

What Is *Celeritas*² And Why Is It important?

Untoward The Holy Grail Of Workforce Optimization



Workforce Optimization – “Matching People and Jobs – fitting the right person to the right job at the right time has long been the Holy Grail of workforce organization.”

McKinsey & Co.

David Hain, the CEO of HR Technologies, Wayne, PA interviewed Grant Lussier the CEO of Celera Search, Radnor, PA a cutting edge executive search firm that specializes in High Tech, Telecom/Datacom and Life Sciences. In this interview, Mr. Hain, a domain expert in the field of Human Resources, examines Celera Search’s research technology and their innovative value proposition. Celera Search created *Celeritas*², knowledge management software applications that utilize data mining research engines. Celera Search is, today, pioneering some of the most promising workforce optimization tools for recruiting and benchmarking knowledge workers.

David: “How did you come up with the idea of creating Celeritas?”

Grant: “A few years ago I was the managing director and country manager for Spencer Stuart in Mexico. Prior to that I was a partner at Heidrick & Struggles. In both cases, the biggest challenge our customers faced at these organizations was getting reliable information about potential candidates on a timely basis – and never enough quantity of potential candidates.”

David: “but these are two of the world’s leading executive search firms. Surely, they must have the best data bases available.”

Grant: “We always touted our vaunted data bases to our clients. But, the truth be known, very few of our final candidates ever came out of those databases. Actually, these are what I would call legacy databases. At Spencer Stuart and Heidrick & Struggles, over the past 40-50 years, these databases have been painstakingly built by hand. You have to realize, that the top global recruiting companies have invested hundreds of millions of dollars creating their proprietary databases, one person at a time. They have legions of highly paid research associates manually data inputting information on potential candidates they have spoken to via phone. At the end of the day, you know the truism regarding databases, ‘garbage in garbage out’; these are static, slow and cumbersome databases that are only as good as the last time you updated it. It is cost prohibitive for these companies to completely update their databases.”

David: “So they are heavily invested in their current database methodologies and platforms – something they are not inclined to cannibalize to try something new?”

Grant: “exactly – but that is another topic for another discussion. Nevertheless, their databases were and remain quite suitable for certain types of applications. For example, if they need to find only one person at a time, their limited databases will most likely do just fine. But if they need to find one person with a complex set of criteria and mix of core competencies, like R&D then their databases go flat. If they need to find multiple persons, forget it, then they hit the wall. They simply don’t have enough people in these databases. They are not equipped to handle large project staffing assignments.”

David: “What do you mean by multiple persons?”

Grant: “I am referring to larger scale staffing projects. If a large global pharma or high-tech software company needs to hire tens and hundreds of technical positions, the top tier search firms are not able to do these types of recruiting assignments. At the end of the day, their business models are designed to handle recruiting assignments one and two at a time. Ask even the largest staffing companies to recruit more than 20 scientists at one time and they are not capable of doing it. We on the other hand, have built a company ideally suited for these large knowledge based staffing projects. We have developed technologies and people in ways never before envisioned. In fact, we thrive on projects that would paralyze our competitors with panic.”

David: What about the internet job board sites, like Monster? Are these alternatives to the way the big traditional search firms conduct searches for clients?

Grant: before I try to answer that, I would like to get back to your original question about how I got the inspiration to create Celeritas. You see, in my view, as an experienced practitioner of executive search, especially these past few years since I have been on my own, I had to develop my own research capability. And I had to do this from scratch. I have always thought there is a better way to do research. Research is the way we find fresh new potential candidates to contact. The problem is that it is expensive. You can either develop it internally, or you can subcontract it to independent contract research firms. In either case, it is a very expensive and time-consuming process. If you look at the entire recruiting industry – from the top tier global firms down to the thousands of independent mom and pops – without exception, they all conduct executive search in a similar fashion. They allocate as much as they possibly can to research and then rely on the good old-fashioned technique of leveraging their network of industry contacts. How many times have you been contacted by executive recruiters trying to pick your brain for fresh new leads of potential candidates to contact?

