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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Finding the right path to the top: How past interorganizational moves impact executive selection outcomes

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Abstract

Research summary: Executives are a critical strategic resource but often build careers across multiple organizations. We explore how firms value that interorganizational mobility by studying executive selection. We suggest that hiring firms will value the diverse experience and adaptability that past mobility across organizations fosters, but that prior mobility can also signal a higher retention risk or lack of competency. Using data from an executive search firm, we employ search-fixed effects model and structural equation models to estimate candidates' probabilities of receiving a job offer. We find that candidates' prior mobility indirectly increases their chances of being hired by increasing their functional diversity and reducing their tenure with their employer below 10 years. Net of these effects, prior mobility has a negative effect on hiring.

Managerial summary: Executives are increasingly building their careers across organizations. How do prospective employers evaluate their records of past moves when they are considered as external hires? We propose that by moving firms, individuals can accumulate diverse experience and become more adaptable, but employers may be concerned about retention or

performance issues for those with records of frequent moves. Using executive search data, we find that prior mobility is valuable to the extent that it builds diverse functional experience; once it is accounted for, we find that prior mobility decreases the likelihood of receiving an offer. Further, staying at the same employer for 10 years or longer is unfavorable due to employers' concerns about adaptability and firm-specific skills. Our survey of fifty-four CHROs resonates with these findings.

KEYWORDS

executive career, executive selection, hiring, interorganizational mobility, strategic human capital

1 | INTRODUCTION

Executives are more mobile than they were. Where senior managers may once have built their careers in a single firm, now the path into top jobs often takes managers across a number of companies (Cappelli et al., 2014; Frydman, 2019). Not only does this mean that firms are now hiring outsiders directly into executive roles (Murphy & Zabojnik, 2004), but also that those new hires have often repeatedly moved employers in the past. How do firms value such cross-firm mobility in preparing people for senior executive roles? In particular, when firms hire new senior managers, do they choose executives to have moved across more firms during their careers, or does such mobility make people less attractive as prospective senior managers?

There are grounds to believe that employers will attend to executives' past career histories in making their hiring decisions. Upper echelons theory argues that executives' backgrounds shape how they perform their jobs (Carpenter, Geletkanycz, and Sanders, 2004; Hambrick & Mason, 1984), and empirical research has explored how executives' experiences might affect strategic decision-making and ethical behaviors (Carpenter & Fredrickson, 2001; Crossland et al., 2014; Koch-Bayram & Wernicke, 2018). Yet our understanding of how prior mobility affects executive hiring remains limited. Where scholars have studied how increased mobility affects managerial selection, it has usually been to examine whether CEOs enter their jobs from within the company versus outside it (Quigley et al., 2019; Zhang & Rajagopalan, 2004, 2010). We still do not know how candidates' *past* moves across organizations affect how likely they are to be selected for executive positions.

Moreover, our broader understanding of the effects of job mobility on executive selection is still nascent. Research on the effects of prior career experiences has tended to explore the effects of such broad constructs as "career variety" (Crossland et al., 2014) or "general managerial skills" (Custódio et al., 2013), finding that executives who have served in a broader variety of positions change strategies more frequently (Crossland et al., 2014) and command higher pay (Custódio et al., 2013). But it is not clear from this research whether those effects are recognized by employers, or indeed whether such breadth in experience would make executives more likely to be hired by employers who may also value strategic stability and executives who

command lower pay premia.[1] Perhaps most important, by treating job mobility as simply a form of career variety, prior research has failed to take into account the multiple different ways that prior mobility can affect employer perceptions. We argue that candidates' track records of prior mobility will affect perceptions about both the kinds of human capital that they have built and the individual tendencies towards mobility and performance that may have shaped those moves. As a consequence, we suggest that cross-firm moves can affect firms' evaluations of job candidates through multiple pathways, so that where managers move and when they move shape their suitability for senior management roles more than whether they move.

