

GOOD SOUL HUNTING

Choosing the Right Wellness & Fitness Recruiter

A Guide for Boutique Fitness Brands, Health
Club Operators, and Wellness Investors.

By Lucy Adey & Matt Adey, Founders | Good Soul Hunting



The Wellness & Fitness Talent Crisis

Whether you're a founder scaling a boutique fitness brand, a CEO growing a wellness company, or a leader building out your health club's executive team, you already know the challenge that sits at the center of everything: finding the people who can actually drive meaningful growth.

The wellness and fitness talent shortage isn't a perception problem. It's a mathematical reality. And understanding the numbers helps explain why your approach to recruitment matters as much as it does.

The U.S. health and wellness market reached \$2.31 trillion in 2025 and is expected to expand to \$3.70 trillion by 2034, growing at a compound annual rate of 5.4%. According to McKinsey, 82% of U.S. consumers now consider wellness a top or important priority in their everyday lives. Globally, the wellness economy grew 7.9% from 2023 to 2024, reaching a record \$6.8 trillion with forecasts of \$8.5 trillion by 2027.

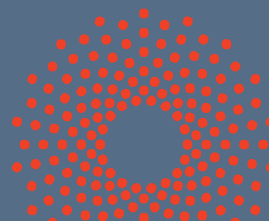
This growth is extraordinary. It also creates extraordinary demand for the leaders who can navigate it. At every level, brands compete for talent. But at the leadership level, the competition intensifies considerably. VPs of Sales who understand membership growth. Directors of Operations who've scaled multi-location businesses. Marketing leaders who can build brand presence in crowded markets. These individuals are in short supply, and the ones who consistently deliver results are rarer still.

The fitness industry is growing at approximately 8.7% per year, with global club memberships projected to reach 230 million by 2030. Yet as the Global Wellness Institute notes, staff retention remains a critical challenge, particularly in roles where compensation lags behind other service industries. You're not just competing with other wellness brands for talent. You're competing with tech companies, financial services firms, and corporate roles that can offer higher salaries and more traditional benefits packages.

For boutique fitness brands and growth-stage wellness companies, this compounds further. You may not have the brand recognition of a major chain or the resources of a PE-backed portfolio company. You need a recruiting partner who can tell your story compellingly enough to reach passive candidates, the good souls who aren't actively looking but would consider the right opportunity if it were presented by someone they trust.

For HVLP chains and scaling fitness franchise brands, you're competing not only with other operators but with the allure of startup equity, the prestige of emerging wellness brands, and the flexibility of consulting or fractional roles. You need leaders who can manage P&Ls, drive membership retention, oversee new location openings, and build teams. Finding people who combine operational excellence with a genuine passion for wellness has never been straightforward.

These realities underscore why the recruiter you choose matters so profoundly. The question isn't whether you need help finding great talent. It's whether the partner you're working with truly understands your world, or is simply promising they do.



The Good Soul Summary

The short version for leaders who are too busy building their brands to read a full guide right now.

The recruitment landscape is broken.

Every recruiter in your inbox claims to be a specialist. They all promise extensive networks, proven processes, and fast results. Very few can actually back it up. This guide gives you the tools to tell the difference.

Large firms and generalists come with hidden trade-offs.

Extensive off-limits lists that shrink your candidate pool. Junior recruiters working your search while the senior partner moves on. A knowledge gap that produces mismatched candidates and wasted interview time. Understanding these limitations helps you make a more informed choice.

10 questions will separate the real specialists from the rest.

Ask about metrics, search process, market knowledge, timelines, who's actually working your search, off-limits lists, reporting cadence, how they'll sell your opportunity, guarantees, and post-placement support. The depth and specificity of the answers will tell you everything you need to know.

Delay is more expensive than you think.

A vacant VP role doesn't just cost you a salary equivalent per day. It costs you in team burnout, stalled growth plans, lost headcount approvals, and the cascade effect where one departure quietly becomes three.

The right partner changes everything.

A specialist who understands wellness leadership, speaks your language, and has cultivated relationships with passive talent over years of industry involvement delivers measurably different outcomes: faster time-to-fill, higher retention, fewer mis-hires, and candidates who genuinely elevate your organization.

Keep reading for the full frameworks,

questions, and data behind each of these, or jump to the section that matters most to your situation right now.

The Reality of Today's Recruitment Landscape

Your inbox is full of messages from recruiters. They all claim to be "specialists" in wellness and fitness recruitment. The promises sound identical: extensive networks, proven processes, quality candidates, fast turnaround times. Everyone has a "proprietary methodology." Everyone promises to be different from the last recruiter who disappointed you.

Here's the challenge. In a market where every recruiter makes the same claims, it's difficult to separate deep expertise from confident salesmanship. The messaging starts to blur together, and the real differences between partners only become apparent once you're already committed to a search.

When you're facing critical vacancies, the pressure to make a decision intensifies. A VP of Sales who just gave notice three weeks before your January push. A Director of Operations departure right as you're opening two new locations. A leadership search that's been open for four months with no progress. If you already have a trusted recruitment partner who understands your business, delivers consistently, and communicates transparently, you're ahead of most organizations in your market.

But what if you haven't found that partner yet? What if your last three recruiting experiences ranged from disappointing to completely frustrating?

