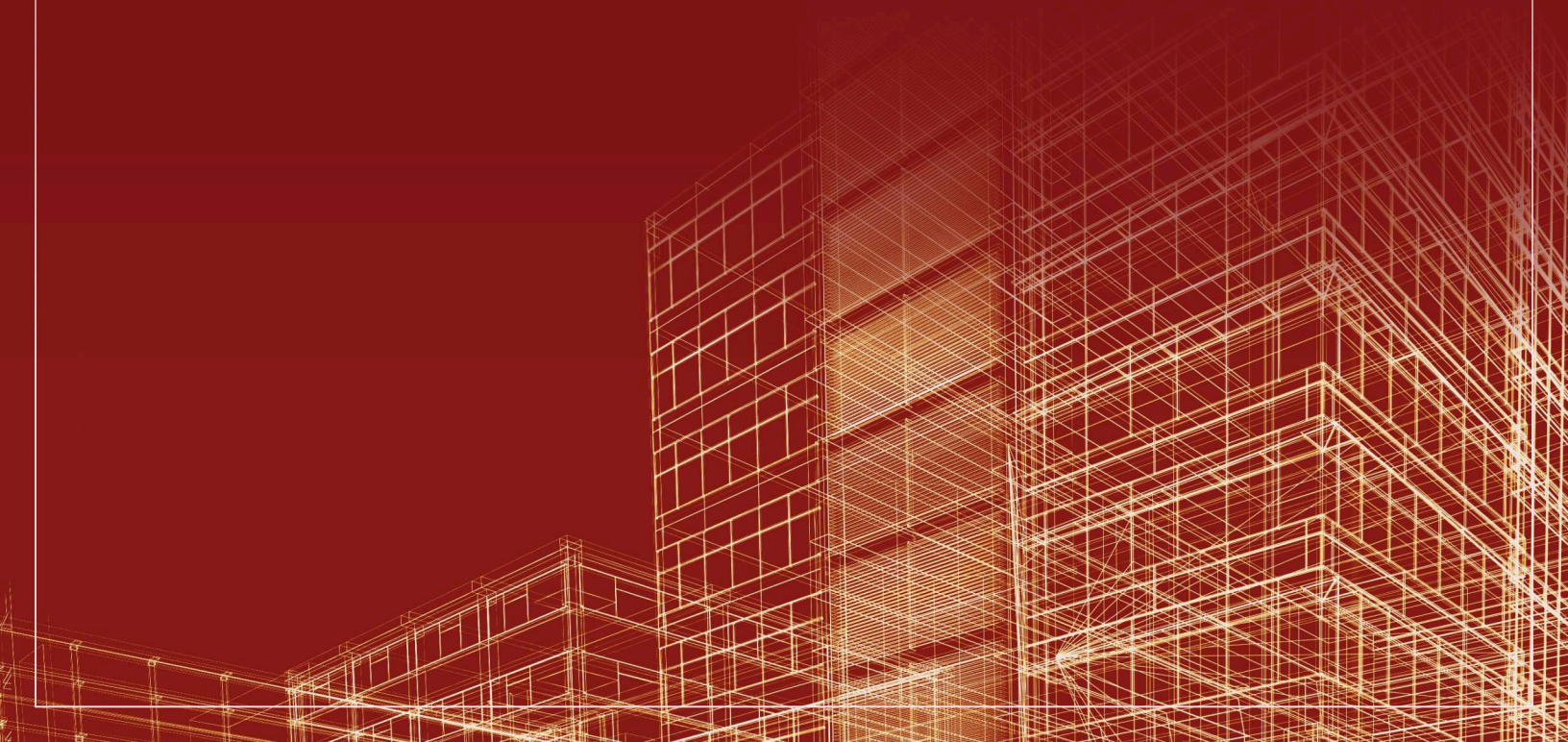
Arcavia Consulting

CAREER INSIGHT SERIES

Senior candidate do's and don'ts

Practical guidance for senior leaders.



