected the likelihood of engaging a search firm in the future. The

independent variable was candidate satisfaction, and the dependent variable was likelihood of engaging a firm in the future. The regression yielded an R of 0.391, an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.153, and a p-value of 0.004. The R<sup>2</sup> value indicates that 15.3% of the variance of the likelihood of engaging a firm in the future can be explained by satisfaction with the search firm process. This value is high enough such that the p-value is significant, but other factors are clearly present that can further explain why administrators are likely or unlikely to engage a search firm in the future.

Administrators were also asked if the coach who was hired with the assistance of a search firm was still employed by the institution. The results are in Table 23.

Table 23: Coach Currently Employed by Institution

Position	Number		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Athletic Director	34	3	91.89	8.11
Football Coach	19	8	70.37	29.63
Men's Basketball Coach	25	3	89.29	10.71
Women's Basketball Coach	8	2	80.00	20.00
Men's Olympic Sport Coach	1	4	20.00	80.00
Women's Olympic Sport Coach	2	3	40.00	60.00
Other	4	3	57.14	42.86

For the more high-profile positions of Athletic Director, Football Coach, Men's Basketball Coach, and Women's Basketball Coach, the percentage of those who are still employed is fairly high, with football being the lowest at 70.39%. It is somewhat surprising that the Men's and Women's Olympic Sport Coaches have such a low retention rate, but this could be due to the very small sample size that was attained for these positions. This study examined searches that occurred between 2005-2010, so many of the coaches and

administrators may have been hired very recently. More time may be needed to see if these hires are performing well and meeting expectations set for them.

**Miscellaneous**

Administrators were also asked questions regarding what resources were given to search firm representatives in order to facilitate the hiring process. A list of options was given to survey respondents, and they were asked to check all that applied to their situation. The results are in Table 24.

Table 24: Resources Given to Search Firm

	<b>Compensation</b>	<b>Reimbursement for Expenses</b>	<b>Internal Documents</b>	<b>Employee Interviews</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Number</b>	32	32	18	21	3
<b>Percentage</b>	84.21	84.21	47.37	55.26	7.89

Over 80% of survey respondents allocated compensation and reimbursement for expenses to search firms. While those percentages are by far the largest of any of the resources, it is somewhat surprising that this amount is not even higher, given the fact that compensation and reimbursement would seem to be something that search firms require in order to do their job.

A one-way within subjects ANOVA was run to determine if significant differences exist between the various resources. A significant p-value of <.0005 was calculated. Compensation was found to differ significantly with internal documents (p-value = .002) and other (p-value = <.0005). Reimbursement for expenses differed significantly with internal documents (p-value = .002), employee interviews (p-value = .032), and other (p-value = <.0005). Finally, other differed significantly with employee interviews (p-value = <.0005) and internal documents (p-value = .002). Just by observing the numbers and percentages,

one would expect that these resources would be significant simply because of the large differences. This data shows that a very large majority of administrators give compensation and reimbursement for expenses to search firms, and about half of administrators give search firms internal documents and allow them to interview employees in order to assist with the hiring process.

Finally, administrators were given a list of possible services/duties that the search firm performed when they were engaged. These questions were also in a “check all that apply” format, so multiple services could have checked by each administrator. The resulting statistics are in Table 25 below.

Table 25: Services Performed by the Search Firm

<b>Services</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Compile List of Candidates</b>	53	96.36
<b>Employee Interviews</b>	19	34.55
<b>Meet with Decision Makers</b>	44	80.00
<b>Discuss Candidate Qualifications</b>	47	85.45
<b>Contact Candidates</b>	52	94.55
<b>Schedule Interviews</b>	41	74.55
<b>Assist with Interviews</b>	29	52.73
<b>Compile List of Top Candidates</b>	38	69.09
<b>Assist with Final Decision</b>	11	20.00
<b>Other</b>	4	7.27

The most frequent services performed by search firms were compiling a list of candidates and contacting those candidates to gauge their interest in the job. Discussing candidate qualifications and meeting with decision-makers were also job responsibilities of the search firm for a large majority of institutions.

A one-way within subjects ANOVA was run to determine if significant differences existed between the services performed by search firms, and a significant p-value of <.0005 was found. Table 26 lists the significant pairwise comparisons for this ANOVA.