Most leaders in this position turn to large, established firms or generalist recruiters who claim wellness expertise. It's a logical decision. Brand recognition suggests stability. Size suggests resources. The choice feels safe.

The reality, however, often diverges from expectations.

Consider what's actually happening in the wellness talent market right now. Research from Workable shows that 37.3% of all U.S. workers are classified as passive candidates: employed professionals who aren't actively looking but would be open to the right opportunity if it came along. In wellness and fitness, where mission alignment and culture matter enormously, that percentage of passive talent likely runs even higher. The good souls who consistently deliver results aren't scrolling job boards. They're heads-down at their current companies, building something they believe in.

What that means for your search is significant. If you're relying primarily on job postings and applicant tracking systems, you're reaching a fraction of the available talent while the strongest candidates remain untouched.

The speed challenge compounds everything. According to research from The HT Group, top candidates are often off the market in 10 days or less, while average time to hire exceeds 27 days for many roles. Data from Employ Inc.'s 2025 Hiring Benchmarks Report shows that average time from job posting to accepted offer is 63.5 days. By the time most hiring processes reach the finish line, the strongest candidates have already committed elsewhere.

This is the context in which you're making recruitment decisions. The talent shortage is real. The best candidates are passive. Time-to-fill keeps extending. And the pressure to fill critical roles grows with every week that passes.

So you forward your job specifications to recruiters, sign the contracts, and wait for results. It makes sense. It feels like the responsible choice.

But responsible doesn't always mean effective.

Why Large Firms and Generalists Aren't Always the Answer

The limitations of large recruitment firms and generalist recruiters aren't always visible at the outset. They tend to emerge over time, often when you're already committed to a search and have limited options to change course.

This isn't about casting blame. These firms are delivering great results in the right circumstances. But the structural realities of how they operate create trade-offs worth understanding before you sign a contract.

Extensive Off-Limits Lists

Large firms work with hundreds of clients across multiple markets. Every company they've placed a candidate with in the past 12 to 24 months becomes off-limits for future recruiting. It's standard practice, and it exists to protect client relationships. But it also significantly narrows your candidate pool.

When a recruiter tells you they "have an extensive network" but can't recruit from the 10 largest fitness brands in your metro area, the three major health club groups, and half the boutique concepts you compete with for talent, it's worth asking where exactly they're sourcing your candidates. The constraint isn't theoretical. It's mathematical.

Any reputable search firm will have some off-limits commitments. That's actually a sign they take client relationships seriously, and it means they'll protect your team the same way. The question is one of scale. A specialist with a focused client base might have a handful of off-limits companies. A large generalist firm could have dozens, potentially eliminating the very organizations where your ideal candidates currently sit.

If a firm has no off-limits list at all, that's equally worth questioning. It means they're not protecting anyone, including you. The moment you become a client, your own team becomes a potential source for their next search on behalf of someone else.

Lack of Personal Attention

In large firms, you're one account among dozens or hundreds. The partner who sold you the engagement often isn't the person working your search day-to-day. That responsibility typically falls to more junior recruiters who may be capable but lack the authority to adjust strategy, make real-time decisions, or push back when timelines slip. They're also likely to be juggling several searches.

Your search becomes process-driven rather than results-driven, moving through a pipeline designed for efficiency at scale rather than responsiveness to your specific situation. When you need to pivot because a candidate declined your offer or requirements shifted after a board meeting, you're requesting an exception to a standardized workflow.

There's a meaningful difference between a recruiter who knows your brand story well enough to tell it with conviction and one who's working from a brief they received last Tuesday. Candidates can feel that difference in the first five minutes of a call.



Representing the Candidate, Not You

There's a subtle but important dynamic worth understanding. Large firms build long-term relationships with candidates they can place repeatedly across multiple clients. You, as the hiring company, represent a single fee on a single search. The candidate represents potential fees on multiple placements over years.

That math shapes the relationship in ways that aren't always apparent. You're paying the fee, but you may not be receiving the advocacy you expect. When a candidate asks their recruiter for guidance about your offer versus a competing one, whose interests are genuinely being served?

The Wellness Knowledge Gap

Perhaps more significant than any structural issue is the expertise gap itself. Generalist recruiters, even those working within large firms that market themselves as specialized, often lack the depth of wellness and fitness knowledge your search requires. They deliver results in other sectors, but wellness leadership recruitment comes with nuances that only direct industry experience can address.

They don't understand why a VP of Sales who spent five years at a legacy health club chain isn't automatically the right fit for a high-growth boutique fitness brand. They can't distinguish between a Director of Operations who managed a stable 20-location footprint and one who opened 15 new studios in 18 months. They don't grasp the difference between driving membership growth in an emerging market versus maintaining retention in a saturated one.

They haven't encountered the "industry circler" pattern, candidates who rotate through wellness companies every 18 months, collecting titles without delivering the results behind them, and whose familiarity with industry language gets mistaken for genuine performance.

They can't speak credibly about the cultural differences between boutique fitness and traditional health club environments. They don't understand why mission alignment matters more in wellness than in most industries, or how to identify candidates who genuinely care about helping people live healthier lives versus those simply pursuing career advancement.