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David: “I get hundreds of phone calls a year from recruiters...”

Grant: “Right! When I personally call candidates or sources, they almost always tell me that they are deluged by recruiters bugging them for help...”

David: “Where are you going with this line of thinking?”

Grant: “Well, if you think about it...there is a better way to do research. Think about the quantum leaps that IT has had on certain industries. Here I am referring to companies that have been able to exploit IT to reach unimaginable scale and size and become the dominant players in their industries. I am talking about companies in industries that have high volume transactions, i.e., financial services, large consumer credit businesses like credit cards. Think of relatively new companies like Schwab or even a retailer like Wal-mart, etc...all of these companies have broken ahead of the pack because they leveraged Information Technology in ways that have enabled them to reach scale and efficiencies and economies of scale, right?”

David: “Yes, IT has definitely enabled certain industries to transform into what they are today. But how is what you are saying applicable to the world of recruiting and human capital?”

Grant: “OK - if you look at the executive search industry and the personnel staffing industry – they have not adopted IT in a similar fashion. The nasty little secret about the executive search and the recruiting industry in general, is that it has not changed much since its inception 50 years ago. Ironically, HR organizations at some of the leading US corporations are more innovative than the top tier global recruiting firms. The recruiting industry has not figured out how to solve their systemic bottlenecks, the root causes that are inhibiting even the best in class recruiting companies from growing in a more predictable and scalable way. Even with Korn Ferry and Heidrick & Struggles going public, with access to large amounts of fresh new capital, they have hit the wall at about \$500 million in annual sales. They have not figured out how to build a recruiting business that can take advantage of IT’s huge potential for transformation.

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At Celera Search we are building a business model that dramatically leverages information technologies and people in ways never before envisioned. We are building this business from scratch with the point of departure that says – ‘how can we build a recruiting business that solves our client’s systemic bottlenecks?’ We have asked ourselves, ‘In an ideal world, how would we build a recruiting company that can handle a large amount of recruiting volume (throughput) while providing the highest quality candidates to our clients?’ ‘What are the best ways to perform research, business intelligence, benchmark and contact potential candidates? How can we streamline the process? Not only faster time to completion – but faster time to contribution? Guarantee results to our clients? Etc, etc..? What would it take to build such a company? What kind of technologies and business models would you need to build such a company?’ If clients could gain access to this new paradigm, they could truly recruit the best human capital and build themselves into market leaders.

Approximately three years ago, I left Spencer Stuart, I immersed myself in solving this business problem. I have spent thousands of hours and invested my life’s savings in R&D developing the company that solves all these questions. Celera Search is the company and Celeritas is the innovative technology that enables us to do research in ways previously unimagined.



For example, we recently built a physician database. In a matter of weeks we created from scratch the worlds most comprehensive database of physicians throughout the USA. Did you know there are approximately 750,000 physicians in the USA? Until we built that database I didn't know that either. Now we know who they are, where they work (in practice vs. in the pharmaceutical industry, etc.), their functional areas of expertise, years of experience, their educational backgrounds, most of their affiliations, their achievements, milestones, their published research papers, where they live, their contact information, etc., etc.

We built this database as part of our research process for an executive search assignment to find a senior rheumatology physician for one of our clients, a leading global pharmaceutical company. Every time we start a new executive search assignment, we develop a research strategy and then blueprint a methodology to automate our research utilizing our proprietary research technology Celeritas.

David: you mean to say that you built a database of 750,000 physicians to find one person?

Grant: this is exactly my point! We have invented technologies unique to our company. We can build a database in a matter of a couple of weeks or less. Every time we build a new database we get better and quicker...

David: but ¾ of million people! At that level of detail, that sounds unbelievable. How do you guys do that? And isn't that overkill?"

