

JOSH COATES

CEO, Instructure

Josh Coates has built a career the way he builds a business—by reimagining the way things can be done. After his start in distributed systems research at the University of California, Berkeley, and Microsoft's Bay Area Research Center, he founded Scale Eight, which developed a new approach to scalable storage software and attracted customers like Microsoft, Viacom and Fujitsu. In 2005, Josh founded Berkeley Data Systems (Mozy.com), which reshaped the world of data storage with a ubiquitous remote backup solution. Two years later, EMC Corp acquired Mozy for \$76 million. Josh now brings this imagination to the Learning Management Systems (LMS) world with [Instructure](#). After seeing the opportunity to disrupt the current landscape, and in doing so, facilitate a better educational experience, he became an early investor before joining the Board and becoming CEO in 2010.



Josh's experience with executive search firms has been less than optimal, but Peggy Thompson at Summative is the exception. Here's what he has to say about a recent search for an Executive VP of Sales:

"In the past, my experience with executive recruiters has been that they often cost a lot of money and don't always deliver.

Peggy Thompson is different. She's real. She's genuinely concerned with getting results in terms of the right fit of the candidate and client as opposed to just trying to get a hire. She's the best recruiter experience I've had."

A Search Process Characterized as Real-Time Refinement

"I liked her process in that she listens and is able to apply what I would call 'real-time refinement' to the search. By that I mean, we started with a job description that actually then evolved over time as we screened and interviewed candidates. After each initial candidate interview, usually conducted through Skype since it was a national search, she would get feedback from us and the candidate to refine our job description and the persona we were looking for.

"Peggy uses a dynamic process that gave confidence over time we were finding the right fit in an individual candidate. This was in contrast to past experiences with recruiters that felt more like just going through a static list. We seriously looked at several executives from across the country and narrowed it down to two excellent candidates."

Summative Does the Heavy Lifting, Keeping Focus on Candidates

“Peggy has a top-notch network of candidates and I was always happy with the candidates she got in front of us, and I felt like she was making sure we were seeing the best. She understood what we were looking for, helping us to refine it as we went along, and we trusted her to weed out those who would not be appropriate.”

“Perhaps most impressive was the amount of effort she put into preparing the candidate and the client for the interviews. With Peggy, this was not a labor intensive process from our end, but it was clear she had done her homework, doing the heavy lifting and getting the details right all in advance so it made our time with candidates much more productive.”

“And since we are located in Salt Lake City, she had to ‘thread the needle’ when it came to managing candidate expectations about a potential relocation. Ultimately, the executive we hired relocated from Nashville to join Instructure.”

“I think what I like best about Peggy is her excellent judgment throughout the process with all our potential candidates. I would absolutely recommend her to my colleagues. She stands out as the one big positive in my experiences with executive recruiters.”