



**For Immediate Release**

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**The SearchWorks Group Shares Mid-Year Read on the EMS Talent Market**

**LEESBURG, VA – May 2026 –** [The SearchWorks Group](#), a leading executive search firm specializing in the electronics manufacturing market, is seeing a noticeable shift in how electronics manufacturers are hiring—and how candidates are responding—heading into the second half of 2026.

At the top level, executive search activity is up. Over the past 6–12 months, there’s been a steady increase in demand for C-suite and functional leadership roles, including CEOs, COOs, commercial leaders, and heads of operations. Much of this is tied to companies preparing for growth, ownership transitions, or private equity activity over the next few years.

At the same time, candidates aren’t moving as quickly.

Even strong candidates are taking a more cautious approach when it comes to changing jobs. Between economic uncertainty, housing concerns, and general risk avoidance, many are hesitant to make a move unless the opportunity clearly outweighs what they already have. In a market that’s already close to full employment, that hesitation is making hiring more competitive.

One of the biggest challenges continues to be the “next generation” gap.



Companies are actively looking for experienced Gen X and early Millennial leaders to step into senior roles, but that group remains limited. Many Baby Boomers are still in leadership positions but are beginning to plan exits over the next few years, while younger talent is still building experience. That leaves a narrow band of candidates who are both ready and willing to step in—and they’re in high demand.

Engineering talent is another pressure point.

Even as automation, AI, and robotics continue to gain traction, the need for experienced manufacturing, process, and quality engineers hasn’t gone away. In many cases, it’s the opposite—growth is being slowed not by lack of business, but by lack of technical talent to support it.

On the commercial side, business development remains the most active hiring area.

Roughly half of recent searches have been tied to BD roles, ranging from leadership positions to individual contributors. These roles are often highly specific, requiring either deep experience in a vertical market like aerospace, medical, or industrial, or a strong presence in a defined geographic region.

Supply chain leadership is also getting more attention.

Companies are shifting away from purely cost-driven sourcing strategies toward more regionalized, risk-aware models. With ongoing tariff pressure and component constraints, there's a growing need for leaders who can build resilient supply chains and get involved earlier in the design process.

"Know what you bring to the table and what you want next," said Jeremy Vanselous, President of The SearchWorks Group. "The market is still active, but companies are being selective. If you're going to make a move, it should be for the right reasons—not just to explore."

Based on what it's seeing across the market, The SearchWorks Group is encouraging companies to be realistic—and proactive—about hiring.

That means recognizing the generational gaps, being ready to act when strong candidates become available, and making sure compensation, benefits, and career paths are competitive. Just as important, companies need to understand how candidates are thinking right now. Changing jobs carries more perceived risk than it did a few years ago, and that mindset matters.

The SearchWorks Group works closely with electronics manufacturers across North America and Europe, helping them navigate these challenges and secure the talent they need to move forward.

For more information about The SearchWorks Group and its executive search services, visit [www.searchworksgroup.com](http://www.searchworksgroup.com).

### **About The SearchWorks Group**

Founded in 2008, The SearchWorks Group is a premier executive search firm specializing in the Electronics Manufacturing market. The SearchWorks Group takes a consultative, relationship-driven approach to recruiting, leveraging industry expertise, intuition, and continuous training to deliver exceptional results. Over the past 16 years, the firm has successfully completed hundreds of searches across functions including Manufacturing, Operations, Engineering, Supply Chain, Quality, Finance, and Business Development, with placements spanning 30 states and 10 countries.