The result is mismatched candidates who look strong on paper but don't hold up in conversation with your hiring team. For a founder trying to hire a VP of Marketing before a funding round, or a CEO building out leadership before expansion, every mismatched interview costs time you simply don't have.

This doesn't have to be your experience. The right questions, asked before you sign a contract, can help you identify a recruitment partner who operates differently, communicates transparently, and delivers measurably better results.

Key Questions to Ask Your Wellness & Fitness Recruiter

Before you hand over job specifications and sign a contract, these ten questions will help you evaluate any recruiter's operations, capabilities, and accountability. The answers will tell you whether you're speaking with a true wellness specialist or a generalist who's added wellness to their LinkedIn profile.

Not every recruiter will have perfect answers to every question. What matters is the depth, specificity, and honesty of their responses. A partner who says "we're building toward that" is often more trustworthy than one who claims perfection across the board.

Question 1: "What Are Your Metrics?"

Ask for specific, quantifiable performance data from searches similar to yours over the past three years. How many candidates did they contact per search? How many moved through to the short list? What's their interview-to-hire ratio? What percentage of their placements come from passive versus active candidates? What's their retention rate at one year and two years?

The recruiting industry has benchmarks you can use for comparison. Research from Crosschq shows that the average offer-to-acceptance rate is 69.3%, though high-performing organizations target 90% or higher. Data from SNS Consulting indicates that proactive sourcing reduces time-to-fill by 37%, and strong employer branding reduces cost-per-hire by 43%.

If a recruiter can't provide any concrete metrics, that tells you something important about how they track and measure their own performance. At the same time, a newer specialist firm with strong results on a smaller data set may be more valuable to you than a large firm with impressive aggregate numbers that don't reflect your specific market.

Question 2: "What Does Your Search Process Look Like?"

Ask to see their entire methodology. How do they map the wellness and fitness talent market in your area? How do they determine who the top performers are? What specific search criteria do they use beyond the obvious requirements listed in your job description?

For wellness searches, this should include their approach to assessing cultural fit and mission alignment. What questions do they ask to evaluate whether a candidate genuinely connects with wellness, or whether they're simply pursuing the next opportunity? How do they screen for the industry circler pattern? At what point do they use video interviewing? How do they present short-listed candidates to you?



The best recruiters also provide meaningful post-hire support. Do they check in during the first 90 days to ensure the placement is succeeding? Do they offer retention guidance based on what they've seen work across similar organizations?

Question 3: "What Do You Know About the Wellness & Fitness Talent Market?"

Test their expertise with specific questions about the industry and the specialist roles within it. What are the differences between VPs of Sales with boutique fitness experience vs those with big box experience? Can they point to examples of successfully placing talent from adjacent industries into the wellness sector? Can they speak to compensation ranges by role and company stage?

A specialist recruiter should know the difference between health club operations and boutique fitness culture. They should understand career progression paths in wellness. They should be able to discuss industry trends with fluency: the shift toward hybrid roles combining operations and digital, the integration of recovery and longevity services, how AI is impacting the industry, and how this applies to their business..

They should reference market context naturally. The wellness industry is growing at 8.7% annually. Consumer priorities have shifted dramatically, with 82% of Americans now considering wellness a top priority. Do they understand what that growth means for talent competition? Can they discuss how compensation in wellness compares to adjacent industries and what that means for your ability to attract candidates?

If they can't answer these questions with specifics, they're not the specialist your search requires.

Question 4: "What Timelines Do You Expect Based on Our Search Criteria?"

Experienced recruiters backward-plan the entire search from your ideal start date. They give you realistic expectations based on actual market data, not optimistic projections designed to win your business. And they push back if your timelines don't align with market realities.

Context matters enormously. Are you searching for a niche skillset like someone who's opened 10+ locations? Are you in a market with limited leadership talent in wellness? Data from Employ Inc.'s 2025 Hiring Benchmarks Report shows that average time from first candidate interaction to accepted offer is 46.2 days, and time from job posting to accepted offer is 63.5 days.

A recruiter who promises a VP search in three weeks either doesn't understand the market or is telling you what you want to hear. Neither serves your interests. The best partners will be honest about what's realistic, and that honesty is worth more than an optimistic timeline that quietly slips month after month.

Question 5: "Who Will Be Working the Search?"

The partner who sells you the engagement may not be the person executing your search. Ask directly: who will actually work this search day-to-day? What's their background in wellness and fitness recruiting specifically? Can you meet them to ensure they can represent your opportunity credibly to candidates?

For wellness searches, relevant experience matters. Have they worked in the industry themselves? Do they understand the language and the culture? Can they speak authentically about your brand's

mission in a way that resonates with candidates who care about purpose? Do they grasp the difference between a high-growth startup environment and an established health club operation?

You need to know whether the person speaking to candidates on your behalf can actually tell your story effectively. A junior recruiter working from a brief won't compete against a specialist who understands why your role represents a genuine career opportunity for the right person.

Question 6: "Do You Have an Off-Limits List? What Companies Are On It?"

Recruiters maintain off-limits lists of companies they can't recruit from, typically for 12 to 24 months after placing a candidate there. It's standard practice, and it exists to protect client relationships.