INTRODUCTION

Why this matters

At senior level, how you move is part of the assessment.

Senior appointments in construction and infrastructure are made in a small, connected market. Boards and hiring partners look beyond the CV, at discretion, judgement and how a move is managed from first conversation to final handover.

This guide sets out what to do, and what to avoid, across five areas.

01 Confidentiality and discretion

02 Reputation and digital footprint

03 Working with search firms

04 References and backchannel checks

05 Counteroffers, notice and leaving well

WHO IT IS FOR

Directors, heads of function and senior project leaders, whether actively searching or open to the right conversation.

HOW TO USE IT

Read it before your first conversation with a search firm, then revisit it at offer and resignation stage.

AREAS 01 AND 02

Discretion and reputation

Protect your position and the story others will find.

01 Confidentiality and discretion

DO Choose your recruitment firms carefully

Many will send your CV speculatively around the market. Others will discuss headhunted roles that are relevant to you. Some put your reputation at risk, others enhance it.

DO Signal you're open to work discreetly

LinkedIn's recruiter-only Open to Work setting doesn't notify your employer. Many senior people leave it on permanently to keep an eye on the market.

DON'T Put commercially sensitive information in your CV

Talk about outcomes and approach, never margins, pricing or unannounced work.

02 Reputation and digital footprint

DO Review your digital footprint

Check your social media posts and any articles or quotes you appear in. Know what is out there and, where you can, shape it to position yourself correctly.

DO Keep LinkedIn current and consistent with your CV

Dates, titles and project values should match exactly.

DON'T Let your profile overstate your role

Most clients are far more interested in team players and collaborators. Taking sole credit for team work can suggest problematic behaviour.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Choose carefully who represents you, and make sure your public profile tells one consistent story.

AREAS 03 AND 04

Search partners and references

Who represents you, and who speaks for you.

03 Working with search firms

DO Build relationships with two or three specialist partners

Firms that know your discipline can represent you accurately.

DO Be transparent about other processes and notice periods

Full visibility lets your partner manage timelines well.

DON'T Let multiple firms submit you for the same role

Duplicate submissions create disputes and question your judgement.

DON'T Ghost companies or search firms

If you're not interested, say so, and be open about where you are in the process. Going quiet can do lasting damage to your reputation with the firm and the client.

04 References and backchannel checks

DO Choose referees who've seen you lead through difficulty

A programme recovery says more than a smooth delivery.

DO Brief your referees before they're contacted

Share the role and the strengths you'd like them to cover.

DO Assume informal backchannel checks will happen

Hiring panels often know your former colleagues.

DON'T Rely only on junior or friendly referees

Panels look for line managers, clients and senior peers.

AREA 05

Counteroffers, notice and leaving well

How you leave is remembered longest.

05 Counteroffers, notice and leaving well

DO Decide in advance if a counteroffer would sway you

If your reasons for leaving remain, a counteroffer rarely fixes them.

DO Confirm notice, garden leave and any restrictions

Share them early so start dates are realistic for all parties.

DO Leave with a proper handover

Document live projects, client relationships and open risks.

DON'T Announce your move before timing is agreed

Clients and teams should hear it in the right order.



SUMMARY

At a glance

The essentials, in one place.

AREA	DO	DON'T
01 Confidentiality	Choose search firms carefully and signal discreetly	Put commercially sensitive information in your CV
02 Reputation	Review your footprint and keep LinkedIn consistent	Overstate your role or take sole credit
03 Search firms	Partner openly with two or three specialists	Allow duplicate submissions or ghost a process
04 References	Choose and brief referees who've seen you lead	Rely on junior or friendly referees
05 Leaving well	Decide on counteroffers early and hand over properly	Announce your move before timing is agreed

IN ESSENCE

Discretion, transparency and a well-managed exit are what senior hiring panels remember. Handle each stage with the same care you bring to your work.



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Considering your next move?

Speak to our executive search team in confidence.

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