

# SELECTING A LEADER

City of Sebastopol  
City Council Meeting  
June 3, 2025, Item #9



# A Common Executive Search Process

Search processes may have six or more major phases, including:

- Stakeholder / Staff Engagement Meetings
- Profile and Materials Development
- Outreach and Marketing
- Preliminary Candidate Screening and Final Candidate List
- Selection Processes (there may be oral, written, advisory, and practical elements)
- Reference, Background, Physical, Medical, and Appointment

# PHASE ONE – Planning and Preparation

During the initial weeks of an executive search, City staff works closely with the search team and the Council or ad hoc committee to:

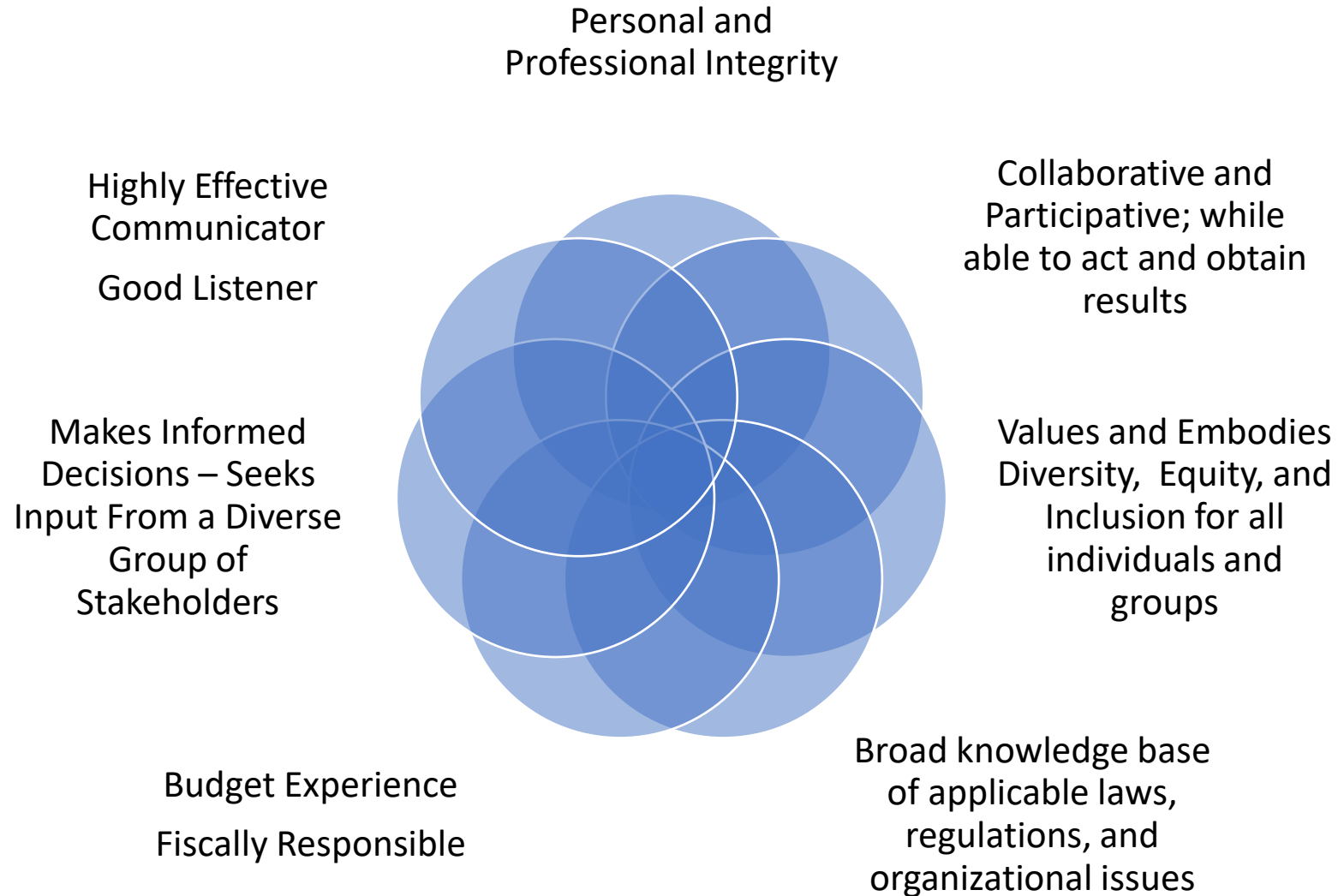
- Determine the methods to collect information about the organization
- Ascertain the current and future key issues facing the City, community, and the position
- Describe the functions and work environment in which the position will work
- Define the people, responsibilities, and customers the position will lead and serve
- Develop a position profile
- Develop Community and stakeholder engagement strategy

## PHASE TWO – Profile and Materials Development

Using the information gleaned in Phase One, a position profile and search materials are developed:

- Develop competencies and attributes for success in the position
- Develop a recruitment strategy
- Develop a search timeline
- Develop marketing materials, brochures, messaging, and ad plan
- Discuss selection processes

# Some Key Leadership Attributes



## PHASE THREE – Outreach and Marketing

A strategic marketing campaign allows the attraction of a broad and qualified pool of candidates. During this phase:

- Brochures, marketing, and print materials are posted and distributed
- Direct mail campaigns are enacted
- Focused email and social media campaigns are initiated
- Recruitment is open and applications are accepted

## PHASE FOUR – PRELIMINARY CANDIDATE SCREEN – FINAL LIST

During Phase Four, the search team reviews all candidate submissions and makes initial calls and interviews with candidates to identify those candidates that best meet the competencies, qualities, and needs identified in the profile developed in steps one and two.

- Sort candidates for qualities and competencies
- Seek to identify special skills or attributes to meet organizational needs
- Develop candidate profiles and rank candidates for final list
- Identify highest and best fit candidates for final selection
- Provide a PDF or binder of all candidates including a list of those not considered for interview, resumes and cover letters of those minimally qualified, and additional candidate profiles for the most qualified candidates

## PHASE FIVE – Selection Process

Working closely with staff and Council or Ad Hoc Committee, the recruitment team will:

- Initiate an inclusive selection process
- Include advisory or ad hoc committee panel(s)
- Schedule a final interview panel or Board
- A final candidate will emerge
- Negotiate, make conditional offer
- Initiate background and other post offer exams



## PHASE SIX – Selection Process

The successful candidate will receive a conditional offer letter and undergo a series of post-offer selection examinations including reference and background checks.

Once clear, an appointment can be made.

The process is confidential until an appointment is made to protect the candidates and any current employers.

## PHASE SIX – Onboarding and Transition

Final steps to a new leader:

- Contract finalization
- Appointment at a Regular Meeting
- Introduction to the Community
- Support for transition and performance planning

# POSSIBLE SEARCH TIMELINE

## POSSIBLE SEARCH TIMELINE UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS

The following timeline is an estimate based on experience and currently anticipated delays due to businesses still closed in response to the pandemic. The actual time may be one to two months faster or slower than indicated.

- **Month 1:**
  - Stakeholder Engagement Meetings
- **Month 2:**
  - Profile and Materials Development
- **Month 3 to 4**
  - Outreach and Marketing - Search for Candidates
- **Month 5**
  - Preliminary Screening – Final Candidate List
- **Month 5 to 6:**
  - Selection Processes
- **Month 6 to 7:**
  - Reference, Background, and Appointment

Thank you!  
Request for Questions.

