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### 2010 will see “buoyant market” for executive search

A more buoyant market for executive search is being predicted for 2010 by the industry’s fastest growing UK firm.

In an upbeat message, Hitchenor Wakeford says the confirmation the UK economy has emerged from recession back into growth and the end of political uncertainty following a Spring general election will help restore confidence and spark increased senior recruitment activity.

With CEOs and finance directors under continued pressure to deliver improved performance, with an emphasis on cutting the cost base, the firm expects the executive search market to thrive as boards look to attract the best talent to help turn around their fortunes.

Retail, e-commerce, financial services and support services are the anticipated growth areas, with new global and UK business development roles for candidates who can maximize new market opportunities, increasing market share.

Managing Director John Wakeford said: “Throughout this long recession we have worked with businesses which have been bucking the trend, performing well by being ahead of the game, identifying new opportunities in their markets and being entrepreneurial and flexible, doing things differently and taking calculated risks.

“Last month I presented the Board of the Year award at the Variety Club Yorkshire Business Awards to *Card Factory* which invested during the recession, increasing the number of its stores in 2009 by around 25 per cent.

“It is those businesses across a wide variety of market sectors which have been prepared to take a cold, hard look at their performance, identify gaps in talent and restructure and invest

accordingly which have fared best during the downturn.

“With the restored confidence which an economy emerging from recession and a Spring general election, which will end political uncertainty over public spending, will bring, I expect an increasingly buoyant executive search market in 2010.”

As well as increased numbers of assignments, Hitchenor Wakeford is also predicting a surge in talented candidates on its books: “The new year is a time when people have taken stock over the extended holiday period and are considering a career move.

“In the new post-recession economy the focus will be on identifying senior executives who can deliver innovative business development and increased market share, reduced cost base, new beneficial B2B relationships with customers and suppliers – in short, improved financial performance,” Mr Wakeford added.

The Hitchenor Wakeford Group was launched by Adrian Hitchenor, John Wakeford and David Tunna in 2006 and is the UK’s fastest growing executive search firm, with offices in Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and London. The company’s vision is to build the executive search firm of choice in every sector it operates in, and there are ambitious plans to open new offices in other regions. Last year saw group turnover increase by 40 per cent.

- **A photo of John Wakeford, Managing Director of Hitchenor Wakeford Executive Search, is attached. For more information, contact Chris Jennings at Cian creative pr at [chris@cian-pr.co.uk](mailto:chris@cian-pr.co.uk) or on 0191 340 8422 or 07954 157939.**