Specifically, we propose that candidates' track records of prior mobility affects whether they are hired through three distinct pathways. Consistent with prior work on career variety, we argue that moving across organizations can increase the breadth of skills and knowledge that managers acquire. We suggest, though, that this increased breadth stems not from moving across firms per se, but rather from the way that those moves often take managers into different kinds of roles, such as those in a different function or industry. Second, we suggest that a history of prior mobility can allay employers' concerns about how well an executive will adapt to their new role, and that employers may therefore worry that candidates who have spent longer with their current employer will have developed the kinds of skills and behaviors that may not transfer easily to a new organization. Third, though, we propose that a track record of repeated prior mobility may also send negative signals about managers' propensity to remain within jobs, and their competence in those jobs. We put all of these arguments together to propose that prior mobility has positive indirect effects on candidates' chances of being hired, based on its effects on role diversity and ability to adapt to a new organization, but also a negative direct effect (once those positive effects are accounted for), due to concerns about retention and competence.

We test how prior cross-firm mobility affects executive selection using executive search firm data on 378 different hiring processes. A particular strength of this data is that it covers the pool of candidates that the employer considered for each role, allowing us to separate out employer preferences for certain attributes from the overall characteristics of the candidate pool that they are choosing from. Unlike work that explores executive pay (e.g., Carpenter et al., 2000; Custódio et al., 2013) or the length of time taken to reach executive positions (e.g., Bonet et al., 2020; Hamori & Koyuncu, 2011), our data therefore allows us to directly examine what firms are looking for when they make hiring decisions, and thereby uncover firms' revealed preferences for executives' attributes. To our knowledge, this is the first paper to use such detailed data on the backgrounds of successful and unsuccessful candidates to understand how firms hire senior managers.

Our paper contributes to the literatures on top management teams and strategic human capital by providing a nuanced perspective on how managers' track records of mobility affect their likelihood of being hired into senior management roles. Our results suggest that hiring firms value certain consequences of mobility when it comes to preparing candidates for senior management roles—notably increased functional diversity and adaptability—even as they may hold a negative view of the process of moving itself. As a consequence, we suggest that executives'

[1]Moreover, research on other labor markets suggests that people often misunderstand the value of different forms of human capital (Campbell, Coff and Krsysczinski, 2012; Coff & Raffiee, 2015; Raffiee & Coff, 2016), and that career paths can shape the way that candidates are evaluated independent of those candidates' actual skills and abilities (Leung, 2014; Zuckerman et al., 2003). It is therefore difficult to directly infer from existing work how prior mobility shapes who gets hired into executive positions.

prior mobility must be understood in terms of where it has taken them and when it took place. We also note that aspiring executives may often do well to seek functional diversity in moves within organizations, while limiting their moves across organizations.

2 | THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 | Senior managerial and executive jobs in organizations

Senior managers play a critical role in the success of organizations (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Hambrick & Quigley, 2014; Quigley & Hambrick, 2015). Often bearing such titles as vice president, president, general manager, managing director, chief operating officer, chief executive officer, or chairman of the board (Barney et al., 2018; Litzky & Greenhaus, 2007), senior managers set the strategic direction for the organization and acquire and allocate the organization's human, financial, and physical resources. Much work has documented the contribution that senior managers make to organizational performance (Carpenter & Fredrickson, 2001; Holcomb et al., 2009; Miller & Shamsie, 2001). How firms acquire senior managers is, therefore, an important strategic question.

Senior management roles are usually only entered once people have acquired considerable work experience (Hamori and Kakarika, 2009). In this paper, we explore how firms seeking to hire senior managers evaluate that career, focusing on how they evaluate candidates' prior mobility across organizations as a signal of skill acquisition and underlying traits.

2.2 | Drawing inferences from the effects and causes of prior mobility

We argue that candidates' prior mobility is likely to shape how they are evaluated by employers for two distinct reasons. First, prior mobility will shape the skills and knowledge that the candidates will have had the opportunity to acquire. Because many of the skills required to perform jobs are tacit, they are best acquired through on-the-job learning (Arrow, 1971). The jobs that people have held are therefore a central determinant of the skills and knowledge they possess (McDaniel et al., 1988; Mosel, 1952). How candidates have moved employers will shape the jobs they have worked in, and thus the kinds of skills that they are expected to have acquired.