Grant: that's part of our magic recipe so to speak. I have spent the past three years developing our IP with a group of 25 technologists spearheaded by a software guru PhD form MIT who was a former product development/management executive at a world leading data mining business intelligence company. But what is really exciting about this, is that now i.e. when our client wanted us to recruit the best rheumatologist, we were able to demonstrate to ourselves as recruiters and to our client, that we indeed did identify virtually 100% of the rheumatology universe of potential candidates. With Celeritas, we were very quickly able to determine that there are approximately 5,800 rheumatologists in the USA. Of these 5,800 we were able to utilize Celeritas to screen against our clients most challenging requirements and further determine that approximately 480 rheumatologists came from the top 10 academic institutions desired by our client. Thereafter, we were able to further refine the candidate pool to approximately 20 finalists that met the various stringent criteria that our client desired in the finalist candidate.

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I can, unequivocally, tell you that this robust capability is unique to Celera Search and is wholly dependent on utilizing our research technology Celeritas. There isn't a recruiting company in the world that can begin to match our research capability. Just do the math...if one were to attempt building this physician database by hand; they would have to initially spend approximately 1-2 hours just to

get the rudimentary facts about each physician. Add to this numerous more hours for the abundant additional detail—the key performance indicators—that we provide regarding each physician, ie. school background, contact info, milestones, research, etc...the entire database begins to approach 10 million man hours of research. Even at the world's largest recruiting firms, this would be cost prohibitive!

So why is this important— what does all of this do for our clients? For the first time, our clients feel secure that a recruiter is really telling them the truth. That the candidates being presented actually represent the best out there. Never before have recruiters been able to look at virtually 100% of the candidate universe, identify and select the best potential candidates. Until now, most recruiters have had to depend on their personal network of contacts, the legacy databases and limited research of the company where they work.

David: What about the resume job board sites, like Monster? Monster claims they have 18 million resumes. And there are approximately 40,000 resume job board sites in the USA alone – can't companies depend on these resume board sites to recruit the people they need?

Right! Clients should care less that Monster has 18 million resumes...as far as we are concerned, they are basically the 18 million wrong ones. We are proactively and strategically building the world's largest database of knowledge workers.

Grant: I am glad you mentioned this. The next time you visit with one of your knowledge based clients, like a bio-pharma company, ask them how many genomic scientists they were able to pull from the monster board site, how many rheumatologists from the top 10 academic institutions? How many researchers and scientists with 10-20 years experience in clinical development, etc, etc?

David: I see where you are going with this – in other words, you are not promoting volume of resumes but rather the ability to identify and target - pinpoint the most difficult to find knowledge based human capital.

Grant: Right! Clients should care less that Monster has 18 million resumes...as far as we are concerned, they are basically the 18 million wrong ones. We are proactively and strategically building the world's largest database of knowledge workers. Initially, our focus is on the life sciences as it is an ideal fit for our business model. Eventually, in several years I anticipate that we will have a database of close to 50 million knowledge based workers across the globe representing the top 15-20% of the corporate strata responsible for inventing, creating, launching, marketing/selling and manufacturing high-tech knowledge based products and services across the globe.

Today we have a unique competitive advantage, as we can identify, target and contact them faster and better than any company in the world.

David: With this capability you could potentially build one of the world's largest and fastest growing recruiting companies, if not the largest. Are you interested in building the largest recruiting company?

Grant: that has its allure...If the marketplace rewards us with this privilege, that would be great. I am at the end of the day, an entrepreneur. I have other ideas and applications that I would like to sink my teeth into.

David: what other things are you talking about – like what?

Grant: I can envision our research technologies playing a strategic role or becoming a strategic piece of knowledge management for global 3000 corporations. We are currently in discussions with fortune 100 companies that are interested in licensing our databases as well as our research technologies. Business intelligence tools to date have focused primarily on competitive intelligence issues surrounding products and services. I believe we are the first to focus on linking business intelligence to the human capital responsible for creating, developing and bringing products and services to market. In my view that is a hugely powerful thing. However, we are still perfecting Celeritas as an internal tool and my sense is it will take us a couple of years to perfect the feature sets necessary for it to be ready for prime time in the knowledge management space. But I do know that we have many commercial opportunities waiting to be developed and that is really exciting.

David: “Like what else?”