Table 26: Significant Pairwise Comparisons for Services Performed by Search Firms

Resource 1	Resource 2	P-Value	Resource 1	Resource 2	P-Value
Compile List	Employee Interviews	<.0005	Compile List	Schedule Interviews	.039
Compile List	Assist with Interviews	<.0005	Compile List	Compile Top Candidates	.002
Compile List	Assist with Final Decision	<.0005	Compile List	Other	<.0005
Employee Interviews	Meet with Decision Makers	<.0005	Employee Interviews	Discuss Qualifications	<.0005
Employee Interviews	Contact Candidates	<.0005	Employee Interviews	Schedule Interviews	<.0005
Employee Interviews	Compile Top Candidates	.016	Employee Interviews	Other	.014
Meet with Decision Makers	Assist with Interviews	.014	Meet with Decision Makers	Assist with Final Decision	<.0005
Meet with Decision Makers	Other	<.0005	Discuss Qualifications	Assist with Interviews	.001
Discuss Qualifications	Assist with Final Decision	<.0005	Discuss Qualifications	Other	<.0005
Contact Candidates	Schedule Interviews	.025	Contact Candidates	Assist with Interviews	<.0005
Contact Candidates	Compile Top Candidates	.027	Contact Candidates	Assist with Final Decision	<.0005
Contact Candidates	Other	<.0005	Schedule Interviews	Assist with Interviews	.039
Schedule Interviews	Assist with Final Decision	<.0005	Schedule Interviews	Other	<.0005
Assist with Interviews	Assist with Final Decision	.005	Assist with Interviews	Other	<.0005
Compile Top Candidates	Assist with Final Decision	<.0005	Compile Top Candidates	Other	<.0005

Based on the above table, it is clear that there are many significant differences in the means of the various services performed by search firms. Going from largest percentage to smallest, the services performed are as follows: compile a list of candidates, contact candidates to gauge interest, discuss candidate qualifications, meet with decision-makers, schedule interviews with candidates, compile a list of top candidates, assist with interviews, interview current employees, assist with the final decision, and other. The choices provided seemed to encapsulate the vast majority of services performed by these firms, and firms seem to be involved with almost all aspects of the hiring process except making the final decision.



## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Summary of Findings**

This research study was undertaken with the goal of determining the prevalence of the use of search firms in college athletics, identifying the reasons why administrators choose or do not choose to hire a search firm, comparing the investment of hiring a coach internally and hiring a coach using a search firm, and evaluating how satisfied administrators were with the search firm process. An online survey was sent to the AD, SWA, FAR, and CFO at each NCAA Division I institution, and the resulting data was analyzed using SPSS software.

In regards to the prevalence of search firms in intercollegiate athletic, approximately 50% of administrators considered using a search firm to assist with the hiring process, and 37.05% of all administrators actually engaged the search firm. Those administrators at FBS institutions engaged search firms over twice as many times as those from FCS and non-football institutions. The majority of administrators (53.77%) used a search firm for one hire in the past five years, and no administrator reported using a search firm more than three times during that time period. The most common positions that search firms were hired to assist with are Athletic Director, Football Coach, and Men's Basketball Coach. These three positions made up 88.31% of search firm engagements.

Administrators also provided valuable data regarding the positives and negatives of engaging a search firm. Those who did not engage a search firm stated that the cost of the firm and desiring control of the hiring process were the two most important factors for not engaging the firm, while not having confidence in the search firm was significantly less

important. Administrators who engaged a search firm believed that the quality of the search firm's results and the cost of the firm were the two most important risks when engaging a firm. Negative perception by others was seen as less important than other factors.

Administrators who did not engage a search firm believed that the most important benefits of engaging a firm were gaining the firm's expertise and ensuring confidentiality in the hiring process. Those who engaged a firm rated confidentiality and candidate identification/evaluation as the most important factors in engaging a firm, with firm expertise following closely behind. Finally, administrators were asked how important it was that other schools had engaged search firms in the past, and the mean of 2.17 out of 5 indicates that peer institutions' decisions were not an important factor in the process of determining if a firm would be engaged.

Data was also collected regarding the time and financial investment involved with hiring coaches and administrators, both internally and with the assistance of a search firm. When hiring internally without search firm assistance, the average cost was between \$15,000 and a little over \$30,000 for all positions. The cost of engaging a search firm was significantly higher than the cost of hiring internally for the Athletic Director, Men's Basketball Coach, and Football Coach. Search firm fees for an Athletic Director averaged around \$53,250, fees for a Men's Basketball Coach were \$42,150, and fees for a football coach were slightly above \$54,600. The cost of engaging a search firm for Women's Basketball Coaches and Men's and Women's Olympic Sport Coaches did not significantly differ from the cost of hiring that position internally.

