



The Executive Search Positioning Checklist

How clearly would a search partner place you in a leadership mandate?

SECTION 1: YOUR EXECUTIVE ARCHETYPE (CLARITY TEST)

If a search partner had 10 seconds, could they place you?

✓ Can you clearly articulate:

☐ I operate primarily in this type of environment:

(e.g., enterprise / PE-backed / high-growth / turnaround / scaling / regulated)

☐ The core constraint I solve is:

(e.g., execution breakdown, scaling friction, GTM alignment, operational discipline)

☐ My leadership impact consistently shows up as:

(e.g., faster execution, improved alignment, predictable scaling, operational stabilization)

⚠ If you wrote more than one answer per line:

→ You are **not yet** a clean archetype

SECTION 2: SEARCH-READY POSITIONING (30-SECOND TEST)

Could you say this clearly in 30 seconds on a recruiter call?

Your positioning statement:

- ☐ I can describe my leadership focus in under 30 seconds
 - ☐ I do NOT rely on job titles to explain my value
 - ☐ I do NOT list multiple unrelated functions or roles
 - ☐ My description is consistent across LinkedIn, email, and calls
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Write your 30-second version here:

SECTION 3: MARKET FIT SIGNAL

Recruiters categorize QUICKLY.

Do search partners instantly know where to place you?

- ☐ My profile clearly maps to at least 1–2 core mandate types
 - ☐ I can name the types of roles I am most aligned to without hesitation
 - ☐ I do NOT describe myself as “open to opportunities broadly”
 - ☐ I am not trying to appeal to multiple unrelated leadership tracks
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If unclear:

You are currently **not filterable in executive search systems**

SECTION 4: SENIORITY SIGNAL AUDIT

Does your language sound like a leader or a candidate?

Check your most recent outreach:

- ☐ I describe environments, not job history
 - ☐ I use phrases like “I operate in...” rather than “I have done...”
 - ☐ **I do NOT say “I am looking for...”**
 - ☐ I do NOT ask for consideration or visibility
 - ☐ My tone is calm, compressed, and observational
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RED FLAGS (that reduce your seniority signal):

- ☐ “Just following up”
 - ☐ “Checking in”
 - ☐ “Any updates?”
 - ☐ “I’d love to be considered”
 - ☐ “I’m open to opportunities”
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SECTION 5: NETWORK POSITIONING (ADVANCED FILTER)

Are you perceived as embedded in a leadership ecosystem?

- ☐ I am connected to operators in my domain
 - ☐ I can reference patterns across organizations, not just one company
 - ☐ I do NOT over-offer help or candidate referrals
 - ☐ I do NOT position myself as a “resource” to recruiters
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Correct signal example:

“I stay close to operators in this space, so I’m embedded in the ecosystem you recruit from.”

SECTION 6: EXECUTIVE SEARCH READINESS SCORE

Score yourself honestly:

- Archetype clarity (/10)
- 30-second positioning strength (/10)
- Market fit specificity (/10)
- Seniority language discipline (/10)
- Network signal maturity (/10)

TOTAL SCORE:

___/50

Interpretation:

- **40–50:** High CXO search readiness
 - **30–39:** Visible but not easily placeable
 - **<30:** Needs positioning tightening before active search engagement
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FINAL DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION

If I removed your name from your LinkedIn and emails,
would a search partner still know exactly where to place you?

- YES → strong positioning
- NO → you are still résumé-based, not archetype-based