Grant: “With one of our advisory board members, we are developing a consulting business initially around strategic issues of rationalizing R&D, linking it to long term strategic growth, and providing robust and meaningful benchmarking services to assure that our knowledge based clients have a meaningful and actionable blue print to help them execute their mid to long term plans.”

I can envision our research technologies playing a strategic role or becoming a strategic piece of knowledge management for global 3000 corporations. We are currently in discussions with fortune 100 companies that are interested in licensing our databases as well as our research technologies.

David: “You suggest there are numerous other applications. Why is that?”

Grant: “In my view, I imagine our research technologies morphing into a strategic research tool that our clients can utilize to sustain a competitive edge. I have been thinking about some quick and easy way to remember—a marketing tag line—our research technologies. Because there are truly limitless applications for knowledge management business intelligence technologies, it is hard for people to get their hands around it in a kind of simple reductive way. In an elevator pitch, if some one were to ask me what it can do... I would say: I believe everything starts with people and the ability of people to imagine the future...new possibilities. Celeritas is a tool that enables people to access unprecedented levels of knowledge...I think about it as having the potential to reach virtually omniscient levels of knowledge. With this kind of research power...with Celeritas – if one can imagine the possibilities, imagine the power, then Celeritas can help power the imagination to new unprecedented heights of creative output. Knowledge based corporations will one day routinely use, if not our specific technologies, these types of technologies to help them power and drive their companies to sustain competitive advantage. The converse holds true, those companies that do not adopt them, will certainly lag behind and ultimately get crushed by the sheer competitive superiority of the best in class that know how to exploit and take advantage of these powerful tools.” End

About HR Technologies (www.hrscope.com)

HR Technologies' mission is to provide the technological tools, quantitative techniques, and related consulting support required for the effective management of human assets. At the core of its product line is a proprietary software product called HRScope™, which leverages competencies into key business and human resources processes. HR Technologies' suite of services offer expertise in competency development, staffing and selection, performance management, management development, succession planning, training & development, career planning and outplacement/de-selection.

About Celera Search LLC (www.celerasearch.com)

Celera Search is a premier organizational strategy and executive search firm comprised of 35 former top tier strategy consultants, executive search professionals and software technologists in the USA and India. The firm specializes in providing Value Based Selling organizational strategy and recruiting services for industry leaders in IT (hardware/software), Telecom/Datacom, and Life Sciences. Celera Search's consultants have deep domain expertise advising and building senior level general management and technical teams across all functional areas. Celera Search created **celeritas**² cutting edge enterprise application software - data mining, business intelligence, knowledge management technologies - for identifying, recruiting human capital, benchmarking and workforce optimization.

Grant P. Lussier is Chief Executive Officer of Celera Search. Prior to Celera Search, Mr. Lussier was a partner and managing director at Heidrick & Struggles and Spencer Stuart. During his tenure as Chairman and Country Manager for Spencer Stuart in Mexico, Grant built the fastest growing executive search firm in the history of Latin America. As a strategy consultant with Arthur D. Little, Grant worked with global 3000 corporations developing business plans, portfolio analysis at the global business unit level and assessed international acquisitions and divestitures.

Mr. Lussier has conducted Board searches and "C" level executive recruiting assignments for global 3000 companies throughout the Americas. A partial list of previous clients include AT&T, MCI, Nextel, Sony, Toshiba, GE, Komatsu, Citibank, New York Life, McGraw-Hill, Columbia TriStar Pictures, SAP. A partial list of Venture Capital clients include Bessemer Venture Partners, Columbia Capital, JP Morgan Capital, Chase Capital Partners, Bluestream Ventures, and Advent International. At Celera, Grant specializes in recruiting "C" level executives for venture capital backed emerging technology startups as well as senior level executives for publicly traded companies in IT, Telecom and Life Sciences. He manages the firm's Value Based Selling practice. Mr. Lussier was raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina and received a B.A. degree in International Relations from Brown University. Upon graduation, Grant was the founder and for 11 years was the CEO of 3XM, Inc. a pioneer in CAD-CAM advanced prototyping.