When the time invested in the hiring process was compared for those engaging search firms and those who hired internally, no significant differences were found for any position.

Most positions required between 85-170 hours of work whether or not a search firm was engaged. In some cases, the time spent on the hiring process was actually greater when the firm was engaged as compared to hiring internally. This seems to contradict traditional wisdom, since previous research stated time saved as one of the main reasons for engaging a search firm.

When administrators were asked to estimate the maximum amount they would pay to engage a search firm, significant differences existed between the amounts for all positions when comparing those who engaged a search firm and those who did not. Administrators who had previously engaged a search firm were, on average, willing to pay upwards of \$45,000 to assist with hiring an AD, Football Coach, or Men's Basketball Coach, while those who had not engaged a firm were only willing to pay around \$15,000. Finally, those institutions at the FBS level were willing to pay significantly more than those at FCS and Non-Football institutions to engage a search firm to assist with hiring an Athletic Director, Football Coach, and Men's Basketball Coach.

Administrators' satisfaction with the search process and likelihood to engage a firm in the future were also addressed in the online survey. Those who engaged a search firm were asked to rate their satisfaction in regards to a variety of factors involving the candidates presented by the search firm. Administrators were most satisfied with candidate experience, qualification, and reputation and significantly less satisfied with the quantity and quality of female and minority candidates. A mean of 3.74 out of 5 in regards to satisfaction with the overall search firm process indicates that administrators were satisfied with the search firm's assistance in the hiring process. As a whole, administrators were unlikely to engage a search firm in the future, but those who engaged a search firm in the past were significantly more

likely than those who had not engaged to hire a firm in the future. FBS institutions were also significantly more likely to engage a search firm than FCS and Non-Football institutions. Those administrators who were likely to engage a firm in the future were also likely to engage the same firm. Those administrators who were unlikely to engage a search firm in the future indicated that the cost of the firm and “Other” factors that were not an option in the survey were the most significant reasons why they would be unlikely to engage. When a linear regression was run to determine the impact that satisfaction with the search firm process had on the likelihood of engaging a firm in the future, the results were significant and 15.3% of the variance in likelihood was explained by satisfaction. This indicates that many other factors are also present in this decision-making process.

Administrators also stated that the vast majority of AD’s, Men’s and Women’s Basketball Coaches, and Football Coaches that were hired with search firm assistance were still employed by the institution. Men’s and Women’s Olympic Sport Coaches had more coaches who were not currently employed than who were, but this could be due to the low sample size for these positions. Administrators most frequently gave search firms the resources of salary and reimbursement, with internal documents and employee interviews given about 50% of the time. Search firms’ responsibilities most often included compiling a list of candidates, contacting candidates to schedule interviews, discussing candidate qualifications, and meeting with decision-makers.

## **Conclusions**

Reviewing the data collected and the completed statistical procedures reveals several important conclusions regarding the use of search firms in intercollegiate athletics. The first is that engaging search firms is a common practice in Division I athletics. Over half of

administrators considered using a search firm, and almost 40% did engage a search firm in the past five years. FBS institutions had the majority of search firm engagements, which is not surprising given the fact that these schools have more resources than FCS and Non-Football institutions. This further verifies the research conducted by Ammons & Glass in 1988 that found that larger cities tended to hire search firms more often than smaller cities and towns. The vast majority of hires that firms assisted with were for an Athletic Director, Men's Basketball Coach, and Football Coach. Given the financial stakes that go hand-in-hand with those positions, using a search firm may help alleviate the pressure felt by administrators to make the right hire for the institution.

The reasons behind administrators choosing whether or not to engage a firm also seem to be clear from the results. Those who did not engage the firm cited cost of the search firm as the most important factor in the decision making process. Closely following that factor were the belief that hiring was the administrator's responsibility and a desire to control the process. Since those who did not engage a search firm were more likely to be from FCS or Non-Football institutions who have less resources, it may be that their lack of resources leads to the belief and desire mentioned above. These institutions know that they do not have the money to engage the firm, so they use other more philosophical factors to justify their decision. These results are similar to the study conducted by Burns in 1971, which also found that the cost of the firm was too great and that internal hiring methods were preferred. Those who do engage firms believed that the quality of results was the greatest risk, with cost being a close second. These schools also believe that the confidentiality gained from using a search firm is worth the investment. Confidentiality was mentioned by both those who did and did not engage as being extremely important. In today's society,

there is great interest in who the next coach or administrator at a school will be, and search firms facilitate this process without allowing media or fans access to information. This trust in the firm's representatives, along with the firm's ability to effectively identify and evaluate potential candidates, constitute institutions' reasons for investing thousands of dollars in these search firms.

