

## **Harvard Business Review as Thought Leadership**

Janis Machala, Paladin Partners, 425-260-5354, [janism@paladinpartners.com](mailto:janism@paladinpartners.com)

With the fake news sites that have cropped up it's comforting to have brands to rely on such as *HBR*. It's something for which I am grateful, that we still have some modicum of quality journalism and research being conducted. I was reminded of this recently as I was reading the December issue of the *Harvard Business Review*. I suggest to my executive and business coaching clients that a subscription to a few high quality publications is worthwhile if you get just one inspiration out of an issue. From each *HBR* issue I often get many.

"How to Hire a CEO" is a fabulous section in the December 2016 *HBR*. While it's focused on public companies, the lessons learned are highly relevant for all board members RE: CEO hiring, succession, and onboarding. I'd purport it is also relevant when applied to both board and C-level recruitment.

Great board members start by understanding the current and future requirements of the job and then zero in on the critical capabilities that will make or break the company. It culls down to the 2 or 3 capabilities required for the new leader to succeed and move the needle on the business. This becomes a filter and decision framework. I think about it as: "In 12 months what would we want to see accomplished by this new leader?" Tradeoffs are inevitable in any C-level search and deciding how to plug the gap is also a key part of determining how to set up a new executive for success (e.g., supporting the new leader with an executive coach or bringing on or promoting someone as a chief operating officer).

The *HBR* articles also argue for succession planning as a necessary ongoing role of the board so that a loss of any key executive or board member is planned for. Hiring a new CEO doesn't get boards off the hook for the next speed bump of leadership transition(s). Plus, how will new board members or a new CEO be onboarded and set up for success versus a sink or swim approach? This onboarding is often overlooked and is as critical as the hiring of a CEO.

I wish each and every one of the Seattle Angel Forum community a healthy, happy, and prosperous holiday season. I'd love to hear from you as to topics you'd enjoy my weighing in on from my extensive start-up scaling and investor experience. I'm an email or phone call away!