The question is how extensive that list is within your market. How many companies are off-limits? Which major fitness brands can't they recruit from? If the list includes half the competitors where your ideal candidates currently work, you'll need to understand where exactly they plan to source your talent.

A focused specialist with a smaller client base will naturally have fewer off-limits constraints than a large firm working across the entire wellness landscape. That said, some off-limits commitments are a healthy sign. It means the firm protects its clients, and they'll extend that same protection to you. The absence of any off-limits list should raise questions about how seriously they take client relationships.

Question 7: "How Will You Report on Our Search?"

At a minimum, expect regular reports on their candidate pipeline, including the number of potential candidates they have approached, the numbers at each stage of the pipeline, and what market intelligence they're gathering. Without consistent reporting, you have no visibility into whether they're actively working your search or whether it's sitting under a pile of other priorities.

For wellness searches, quality reporting includes compensation feedback from candidates, insights into why people are considering leaving current roles, and whether counteroffer trends are impacting your ability to close candidates.

This reporting serves two purposes. First, it ensures accountability. You can see that work is happening. Second, it provides valuable market intelligence that helps you refine your approach, adjust compensation if necessary, or recalibrate your requirements if the initial criteria aren't generating the response you expected. A good partner treats reporting as a conversation, not a checkbox.

Question 8: "How Will You Sell Our Opportunity?"

This might be the most revealing question of all. Ask the recruiter to articulate your employer value proposition as if you were a candidate they were trying to engage.

Can they position your mission and culture in a way that would genuinely excite a senior wellness leader? Do they understand what motivates top performers in this industry to consider a move? Can they speak to your growth trajectory, your leadership culture, your brand's impact in a way that feels authentic and compelling?

The quality of their answer matters because this is exactly what they'll be saying to every candidate they call on your behalf. Your recruiter is your brand ambassador to the talent market. Poor messaging doesn't just fail to attract the right people. It can shape how passive candidates perceive your brand, and you may never know a great candidate passed because the recruiter's pitch didn't do your story justice.

■ **Question 9: "Do You Offer a Guarantee?"**

Guarantees vary based on engagement model. Contingency recruiters typically offer 30 to 90 day guarantees. Engaged or retained search firms may offer up to 6 or 9 months. What matters is understanding exactly what triggers the guarantee.

Does it apply only to voluntary termination, or does it cover performance-based termination as well? What's the replacement process if the guarantee is triggered? Is there a time limit on providing a replacement candidate?

This isn't about expecting failure. It's about understanding how confident your recruiter is in their assessment process and how much accountability they're willing to assume for the quality of their work.

■ **Question 10: "What Preventative Maintenance Do You Provide?"**

The best recruiters don't consider their job finished when the offer is signed. They invest in the success of each placement because retention reflects directly on the quality of their work.

Ask about onboarding support. Do they check in with both the new hire and the hiring manager during the critical early period? Do they flag potential issues before they become problems?

The first 90 days are where cultural integration either succeeds or begins to unravel. A recruiter who invests in this period demonstrates a commitment to outcomes, not just transactions. They're building a track record of successful placements rather than collecting fees and moving on. That's the kind of partner who becomes more valuable with every search.

These ten questions won't guarantee a perfect recruiting relationship. But they will separate the partners who genuinely understand wellness hiring from those who are simply promising they do. The answers, and particularly the depth and specificity of those answers, will tell you what you need to know.



The Cost of Delay

Understanding the cost of a vacant leadership position helps clarify why the recruiter you choose, and how quickly they can deliver, matters as much as it does.

The Daily Cost of an Empty Chair

Every day a critical role goes unfilled carries a measurable financial impact but the real cost extends well beyond the P&L.

Who's covering that role while it sits open? Your remaining leaders are stretching to absorb responsibilities that aren't theirs. Projects stall. Decisions get delayed or made by people without the full context. Growth initiatives that required that leader's attention quietly lose momentum.

Research from the Society for Human Resource Management indicates that lost productivity from a vacant position can reach 1.5 to 2 times the role's annual salary when you factor in the ripple effects across the organization. For a Director of Operations earning \$175,000, that translates to \$262,500 to \$350,000 in productivity impact over the course of a prolonged vacancy.

These aren't abstract numbers. They show up in missed expansion timelines, delayed location openings, and the slow erosion of team energy that happens when good people are asked to carry more than their share for too long.

The Cascade Effect

One leadership vacancy rarely stays one vacancy for long.

When a Director leaves and the role goes unfilled for months, the team absorbs the extra workload. Initially, people step up. By month two, the strain begins to show. By month three, your strongest performers, the ones carrying the heaviest load, start questioning whether this is sustainable. By month four, the first of them begins having conversations with recruiters.

What began as a single open position quietly becomes two or three. Each additional vacancy compounds the pressure on whoever remains, accelerating the cycle. We've seen this pattern play out across wellness brands of every size, and the organizations that move quickly to fill the first vacancy almost always avoid the cascade that follows.





The Financial Reality

The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that a bad hire costs up to 30% of the employee's first-year earnings. Other research places the figure between 50% and 200% of salary depending on the complexity and seniority of the role. For a \$150,000 Director of Operations, that's \$150,000 to \$300,000 in total replacement costs if the hire doesn't work out.