It is also interesting to note that the success of other searches was not one of the most important factors for those engaging the firm, and schools were only somewhat influenced by the fact that other schools have engaged firms in the past. These survey questions were based upon institutional theory, but it seems that peer institutions' decisions are not as important as other factors when engaging search firms. The fact that success of other searches was not an extremely important factor mirrors the results of the Haunschild and Miner study in 1997 and the Williamson and Cable study in 2003. Both of these studies found that outcome-based imitation, which involves mimicking actions that produced positive results for other firms, was not a significant factor in the decision-making process. While it would make logical sense that seeing successful hires being made with the assistance of search firms would be an important factor in deciding whether to hire the firm, results from previous and this study have found otherwise. Since institutions were only somewhat influenced by the fact that other schools have engaged firms in the past, it can be concluded that frequency-based imitation, which consists of imitating actions that have been taken by a large number of organizations, was not particularly present in this study. This contradicts the results from Haunschild and Miner (1997) and Williamson and Cable (2003) where frequency-based imitation was found to have a significant and positive relationship with organizational hiring patterns in regards to search firms. Perhaps further research

should be done in order to examine more deeply the impact that other organizations' actions and beliefs have on an administrator's decision involving a search firm.

In regards to the investment related to a search firm, it is clearly more expensive to engage a search firm than to hire internally. For reasons previously mentioned, administrators believe this investment is worth the end result. Those who have engaged firms in the past are willing to pay more than those who have not. This may indicate that these institutions simply have more resources to dedicate to hiring, or it could be that firms were satisfied with their search firm experience and firmly believe in paying more to achieve the best results.

It is interesting to note that there were no statistically significant differences in the time spent on the hiring process for those who engaged the firm as compared to those who did not. Time spent on the hiring process actually increased for some positions when a firm was engaged when compared to hiring internally. It is possible that survey respondents misunderstood the question, which caused the responses to be more similar than they actually are in the real world. Or, respondents simply entered the same amount of time for both options (internally and with the firm) because they were not able to accurately estimate the time spent. Another possible explanation involves the fact that even though search firms are facilitating the process, there may be more people involved in the process, and subsequently, more total time must be invested to make the right decision. This also reinforces the data collected on the importance of time saved as a factor in the decision. Since time saved was not one of the top factors for engaging a search firm and there were no significant differences in time spent in the hiring process, it can be concluded that firms are not being engaged first and foremost to give administrators more time to spend on other responsibilities. Due to the

fact that there is minimal time being saved by administrators, the monetary value of saving that time is also minimal. The minimal value generated does not justify the cost investment that is associated with the engagement of a search firm, so clearly the value of the money being spent on the firm has more to do with the other services that these firms provide.

Administrators tend to be satisfied with the search firm process overall. Those who engaged a search firm in the past were very likely to engage a firm in the future, while those who have not previously engaged tend to be less likely. This may simply be due to a difference in resources. Schools who do not have the resources cannot engage a firm; therefore, they are less likely to do so in the future unless their resource situation changes. FBS institutions face tremendous pressure to succeed, so they choose to use their available resources on firms who specialize in the hiring process. Those who engaged a firm also tended to be very satisfied with the presented candidates' reputation, experience, and qualifications. When coupled with the guarantee of confidentiality and effectiveness of facilitating communication, this satisfaction increases and causes institutions to continue to hire these firms.

Administrators were significantly less satisfied with the quantity and quality of minority and female candidates. While administrators were not dissatisfied with these factors, it seems that firms are not as concerned with diversity. This could be due to the fact that firms are often seen as another "old boys" network that only promotes from within their limited network. These results indicate that more research should be done to examine the practices of search firms in relation to diversity, and the survey questions related to diversity should provide a solid foundation. It could be that search firms have not been as effective at identifying minority and female candidates and including them in the candidate pool. Or, it



could indicate that there are simply less minority and female candidates in comparison to white male candidates, so a smaller percentage are included in the applicant pool that the firms provide to the administrator. Finally, the slightly lower satisfaction rating could be a way that administrators justify hiring another non-minority candidate. Rating the quantity and quality of these candidates lower provides a reason for an administrator to choose another candidate for the job, even if the minority and female candidates were actually plentiful in number and qualified for the particular position. Almost 90% of respondents were white, and 56% were males, so it is possible that these non-minority respondents simply hired someone who was similar to them because they felt more comfortable justifying that decision. These possibilities should all be examined to clarify the existing relationship between minority/female candidates and search firms.

