

Ferguson Hiring Signals Western Push

Ferguson Partners has tapped veteran recruiter Robert Mayes to expand and oversee its executive-search practice in the western U.S.

Mayes will join the firm later this month as a senior managing director based in Los Angeles. He previously was a senior client partner at Korn Ferry, where he spent nearly 13 years and led the firm's U.S. real estate practice.

His hire is part of a larger push by Ferguson, which is led by chief executive Bill Ferguson, to expand its 35-year-old global executive-search and advisory business. In April, Graham Beatty joined as president from Heidrick & Struggles. And in July, Matt McAulay signed on as a managing director based in Charlotte.

Mayes' hiring is part of the company's plan to capture a larger market share nationally, with a focus on West Coast senior-level search assignments such as C-suite positions and REIT board placements. That includes building out a team in a region where Ferguson previously has had only a modest presence.

"The West Coast in general and Southern California in particular is a very competitive market ... if you don't have boots on the ground," Beatty said. "It is really important for us as we are building and really growing our national platform, taking advantage of the shift in the cycle, to have the best team on the ground in North America."

Mayes' hire is a homecoming, as he spent seven years at Ferguson before leaving in 2008 to work at Russell Reynolds Associates. He spent three years there working with Beatty, before leaving for Korn Ferry.

Mayes was drawn to Ferguson by the opportunity to work at a boutique recruitment firm focused on real estate and real assets. His arrival comes ahead of an anticipated uptick in hiring.

"Having been through a few of these cycles, we feel that



we are on the precipice of a spike in demand. As investment activity picks up, as development activity accelerates and as distressed assets change hands — that is all going to drive the competitive landscape for real estate talent," Mayes said.

Ferguson has about 100 staffers in four offices in North America, four in Asia and Australia, and one in London. ❖

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