These figures include recruiting costs, onboarding, training, lost productivity during ramp-up, and the less visible costs of decisions made during the learning curve that a more experienced leader would have handled differently.

Market Positioning Erosion

In tight wellness talent markets, reputation matters. When searches drag on for months with no hire, word travels through professional networks. When new hires leave quickly because they were poorly matched or the opportunity was oversold, that damages your employer brand in ways that make future searches harder.

Research from SNS Consulting indicates that proactive sourcing reduces time-to-fill by 37% and strong employer branding reduces cost-per-hire by 43%. The inverse holds as well: reactive hiring and inconsistent positioning cost you both time and money while making each subsequent search more difficult than the last.

Every month you operate with critical vacancies costs you in momentum, team morale, growth execution, and competitive positioning. The question isn't whether specialized recruitment is worth the investment. It's whether you can afford to continue without it.



The Challenges You Face Without the Right Recruitment Partner

The consequences of working with the wrong recruiter, or trying to manage wellness and fitness hiring without specialized support, tend to follow predictable patterns. Understanding them helps you recognize where your current approach may be falling short, and where the right partner could make a meaningful difference.

Recruitment Is Getting More Competitive

The wellness industry is growing at approximately 8.7% per year, with global club memberships projected to reach 230 million by 2030. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects fitness employment to grow 14% from 2022 to 2032, significantly faster than average. Meanwhile, approximately 69,000 openings occur each year, many to replace workers who leave the industry entirely.

You're competing for talent in a market where demand is accelerating and qualified candidates have genuine options. Fitness and wellness brands increasingly need hybrid talent: leaders who understand both in-person operations and digital engagement, who can manage physical locations while building online community presence. The candidates who can do both are rare and highly sought after.

This isn't a challenge that's going to ease on its own. The brands that build strong recruitment partnerships now are the ones that will consistently attract the best leadership talent as competition intensifies.

Quality of Candidates Isn't Meeting Expectations

Without a specialist recruiter who understands the nuances of wellness leadership, you're likely seeing candidates who look strong on paper but fall short in practice. Generalist recruiters, however capable they are in other sectors, can't assess wellness-specific competencies with the depth your search requires.

They present the Director of Operations who managed a stable portfolio but has never navigated the complexity of rapid expansion. They recommend the VP of Sales with impressive revenue numbers who inherited a mature market rather than building one. They miss the industry circler pattern entirely: candidates who rotate through wellness brands every 18 months, accumulating titles without delivering the results behind them.

The time you spend interviewing mismatched candidates isn't just frustrating. It's time you're not spending on the candidates who could genuinely transform your organization.

Critical Openings Take Too Long to Fill

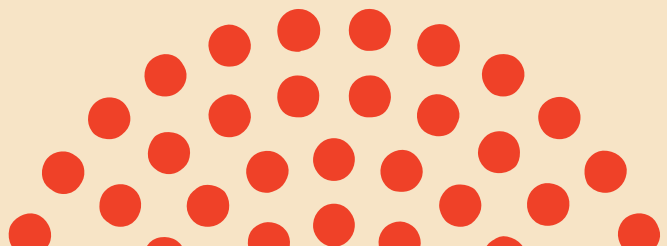
Top candidates are off the market within 10 days of actively interviewing. When your recruitment process takes 60 or more days, you're consistently arriving after the strongest candidates have already committed elsewhere.

Every week a leadership position remains open delays the initiatives that depend on that role. You can't open new locations without the Director of Operations to manage the build-out. You can't launch a new programming strategy without the leader who will own it. You can't scale membership growth without the VP of Sales who will drive it.

The longer the vacancy persists, the more your growth timeline shifts. And the harder it becomes to justify the headcount when results aren't materializing.

Mis-Hire Risk Continues to Rise

The combination of urgency and limited options creates a familiar trap. You've been searching for months. The team is stretched. The board is asking questions. And then a candidate appears who seems good enough: not perfect, but reasonably qualified. The temptation to move forward becomes difficult to resist.



In wellness, where culture and mission alignment matter enormously, "good enough" almost always disappoints. Cultural misfits don't just underperform. They create friction with existing teams, erode morale, and frequently trigger additional departures. The cost of a mis-hire at the leadership level often exceeds the cost of leaving the position vacant longer, but that's a difficult calculation to make when you're under pressure.

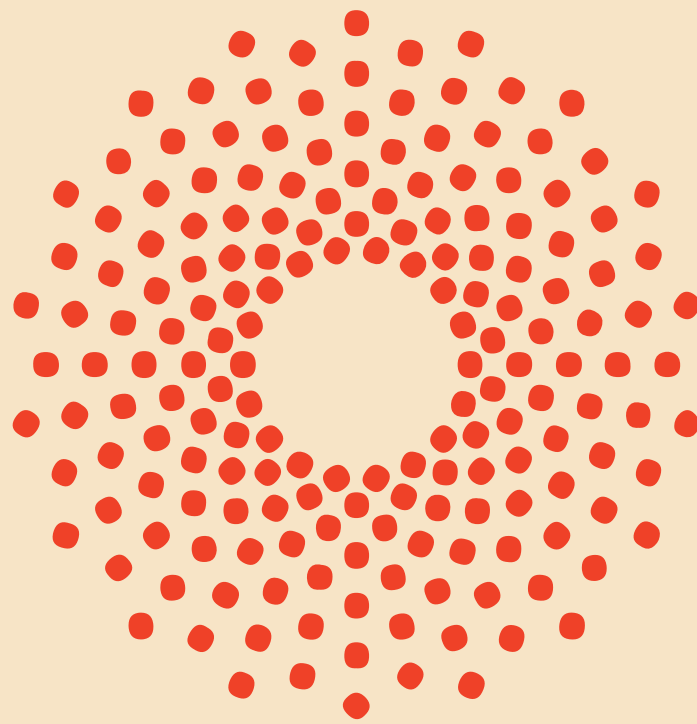
We've seen this play out too many times, and it's one of the reasons we believe so strongly in getting the search right rather than getting it done fast. Speed matters, but not at the expense of fit.