Firms do seem to be finding “successful” coaches for institutions, as the vast majority of Athletic Directors, Football Coaches, and Men’s Basketball Coaches are still employed by that institution. This may be due to the fact that the hire occurred within the last five years, so the coach may not have had significant time to succeed or fail. Or, it could indicate that firms are indeed identifying candidates who are qualified and a good fit for a particular institution. More time and research is needed to determine if one or both of these factors have contributed to these coaches still being employed.

Finally, search firms seem to be most heavily involved with the beginning of the hiring process. They are most often meeting with decision-makers to identify candidates, contacting candidates to gauge interest and schedule interviews, and facilitating the interview process both logistically and ensuring confidentiality. These firms complete the “behind the scenes” prep work that allows those in charge of hiring to remove themselves from this

sometimes shady world. The institutions tend to make the final decision regarding who will actually be hired, with the firm occasionally making recommendations. The firm's role as a liaison serves its purpose to assemble interested candidates, but administrators have the responsibility for the actual hire.

Overall, search firms tend to be used by those who have more resources in order to mitigate the risk that goes along with a high-profile position such as a Football or Men's Basketball Coach. Those with fewer resources tend to be more hesitant to engage these firms, as many believe they are delegating an essential responsibility. Search firms do require significant investment, but administrators seem to be satisfied with the process and willing to engage firms in the future. This study encapsulated a relatively recent time period, so it will be interesting to see if the opinions and actions of administrators change as those new hires have spent several years at the institution. Regardless, the practice of using search firms is popular, especially among larger institutions, and will most likely continue to grow as intercollegiate athletics become even bigger business.

### **Recommendations**

This study was intended to provide a foundation of knowledge regarding the use of search firms in intercollegiate athletics. While valuable data was collected regarding search firms, future research is needed in order to expand the literature and increase the information available in order to assist administrators in the decision-making process.

After reviewing the open-ended responses and email replies of administrators, one common statement was that they were not involved and/or aware of the intricacies of the search firm process. In particular, FAR's often stated that they were informed that a search firm would be hired, but they had no say in the decision and did not know many of the

details. Future studies should perhaps seek information from different sources in order to collect data from those more involved in the process. Potential targets include human resources personnel and university presidents. Those in human resources may be able to more accurately report data regarding the financial investment involved with search firms. University presidents or chancellors could potentially provide information regarding the use of search firms when hiring an athletic director, and they may also provide the university's overall position on hiring search firms and the factors that went into creating that philosophy.

It may also be beneficial to wait a few years before conducting a similar study regarding search firms. Since the practice of engaging search firms seems to be growing rapidly, a larger and more representative sample may be obtained if the research is not conducted for a certain period of time. This may be especially helpful in regards to engaging search firms for a Women's Basketball Coach and Olympic Sport Coaches, since the sample size for this study was relatively small. By waiting to obtain a larger sample, it will likely be easier to ascertain the trends that are developing for search firm use for a variety of coaching and administrative positions.

There is also the possibility of conducting research related to repeat engagements of search firms. Several articles were written regarding the cyclical nature of search firm hires, and it could be interesting to study the administrators' views and experiences related to this process. For instance, a study examining those who engaged a search firm for multiple hires and/or those who were hired by an institution who engaged the same search firm could provide valuable insight into the role of networking and previous relationships in the hiring process. It is also important to examine firms' effectiveness at identifying and recommending female and minority candidates for these positions to ensure that firms are

indeed allowing every deserving candidate an opportunity and not just those with whom they have connections. Analyzing the structure and popularity of the major search firm “players” could also reveal important trends regarding the best practices of leaders in the industry. Research should also be conducted that focuses on the perspective of the search firm, and interviews with search firm representatives could be undertaken in order to determine how their goals, opinions, and actions compare with those of athletic administrators.

Finally, perhaps the most important future research regarding search firms should examine the success of the hires made. Obviously, collegiate athletics are a multi-million dollar industry, and hiring the right coach or administrator is of utmost importance. While results from this study indicate that confidentiality is one of the major benefits of engaging a search firm, firm representatives should also be providing an impressive list of candidates and helping to facilitate the entire search process. If all they are providing is confidentiality, the firms basically become a travel agent who specializes in shielding information from the public. It may be the case that confidentiality is the ultimate goal for some universities, but for others, the evaluation of candidates is just as important. The next logical step seems to be to compare the success of coaches or administrators hired with the assistance of search firms against those coaches or administrators who were hired internally. Examining the substantial, quantitative benefits that search firms provide seems to be the next logical step that could provide great value to those companies that are contemplating using a search firm in the hiring process. Criteria would obviously need to be established to measure “success”, but this research could provide administrators with extremely valuable information regarding whether their investment in a search firm will translate into future success.

