EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | NOVEMBER 2026

The Job Market for Director to SVP Leaders: 2026 and What to Expect in 2027

The short version: the market is stable but slow. Unemployment is low and layoffs are falling, but hiring is cautious, and forecasters expect 2027 to look much the same. For mid- to late-career Directors, Senior Directors, VPs and SVPs, the real challenge is not *whether* you land. It is *how long* it takes, and how much confidence and momentum you spend along the way.

The Market at a Glance

Indicator	November 2026	2027 outlook
Unemployment rate	4.1%, in a narrow 4.1% to 4.3% range since March (BLS)	4.1% (Federal Reserve median) to about 4.4% (Indeed panel of 100+ economists)
Layoffs	617,189 announced through October, down 44% and the lowest since 2022 (Challenger)	Stable; economic conditions, not AI, are now the top reason for cuts
Hiring demand	Cautious, selective, multi-round processes	Job postings expected to ease about 1.4% by June 2027 (Indeed)
Long searches	27.6% of the unemployed have searched 27+ weeks (BLS)	Likely to persist in a slow-hire market
Search length, ages 55 to 64	34.1 weeks on average in October, vs 28.1 weeks for all ages (AARP / BLS)	Experience helps you stay employed, but searches run longer
Management roles	Middle-management postings about 42% below their April 2022 peak (Revelio Labs)	Fewer seats at your level; positioning matters more
Senior roles	Only 24% of senior leaders believe most executive roles are publicly advertised (TopResume survey)	Relationships and sponsors stay the main path in
Interim and fractional	Interim C-suite requests up 151% since 2021 (Business Talent Group)	A real second path back to a permanent role

What This Means for You

- **Plan for a marathon, not a sprint.** Of workers 55 to 64 who lost jobs held 3+ years, 57.3% were re-employed by January 2026, compared with 66.1% across all ages (BLS). A weekly rhythm and a financial runway matter.
- **Relationships beat applications.** In a widely cited Lever study, about 1 in 16 referred candidates was hired, compared with about 1 in 100 of all candidates (SHRM). In a survey of 500 senior leaders, 30% found their latest role through personal or professional connections and 55% plan to use their network for their next move (TopResume).
- **Your next role may never be posted.** Visibility and direct outreach to decision-makers matter more than ever.
- **Make experience your advantage.** 64% of workers 50+ report age discrimination, yet workers 50+ are adding AI skills nearly twice as fast as younger workers. Lead with recent outcomes and current skills.

The Bottom Line

The market is not closed to Director to SVP leaders. It is slower and more relationship-driven. People who spend their time where opportunity moves (conversations, sponsors and visibility) shorten the search.

How the Career Reset & Restore Formula™ Responds

Phase	Market challenge	What we do together
1. Clarify	Long searches drain confidence and direction	Reset your target and next chapter so every hour has a purpose
2. Position	AI screening and age signals filter senior candidates	An AI-optimized resume and LinkedIn profile in outcome language
3. Exposure	Senior roles filled through referrals before posting	Target company lists, executive outreach and LinkedIn campaigns that create real conversations
4. Land	Cautious, multi-round hiring	Executive interview preparation and data-driven offer negotiation
5. Develop	Fewer second chances once you land	A New Role Success plan for your first 180 days

Choose Your Package

30-Day Package	90-Day Package	180-Day Package
A fast reset of your positioning: resume, LinkedIn and value story	A full search: positioning plus outreach, interviews and offers	The complete journey, through landing and your first months in the new role

Why Work With Jim Munson

- **30+ years** in executive talent acquisition, career transition and coaching, across 14+ industries
- **10,000+ interviews** conducted and **1,000+ professional and executive placements**
- Has sat on both sides of the table: has led hiring for C-suite leaders and has navigated his own role eliminations
- A coaching practice built for mid- to late-career senior professionals, from Director to SVP

YOUR COMPANION BOOK

The Strategic Career Reset™

Find Your YES (Your Executive Sponsor) and unlock the hidden job market. Released November 2026.

Get the book: www.careerresetrestore.com/book.html

Ready for Your Reset?

Book a conversation at **www.careerresetrestore.com** or message Jim Munson on LinkedIn. Your next chapter starts with one conversation.

Scan the QR code to explore the Career Reset & Restore Formula™.

Sources (data as of November 15, 2026; 2027 figures are forecasts)

BLS Employment Situation, Oct 2026 | Federal Reserve projections, Sept 2026 | Indeed Hiring Lab outlook survey | Challenger, Gray & Christmas | AARP, older workers and unemployment | AARP age bias survey 2026 | Generations / AARP | CFO Dive / Business Talent Group | SHRM / Lever (2016) | BLS Displaced Workers, Jan 2026 | Revelio Labs via Yahoo Finance | TopResume executive survey