■ Your Process Lacks Continuity

Without a consistent recruitment partner, each search starts from zero. There's no passive candidate pipeline carrying forward from previous work. No institutional knowledge about what messaging resonated, what compensation benchmarks proved realistic, or which candidates were strong but not quite right for the last role and might be perfect for this one.

You're rebuilding the foundation every time, absorbing the learning curve cost repeatedly, and never developing the recruitment infrastructure that compounds in value over time. A specialist partner who knows your organization, your culture, and your market becomes more effective with each search. But that advantage only exists when there's continuity in the relationship.

These challenges aren't inevitable. They're the predictable result of approaching wellness hiring without the specialized support the market demands. The right recruitment partner doesn't just fill roles. They help you build the leadership infrastructure that drives sustained growth.



Good Soul Hunting's Approach

We built Good Soul Hunting specifically to address the challenges outlined in this guide. We're not generalists who added wellness to our service offerings. We're industry insiders who became recruiters because we saw how badly the wellness and fitness sector needed specialized talent partners who actually understood the world they were hiring for.

Our Model

We operate on an engaged search model, providing the commitment and focus of retained search without requiring the full upfront investment. This structure works because we're specialists. We don't need months to learn your industry. We already know it.

Our focus is exclusively on the U.S. wellness and fitness market. Boutique fitness brands. Health club groups. Wellness tech companies. Recovery and longevity businesses. Fitness equipment and e-commerce brands. We understand these sectors because we came from them.

Lucy spent over 15 years in HR, employment law, and international recruitment, including nearly a decade with Les Mills International as Global People & Culture Performance Director. Matt brings 30 years of sales, marketing, and operations leadership at brands including Les Mills and Orangetheory Fitness.

We speak your language because it's our language too.

The Good Soul Hunting Process

Our approach follows six stages designed to deliver quality without sacrificing speed:

Deep Briefing & Co-Creation. We invest significant time understanding your organization, your culture, your growth trajectory, and the specific leadership qualities this role requires. We don't just take a job spec. We co-create the search strategy with you, drawing on our industry knowledge to refine requirements and identify the profile most likely to succeed in your specific environment.

Three-Pronged Sourcing. We combine our cultivated industry network, targeted outbound outreach, and strategic social engagement to access the full spectrum of available talent, including the 37.3% of the workforce classified as passive candidates who won't see your job posting but would consider the right opportunity from someone they trust.

Two-Stage Video Interview. Every candidate goes through a candidate-first conversation, understanding their story, motivations, and what a meaningful next step looks like for them, followed by a role-specific assessment evaluating competencies, cultural alignment, and leadership approach.

Video Presentation to Client. Rather than a flat resume and a paragraph of notes, we present candidates on a video call where we talk through detailed summaries designed to provide insight into their fit for this specific role. You also have the chance to ask questions and challenge our thinking before committing your time to an interview

Comprehensive Interview Management. We guide and support the entire interview process: candidate preparation, interviewer briefing, real-time feedback coordination, and timeline management to ensure you don't lose strong candidates to a slow process.

Strategic Offer Management. We help you craft compelling offers, prepare candidates for the emotional complexity of resignation and counteroffers, and maintain momentum through the critical period between verbal acceptance and start date.

Our Results

- ✿ 80% retention rate at one year
- ✿ 75% of submitted candidates receive interview requests
- ✿ 3 to 5 vetted candidates delivered within the first 10 days
- ✿ 95%+ successful placement rate for engaged searches

What Our Clients Say

"I was delighted to partner with Good Soul Hunting on an executive-level search within the marketing team. This was a business-critical role with the added difficulty of being based in our HQ location. Good Soul Hunting took on the challenge and quickly delivered a wide variety of highly qualified candidates. The team was really easy to work with. Most importantly, they truly understood our business, the industry, and the nuances of the profile we were looking for."

— Chief Marketing Officer, Orangetheory Fitness

"Good Soul Hunting has not only helped us fill critical roles, but also build our HQ team in Miami with the right talent for Barry's. Lucy and Matt are great partners and are precise at sourcing a balance of skill and cultural fit, which is so important to our organization."

— SVP People & Culture, Barry's

"We at [solidcore] had a GREAT experience with Good Soul Hunting! They had a way of quickly understanding our business and our needs. Even the people we didn't move forward with were interesting and helpful in understanding what we needed. Above all they add a caring, personal touch to the employer and candidate's experience."