The use of search firms seems to be a practice that will continue to exist in collegiate athletics in the near future. Conducting research on the various facets of this process can better equip administrators to make informed decisions regarding the hiring process.

## APPENDIX: SURVEY

**1. Between the years of 2005-2010, did your institution(s) conduct a search in order to hire either a head coach or senior athletics administrator? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	No

**2. Between the years of 2005-2010, did your institution(s) consider using a search firm in order to assist with hiring a coach or senior athletics administrator? \*\*Asked to administrators who answered “Yes” to Question 1\*\***

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	No

**3. Did your institution actually engage a search firm in order to assist with the hiring of a coach or senior athletics administrator? \*\*Asked to administrators who answered “Yes” to Question 2\*\***

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	No

**4. Were you personally involved in the decision-making process of whether or not to engage a search firm? \*\*Asked to administrators who answered “Yes” to Question 3\*\***

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	No

**5. How many hires did a search firm assist with? \*\*Asked to administrators who answered “Yes” to Question 3\*\***

Text Response

**6. What positions did the search firm assist with filling? \*\*Asked to administrators who answered “Yes” to Question 3\*\***

#	Answer
1	Men's Basketball Coach
2	Women's Basketball Coach
3	Football Coach
4	Men's Olympic Sport Coach
5	Women's Olympic Sport Coach
6	Athletic Director
7	Other

**7. What is your role / position within the athletic department? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

#	Answer
1	Athletic Director
2	Senior Woman Administrator
3	Faculty Athletics Representative
4	Chief Financial Officer / Business Office

**8. Please write in your job title. \*\*Asked to administrators who answered “Chief Financial Officer/Business Office\*\***

Text Response

**9. What is your sex? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

**10. Please specify your race. \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**11. What is your age? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

#	Answer
1	20-29
2	30-39
3	40-49
4	50-59
5	60-69
6	70+

**12. How many years were you (or have you been) employed by the institution that engaged a search firm in the hiring process? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

Text Response

**13. How many years of total experience do you have in Division I athletics? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

Text Response



**14. How is the institution that engaged a search firm currently classified? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

#	Answer
1	Division I FBS
2	Division I FCS
3	Division I Non-Football

**15. How important were each of the following factors in your institution's decision to NOT engage a search firm? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each factor, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to those administrators who did NOT engage a search firm\*\***

#	Question	Extremely unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat important	Extremely important
1	Cost of search firm					
2	Desired control of process					
3	Considered hiring one of main job responsibilities					
4	Lack of confidence in search firm					

**16. How important do you perceive each of the following benefits of engaging a search firm? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each benefit, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who did NOT engage a search firm\*\***

#	Question	Extremely unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat important	Extremely important
1	Expertise of the firm					
2	Time saved					
3	Candidate identification & evaluation					
4	Outside & unbiased perspective					
5	Confidentiality					
6	Success of other searches					

**17. How important were each of the following factors in your institution's decision to engage a search firm? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each factor, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Question	Extremely unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat important	Extremely important
1	Expertise of the search firm					
2	Time saved					
3	Candidate identification & evaluation					
4	Outside & unbiased perspective					
5	Confidentiality					
6	Success of other searches					

**18. How important were the following perceived risks and/or drawbacks of engaging a search firm? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each risk and/or drawback, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Question	Extremely unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat important	Extremely important
1	Cost of the search firm					
2	Lack of control in search process					
3	Quality of search firm results					
4	Negative perceptions by others					

**19. How influential was it that other Division I schools have engaged search firms when deciding whether to engage a particular search firm? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who conducted a search for a head coach or administrator between 2005 – 2010\*\***

#	Question	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Moderately influential	Very influential	Extremely influential
1	Other Division I schools employed search firm					

**20. What is the maximum amount that you would pay a search firm to assist in the hiring process for the following positions? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each position, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who conducted a search for a head coach or administrator between 2005 – 2010\*\***

