



5/7/2026

Meeting Summary & Highlights

Speaker Highlights

Presented by Kathy Bone Rogers, founder and managing partner of [KB Search Team](#), the May 7 meeting held at Ruth's Chris Steak House featured a wide-ranging overview of executive search from a practitioner's perspective. Drawing on 43 years in recruiting — from plant startups at her father's Fort Wayne staffing firm to building an all-women, women-owned search firm with national reach — Rogers covered her firm's philosophy, search process, candidate experience approach, and the evolving role of AI in modern talent acquisition.

Announcements

Upcoming Meetings:

5/13: Kevin Cawood

5/20: Social Event / Cassidy Young — 4pm–6pm

5/27: Business meeting at Umi

Tip Session Highlights

- Note: Recording began during the featured speaker presentation; member tip session was not captured.

Featured Speaker (Summary / AI-Supported notes for record / recording available with request)

Introduction: Kathy Bone Rogers is founder and managing partner of KB Search Team, an all-women, women-owned executive search firm based in Fort Wayne. Rogers began her 43-year career in recruiting in 1982 when she joined her father's company, Time Services, which grew to seventeen offices across Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. When

Time Services was acquired in 2009, she launched KB Search Team; the firm has since placed candidates in over 36 states.

KB Search Team: The firm comprises five professionals with approximately 140 years of combined experience. KB Search Team specializes in manufacturing sector placements across C-suite, HR, engineering, accounting, finance, and sales, with a growing regional nonprofit practice. Standard search fee is 25% of first-year salary; nonprofits receive a discounted rate of 20% as a community give-back.

The Case for External Search: Rogers outlined four reasons to engage an external firm: access to passive candidates not responding to job postings; augmenting internal HR bandwidth during critical or time-sensitive searches; enabling confidential searches where discretion is required; and national reach through the Top Cash One Network — approximately 1,000 search firms with access to 8 million resumes and 50,000 new additions monthly.

Selection Criteria and Process: Before accepting a search, KB Search Team evaluates alignment on company values and mission, depth of understanding of culture alongside skill requirements, team reputation, and repeat client relationships — a lack of repeat business is flagged as a key warning sign. Approximately 60% of searches require rewriting job descriptions to accurately reflect the role. The firm will decline assignments where the company is not a good fit or lacks the culture and communication to support a successful hire.

Candidate Experience and Offer Support: Onboarding begins the moment an offer is accepted. Rogers described preparing candidates for the three most common counter-offer and notice scenarios, helping them anticipate and navigate each. The firm's philosophy centers on candidates feeling treated as individuals — remembering personal details, maintaining consistent communication — rather than simply filling a slot.

AI in Recruiting: AI is used as a supportive tool — not a replacement — for marketing, sourcing, note-taking, and mapping candidate interview insights to job descriptions to surface strengths and weaknesses. Rogers cautioned that AI-generated resumes can look identical across candidates and advised that authenticity must be preserved; the communication should remain in the candidate's own voice throughout the process.

Client Ethics and Non-Poaching Policy: The firm maintains a strict non-poaching policy for active clients — it will never approach employees at a client organization. However, if a client's employee independently initiates contact or is publicly signaling openness to new opportunities (e.g., on LinkedIn), the firm may engage. This boundary is discussed openly with clients at the outset and reviewed weekly at staff meetings.

Q&A and Client Testimonials: Members shared direct experience with KB Search Team. One noted being an internal candidate who ultimately received the position, crediting the process as validating rather than threatening. Another described placing

'Katie,' a 20-year Kroger veteran, into a role where she has remained for eight years. Rogers noted that when a search committee is divided, the firm declines to influence the final decision — 'That's your decision' — and focuses on surfacing candidates the client might not have otherwise considered.