— VP People & Talent, [solidcore]

"Working with Good Soul Hunting has been a great experience. We were hiring for several key leadership roles that required both strong capabilities and the right cultural fit. GSH listened and had a clear sense of what was needed both on paper and in personality. They moved quickly, communicated throughout the process and delivered strong candidates. Their partnership is thoughtful, efficient, and aligned with how we work. I'd absolutely partner with Good Soul Hunting again."

— SVP Operations, The Asprey Group

What Makes Us Different

We're not the largest firm. We don't have the most recruiters or the biggest database. What we have is something harder to build and impossible to replicate: direct operating experience in the wellness and fitness industry, deep relationships with passive talent cultivated over decades of combined industry involvement, and a genuine commitment to finding the good souls who will elevate your organization.

We tell your story as well as you do, because we've lived a version of it ourselves. We challenge your thinking when it serves your search. We communicate transparently even when the news isn't what you want to hear. And we treat every candidate interaction as a reflection of your brand, because in wellness, where community and trust mean everything, how you hire says as much about you as who you hire.

Our philosophy is simple: help first, hunt second. If we can add value, whether that's a placement, market intelligence, or an honest assessment of your hiring approach, we will. That's what partnership looks like.



Supplementary Resources

These tools are designed to help you evaluate your current hiring approach and make more informed decisions about recruitment partnerships. Use them as starting points for internal conversations or as frameworks for comparing potential partners.

A. Wellness & Fitness Recruitment Self-Assessment

Rate your organization on each criterion from 1 [significant gap] to 5 [strong capability]. Be honest with yourself here. This is for your benefit, not anyone else's.

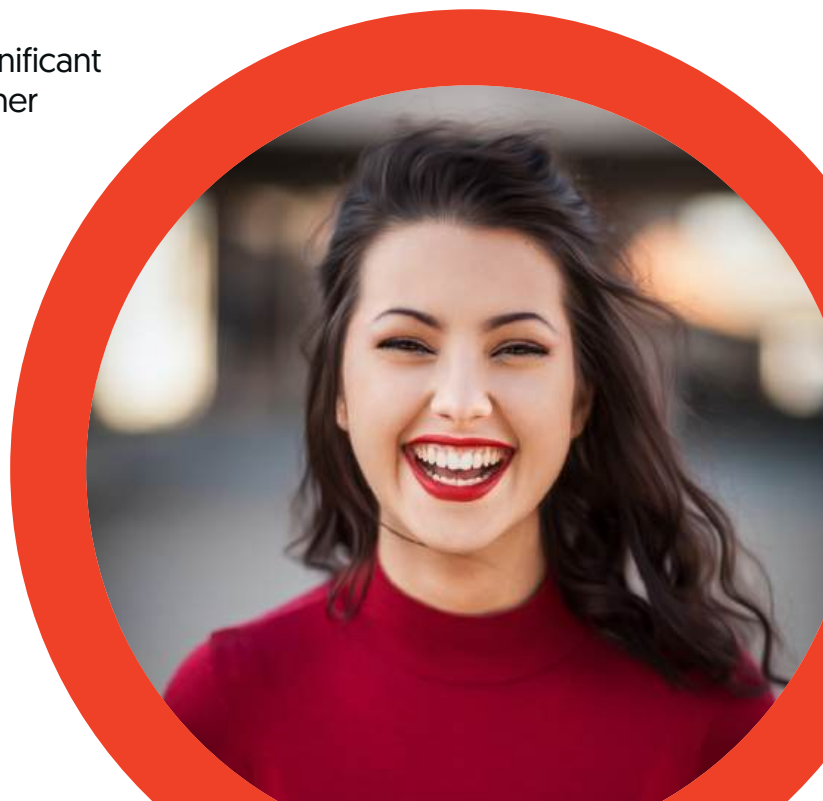
1. We have a clear, documented process for defining leadership roles beyond job descriptions
2. We can access passive candidates who aren't actively looking
3. We assess cultural fit and mission alignment with the same rigor as technical competency
4. Our time-to-fill for leadership roles is under 45 days
5. We have a structured interview process with scorecards and consistent evaluation criteria
6. We conduct thorough reference checks as a non-negotiable part of our process
7. We have a compelling employer value proposition that resonates with wellness professionals
8. Our first-year retention rate for leadership hires exceeds 80%
9. We have a proactive talent pipeline rather than hiring reactively
10. We have a consistent recruitment partner who understands our industry and culture

Scoring:

40-50: Your talent infrastructure is strong. You're well-positioned to compete for top wellness leadership.

25-39: You have solid foundations but meaningful gaps. A specialized recruitment partner could help you close them and build a more consistent process.

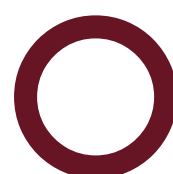
Below 25: Your hiring approach likely has significant vulnerabilities. Addressing these gaps, whether internally or through partnership, should be a strategic priority.



B. Recruitment Partner Decision Matrix

Use this framework to compare your options across the criteria that matter most for wellness and fitness leadership searches. No single option is universally right. The decision depends on your specific situation, resources, and the seniority of the roles you're filling. This matrix is meant to help you think through the trade-offs clearly.