#	Question	We would never use a search firm for this position.	\$0 - \$15,000	\$15,000 - \$30,000	\$30,000 - \$45,000	\$45,000 - \$60,000	\$60,000 - \$75,000	\$75,000 - \$90,000	\$90,000 - \$105,000	\$105,000 - \$120,000	\$120,000 - \$135,000	\$135,000 - \$150,000	\$150,000 +
1	AD												
2	Football												
3	MBB												
4	WBB												
5	Men's Olympic												
6	Women's Olympic												

**21. Please estimate the total time spent (in hours) by all involved individuals, including search committee members, in the hiring process for the following positions if no search**

firm were engaged (including candidate identification and selection, research, interviews, decision making, etc.) \*\*Asked to all administrators who conducted a search for a head coach or administrator between 2005 – 2010\*\*

Athletic Director	Football Coach	Men's Basketball Coach	Women's Basketball Coach	Men's Olympic Sport Coach	Women's Olympic Sport Coach

**22. Please estimate the cost of hiring a new coach or athletic director using internal processes. Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each position, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who conducted a search for a head coach or administrator between 2005 – 2010\*\***

#	Question	\$0-\$15,000	\$15,001-\$30,000	\$30,001-\$45,000	\$45,001-\$60,000	\$60,001-\$75,000	\$75,001-\$90,000	\$90,001-\$105,000	\$105,001-\$120,000	\$120,001-\$135,000	\$135,001-\$150,000	\$150,001+
1	AD											
2	Football											
3	MBB											
4	WBB											
5	Men's Olympic											
6	Women's Olympic											

**23. What was the total cost of engaging a search firm? (If a search firm was not engaged for a particular coaching position, please leave that row blank.) Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each position, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Question	\$0 - \$15,000	\$15,001 - \$30,000	\$30,001 - \$45,000	\$45,001 - \$60,000	\$60,001 - \$75,000	\$75,001 - \$90,000	\$90,001 - \$105,000	\$105,001 - \$120,000	\$120,001 - \$135,000	\$135,001 - \$150,000	\$150,001 +
1	Athletic Director											
2	Football Coach											
3	Men's Basketball Coach											
4	Women's Basketball Coach											
5	Men's Olympic Sport Coach											
6	Women's Olympic Sport Coach											

**24. Please estimate the total time spent (in hours) by all involved individuals, including search committee members, in the hiring process for each of the following positions when a search firm is engaged (including candidate identification and selection, research, interviews, decision making, etc.) \*Do NOT include time spent by search firm representatives\* \*\*Asked to all administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

Athletic Director	Football Coach	Men's Basketball Coach	Women's Basketball Coach	Men's Olympic Sport Coach	Women's Olympic Sport Coach

**25. Please identify all resources that were allocated to the search firm in order to assist with the hiring process. If search firms were used on multiple occasions, please use the most recent search to answer this question. \*\*Asked to administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Salary / Compensation
2	Reimbursement for expenses
3	Internal documents
4	Employee feedback via interviews
5	Other



**26. What services or duties did the search firm perform? Please check all that apply. If search firms were used on multiple occasions, please use the most recent search to answer this question. \*\*Asked to all administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Compile a list of candidates
2	Conduct interviews with current athletic department employees
3	Meet with decision-makers
4	Discuss candidate qualifications and desired skills or attributes with decision-makers
5	Contact candidates to gauge interest
6	Contact candidates to schedule interviews
7	Assist with interviews
8	Compile list of "top candidates"
9	Assist with final decision-making process
10	Other

**27. Is the coach or administrator who was hired using a search firm still employed by the university in that position? \*\*Asked to all administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Question	Yes	No	Responses	Mean
1	Men's Basketball Coach				
2	Women's Basketball Coach				
3	Football Coach				
4	Men's Olympic Sport Coach				
5	Women's Olympic Sport Coach				
6	Athletic Director				
7	Other				

**28. Overall, please rate your satisfaction with the candidates presented by the search firm in regards to the following factors. If search firms were used on multiple occasions, please use the most recent search to answer this question. Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice for each factor, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Question	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
1	Candidate qualifications					
2	Candidate experience					
3	Candidate prestige and reputation					
4	Quantity of female candidates					
5	Quality of female candidates					
6	Quantity of ethnically diverse candidates					
7	Quality of ethnically diverse candidates					

**29. Overall, please rate your satisfaction with the search firm process as a whole. Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who DID engage a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Very dissatisfied
2	Dissatisfied
3	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4	Satisfied
5	Very satisfied

**30. Please rank how likely you would be to engage a search firm the next time you are making a coach or administrative hire. Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to all administrators who conducted a search for a head coach or administrator between 2005 – 2010\*\***

