



## Case Study – DEA

### Executive Search for a Chief Executive Officer

**The Challenge** – Recruit a new leader who understands the philosophical values of disability employment and who can act as a conduit between disability employment providers, government and politicians.

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Disability Employment Australia (DEA) is a peak body and membership organisation within the disability sector. With a particular focus on employment, the organisation exists to represent the interests of disability service providers at a national level, through the delivery of services designed to support its members to achieve best practice employment services.

DEA approached Parkhouse Bell to conduct a full executive search with a view to sourcing an experienced senior leader who understood, or who was quickly able to appreciate, the philosophical values of disability employment.

Tasked with driving DEA's strategic objectives and implementing its vision to gain both social and commercial outcomes, the CEO was to be commercially astute and able to take full oversight of all financial matters. In addition the new CEO would be required to act as a conduit between members, government and other stakeholders, whilst simultaneously managing the day-to-day operations of the organisation, and diversifying, shaping and guiding DEA into a successful and sustainable future.

Our Managing Consultant spoke with several members of DEA's Board including the Board Chair. A full job brief was taken, and a Position Description and detailed Candidate Information Pack were prepared for distribution to suitable and interested candidates.

Following the preparation and posting of advertisements, Parkhouse Bell undertook a four-week search process that included reviewing existing networks, contacts and word of mouth referrals, responding to applicants through many telephone and email enquiries, as well as undertaking fresh market mapping activities to identify suitably experienced candidates with experience in Disability Employment Services (DES), Employment Services, Government, Disability Services / NDIS, Disability Policy, Peak Bodies, and Human Services. We also actively sought out and encouraged applications from candidates with lived experience of disability.

Throughout the four-week advertising and selection campaign, many suitable candidates were pre-screened and interviewed at length by our Managing Consultant and Head of Research, either in person or via video conferencing, and several were presented to DEA for review, along with application documentation. All short-listed candidates were based in a state capital city and were happy to travel as required for the role.

Following an initial interview, three candidates were asked to participate in a second interview and to prepare a role-relevant presentation. All three candidates presented very well and excellent feedback was provided, however the Board agreed on a preferred candidate, who was sourced via our headhunting activities. Following our negotiations, he accepted the role and commenced the important work of DEA in February 2023.