

MAP & TRACK™

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Does MAP & TRACK™ work for a particular function, how flexible is it?

A. MAP & TRACK™ is totally flexible and can be designed to work for any function, geography (single or multiple countries), level, and for any type of candidate profile - typically high potential and international mobile candidates.

Q. How long does the programme take to get set up and running?

A. Typically up to about six months. This period will include the programme strategy planning, preparation of support and communication materials, internal communication process, the search, Nichols and company interviews, and the selection of the candidates into the pool. From this point, the pool is managed over the agreed project lifecycle.

Q. How long does the MAP & TRACK™ programme run for?

A. We recommend no longer than two years from the final selection of the candidate pool. Our experience has shown that longer periods of time are less practical for both the candidates and the company.

Q. How does the MAP & TRACK™ programme work given we have our own succession planning process?

A. MAP & TRACK™ works in conjunction with any internal talent development processes and its purpose is to provide an 'external' talent supply to support and enhance the internal talent planning system. MAP & TRACK™ can be used where there is a lack of talent pipeline internally, and/or when the company wants to provide an external benchmark with its internal options. It is also valued as an 'insurance policy' for critical roles within an organisation.

Q. How is MAP & TRACK™ different from a benchmarking/mapping exercise?

A. MAP & TRACK™ is more than a benchmarking/mapping exercise because it moves beyond the research and benchmarking phase. Often time, money and goodwill is wasted following benchmarking as there is no formal method of utilising this information. MAP & TRACK™ provides the mechanics to proactively track and manage candidates over a defined period of time. MAP & TRACK™ provides the ability to select and hire candidates with speed from a pre-screened pool of candidates and Nichols supports the hiring process to its successful conclusion.

Q. What is the commitment level from the company?

A. Nichols manages the MAP & TRACK™ programme from start to finish, including the final hiring process of a selected candidate. However, the company also has a key role and this begins with the appointment of a 'project sponsor/manager'. Internal communication and buy-in amongst key stakeholders is also critical upon the set up and duration of the project. A communication strategy will be required, including the development of key information/collateral for candidates to receive and a plan to maintain contact with the candidate pool over time.



Q. What is the cost of a MAP & TRACK™ project and how is this invoiced?

A. Each MAP & TRACK™ project is costed as an individual consultancy project, dependent upon the specific requirements. The project cost will depend on a number of variables, such as the functions to be covered, the roles and their levels, and the geographic spread of the project. Invoicing is in stages and spread over the duration of project. An advantage of MAP & TRACK™ is that recruitment costs are fixed and can be budgeted for ahead of time. This forward planning helps remove the stress of recruitment.

Q. What are the placement fees?

A. Zero. There are no fees for the recruitment of a candidate from the pool. The Project Fee is agreed up front and this cost is fixed upon starting a MAP & TRACK™ project. The number of candidates recruited from the pool is up to you, but there are no extra fees payable.

Q. Will it save the company money?

A. A MAP & TRACK™ programme would incur less cost than if individual recruitment exercises were undertaken. There are also less quantifiable but real costs, such as “down time” and the impact on the business this can have should a key role become vacant. Others include the current incumbent being “held up” from moving into a promotion until a new hire is on board. Costs can also be saved through making the “right hiring choice” – having spent more time building relationships with the candidates over a longer period... “a courtship before marriage”.

Q. How wide and deep is the search during a MAP & TRACK™ programme?

A. A key strength of MAP & TRACK™ is that as we are not talking to candidates about ‘an open’ vacancy; the majority of candidates are more interested to talk to us as there is no pressure to immediately change jobs and they do not feel they are “being sold to”.

Typically, during a search a large proportion of candidates in the market are not open to seriously considering an opportunity – often because the timing is not quite right. For example - “I am really interested in the company and opportunity, but I want to finish my current project which will be in about six month’s time, but after that I would be open to considering a new challenge...”.

The search project and target market can be as broad or as narrow as you wish. Typically, our clients are seeking to upgrade their talent pool and will often ask us to approach a fairly narrow number of “blue chip” companies, whilst others prefer a more eclectic approach.

Q. How big should the talent pools be?

A. Our experience shows that it is better for the pools to be small and focused, rather than on the larger side, and whilst each project is different, typically two to three candidates per role works well in practice.

Q. How should the company communicate with the candidates in the talent pool?

A. Different methods can be used and these can be tailored to suit the programme. Examples are meeting face to face (over lunch/coffee, etc), or maintaining regular contact by e-mail or phone. Assigning mentors has also proved successful as has regular written communication in the form of business update reports.



Q. How do you track candidates on a MAP & TRACK™ programme?

A. Candidates are tracked by Nichols and this is in combination with some touch points/communication by the company. We regularly make contact with the candidates and check their current situation, along with capturing any changes in their circumstances.

Q. How do candidates perceive the MAP & TRACK™ programme who are not actively looking?

A. Very well, and these are the candidates we are most interested in talking to – we believe that candidates who are busy, successful and not actively looking for a new role are often the better candidates in the market. These candidates are more likely to be strategically managing their careers and looking further ahead into the future. Our experiences have also identified that candidates are attracted by the unique and innovative nature of MAP & TRACK™ which also reflects very well on the company.

Q. What happens if candidates drop out of the programme?

A. We guarantee to maintain and refresh the pool as and when necessary, at no extra cost. We are in regular contact (at least quarterly) with the candidates in the pool and will be able to add more candidates to the pool if required.

Q. What happens to the candidates at the end of the MAP & TRACK™ programme?

A. It is essential that candidate expectations are proactively managed at this time and, through a coordinated approach between the company and Nichols, all candidates will be contacted.

Q. Will the programme save us any time?

A. Yes, and this can be considerable. When it is known that a vacancy will arise in the company, candidates on the talent pool can be considered and appointed very quickly, with little or no “down time”. There is no time lost whilst a recruitment and selection process is undertaken.

Q. Are candidates exclusive to the programme?

A. Yes, and Nichols will not consider candidates on the talent programme for any other company searches. Of course, the candidates themselves may consider other opportunities they see outside of this relationship during the period of the MAP & TRACK™ programme.

Q. What do our internal incumbents think about their company seeking candidates to replace them in the future?

A. Where MAP & TRACK™ is used to talent plan for existing roles in an organisation, it is imperative that the current incumbents are made aware of the MAP & TRACK™ programme and its strategic purpose to build a future pipeline of talent. This approach forms part of the company's aim to proactively and professionally manage succession planning upon the promotion of its employees and is seen as being very positive by existing management.

Q. What about talking to candidates who are from a competitor?

A. Confidentiality concerning the activities of a business and its staff is imperative. Whether the candidate is from a competitor or not, all information shared with candidates during the interview and tracking period should not be confidential or sensitive.