#	Answer
1	Very Unlikely
2	Unlikely
3	Undecided
4	Likely
5	Very Likely

**31. How likely would you be to engage the same search firm in the hiring process in the future? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to administrators who responded “Likely” or “Very Likely” to Question 30\*\***

#	Answer
1	Very Unlikely
2	Unlikely
3	Undecided
4	Likely
5	Very Likely

**32. What are your reasons for being unlikely to engage a search firm in the future? Please be aware that while you are able to change your answer choice, you may NOT completely unselect an answer choice and leave the question blank once you have selected any of the listed options. \*\*Asked to administrators who responded “Very Unlikely”, “Unlikely”, or “Undecided” to Question 30.**

#	Question	Extremely unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat important	Extremely important
1	Cost of search firm					
2	Lack of quality candidates presented					
3	Search process took too long					
4	Poor experience with search firm representative					
5	Desired candidate was not hired					
6	Other					

**33. Please describe any additional thoughts or experiences regarding the use of search firms in intercollegiate athletics. \*\*Asked to all administrators who conducted a search for a head coach or administrator between 2005 – 2010\*\***

Text Response

**34. Thank you for completing this survey regarding search firms in intercollegiate athletics. Your response is greatly appreciated. Would you like to request the results of this study? \*\*Asked to all administrators\*\***

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	No

**\*\*The following questions were asked in the survey at the request of this thesis committee. Responses were not analyzed for this study but will be used for future research.\*\***

**6A1. How many candidates applied for the men's basketball coach position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a men's basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response	

**6A2. Please identify the number of applicants that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men's basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6A3. Please identify the number of applicants that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men's basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6A4. How many total candidates were interviewed for this position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a men's basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6A5. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6A6. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6A7. Please indicate the race of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**6A8. Please indicate the sex of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

**6B1. How many candidates applied for the women's basketball coach position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response



**6B2. Please identify the number of applicants that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6B3. Please identify the number of applicants that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6B4. How many total candidates were interviewed for this position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6B5. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6B6. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6B7. Please indicate the race of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**6B8. Please indicate the sex of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s basketball coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

**6C1. How many candidates applied for the football coach position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6C2. Please identify the number of applicants that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6C3. Please identify the number of applicants that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6C4. How many total candidates were interviewed for this position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

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**6C5. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6C6. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6C7. Please indicate the race of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**6C8. Please indicate the sex of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a football coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

**6D1. How many candidates applied for the Men’s Olympic Sport coach position?  
\*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

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**6D2. Please identify the number of applicants that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6D3. Please identify the number of applicants that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6D4. How many total candidates were interviewed for this position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

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**6D5. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6C6. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6D7. Please indicate the race of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**6D8. Please indicate the sex of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a men’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

**6E1. How many candidates applied for the Women’s Olympic Sport coach position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6E2. Please identify the number of applicants that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6E3. Please identify the number of applicants that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6E4. How many total candidates were interviewed for this position? \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

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**6E5. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6E6. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6E7. Please indicate the race of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**6E8. Please indicate the sex of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired a women’s Olympic sport coach using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

**6F1. How many candidates applied for the Athletic Director position? \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6F2. Please identify the number of applicants that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6F3. Please identify the number of applicants that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6F4. How many total candidates were interviewed for this position? \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6F5. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6F6. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6F7. Please indicate the race of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**6F8. Please indicate the sex of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

**6G1. What was the title of the "Other" position that was hired with the assistance of a search firm? \*\*Asked to those who hired an athletic director using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6G2. How many candidates applied for the "Other" position? \*\*Asked to those who hired an "Other" position using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6G3. Please identify the number of applicants that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired an "Other" position using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other



**6G4. Please identify the number of applicants that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired an “Other” position using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6G5. How many total candidates were interviewed for this position? \*\*Asked to those who hired an “Other” position using a search firm\*\***

Text Response

**6G6. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were of each race. \*\*Asked to those who hired an “Other” position using a search firm\*\***

White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Other

**6G7. Please indicate the number of applicants who interviewed for the position that were male and the number that were female. \*\*Asked to those who hired an “Other” position using a search firm\*\***

Male	Female

**6G8. Please indicate the race of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired an “Other” position using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	White
2	Black
3	Asian
4	American Indian
5	Hispanic
6	Pacific Islander
7	Other

**6G9. Please indicate the sex of the candidate who was hired for the position. \*\*Asked to those who hired an “Other” position using a search firm\*\***

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

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