Criteria	Large Generalist Firm	Specialized Wellness Recruiter	Internal HR
Wellness industry knowledge	Limited	Deep	Varies
Access to passive candidates	Moderate (broad but shallow)	Strong (deep industry relationships)	Limited
Off-limits list impact	Extensive (many conflicts)	Manageable (focused client base)	None
Time-to-fill	60-90+ days	30-60 days	90+ days
Cultural fit assessment	Generic	Industry-specific	Internal knowledge
Cost per hire	High (premium fees, lower success rate)	Moderate (higher success rate offsets fees)	Lower direct cost, higher indirect cost
Candidate experience	Variable	Consistent and brand-aligned	Variable
Post-placement support	Minimal	Active support	Internal
Accountability/reporting	Standardized	Customized and transparent	Internal
Understanding of your brand story	Surface-level	Deep and authentic	Strong

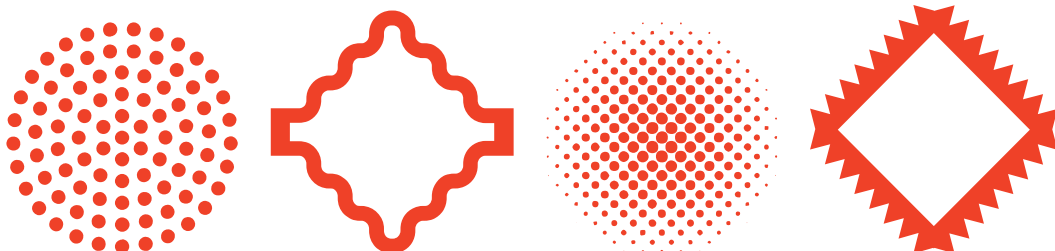


C. The ROI of Specialized Wellness & Fitness Recruitment

This comparison illustrates the financial impact of a traditional hiring approach versus a specialized one, based on industry research and our own placement data.

Factor	Traditional Approach	Specialized Approach
Average time-to-fill	60-90 days	30-60 days
Productivity loss during vacancy	\$50,000-\$150,000+	Minimized through faster placement
First-year retention rate	50-60% (industry average)	80%+ (GSH track record)
Replacement cost if hire fails	50-200% of annual salary	Significantly reduced through better assessment
Interview-to-hire efficiency	20-30% of candidates interviewed	75% of candidates receive interviews
Access to passive candidates	Limited to job board applicants	Full market including 37.3% passive talent
Employer brand impact	Risk of inconsistent candidate experience	Consistent, brand-aligned representation

The direct cost of a specialized recruiter may be higher on a per-search basis. But when you factor in faster time-to-fill, higher retention, fewer mis-hires, and stronger candidate quality, the total cost of hiring typically decreases while outcomes improve meaningfully. The numbers tell a clear story, but the real difference shows up in the quality of the leaders sitting around your table a year from now.



It's Time to Rethink Your Talent Strategy

The wellness and fitness industry is growing faster than the talent pipeline can support. The U.S. market is expanding toward \$3.7 trillion by 2034. Fitness employment is projected to grow 14% over the next decade. Competition for qualified leadership talent intensifies with each passing quarter. And the strongest candidates remain passive, requiring proactive engagement from recruiters who understand how to reach them and earn their trust.

You have three options. Continue with approaches that aren't delivering the results you need. Invest time and resources in trying multiple recruiters and hoping one proves to be the right fit. Or partner with specialists who understand your world and deliver measurably better outcomes. If you're ready to explore that third option, we offer three ways to start the conversation:

Talent Needs Call

For founders, CEOs, and wellness leaders who need to fill critical positions now. We'll discuss your specific open roles, what's working in your current approach, what isn't, and whether a partnership makes sense for your situation. No pitch, no pressure. Just an honest conversation about where you are and how we might help.

[BOOK YOUR CALL](#)

Strategy Call

For forward-thinking leaders who want to understand the wellness talent market more deeply. We'll explore compensation trends, discuss why job postings reach only a fraction of potential candidates, and help you develop a proactive talent strategy that positions you ahead of the curve.

[BOOK YOUR CALL](#)

Leadership Call

For wellness and fitness professionals exploring their next career move. Whether you're stepping from Director to VP, transitioning from health club to boutique fitness, or looking for a role where you can make a greater impact, we'd love to hear your story and help you find opportunities aligned with your goals and values.

[BOOK YOUR CALL](#)

Stay Connected

Subscribe to The Good Soul Search, our LinkedIn newsletter, for insights on wellness talent trends, compensation benchmarks, and leadership hiring strategies.

[\[Subscribe to The Good Soul Search\]](#)

The wellness industry exists to help people live healthier, more fulfilling lives. Building the teams that deliver on that mission is work we believe in deeply. We'd love to help you find the good souls who will shape what you build next.

Here's to your growth and hiring success,



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Good Soul Hunting is a boutique search partner for purpose-driven wellness and fitness brands. Founded by Lucy and Matt Adey, we combine 45+ years of industry experience with a candidate-first approach to hand-pick the good souls who elevate culture, impact, and commercial performance. We get to know your story so we can tell it as well as you do. Learn more at goodsoulhunting.com.

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