Second, employers are also likely to make assumptions about the reasons that candidates have moved employers, shaping their assessments of those candidates' likely future behavior (Bills, 1990; Greenwald, 1986). Decisions to move firms can reflect an employee's preferences for variety and change (Ghiselli, 1974; Munasinghe & Sigman, 2004) as well as their performance within the prior job (Gibbons & Katz, 1991; Greenwald, 1986). How much candidates have moved is therefore likely to provide signals about candidates' potential attrition risk and ability.

Because candidates' prior mobility will shape inferences about the kinds of skills that the candidate has acquired and the abilities and behaviors that led to that mobility, we propose that prior mobility affects suitability for senior management roles through multiple pathways. We outline each of different pathways below, and illustrate them in Figure 1.

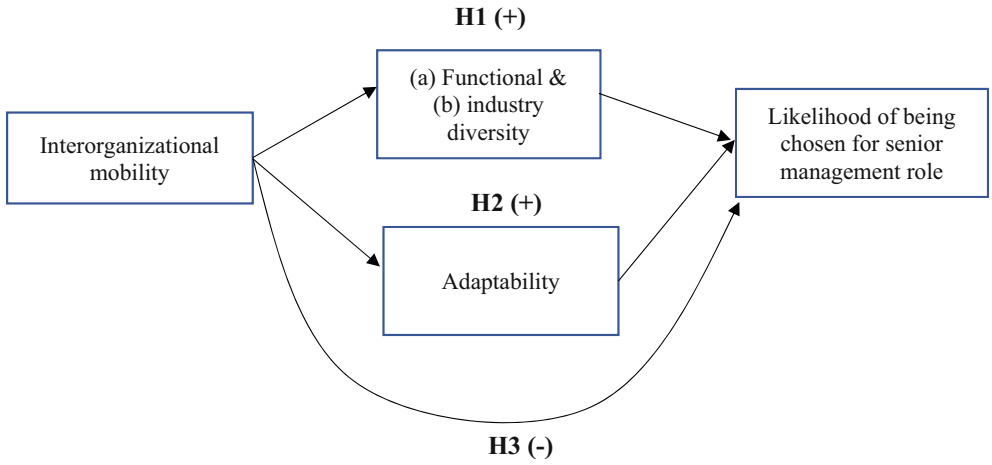

FIGURE 1 Theoretical model.

2.3 | Interorganizational mobility and inferences about skill acquisition

We propose that having moved across organizations will signal that candidates are more likely to have acquired two sets of skills that employers will value. First, greater past mobility is likely to increase the breadth of a candidates' skills by increasing the chances that candidates have worked across more varied functions and industries Second, greater prior mobility will reduce the chances that a candidate has spent too long with their current employer, reassuring potential employers that the candidate has developed the capacity to transfer their skills and performance to a new organization.

2.3.1 | Interorganizational mobility and the breadth of skills

One way in which moving across organizations is likely to affect managers' skills is by exposing them to a broader range of roles and situations, thereby increasing the breadth of their skills.

An important dimension of how executives build skills through on-the-job-learning is whether they develop deep expertise by taking jobs in a single area versus developing broad skills by moving across more varied jobs. Some evidence points to the advantages of developing deeper expertise. For example, Ferguson and Hasan (2013) found that Indian civil servants who moved through more closely related roles received more rapid promotions. Other research, though, points to significant benefits of skill breadth.

In particular, researchers suggest that experience in more different fields can build the kinds of cognitive breadth that are useful in management positions. Because experience in different roles provides both different skills and different cognitive frames (Kaplan & Tripsas, 2008), those who have worked in a broader diversity of roles will have a more varied set of skills and cognitive frames to draw on in problem solving. Exposure to a wider variety of situations also allows for the experience of novel problems that stimulate strategic thinking (Dragoni et al., 2011). Drawing on these ideas, Crossland et al. (2014) show that CEOs who have had

more varied career experiences are more likely to alter their strategies and come up with more distinctive strategies.

If employers value these benefits of increased breadth, then a record of increased prior mobility may increase candidates' attractiveness. Although some cross-firm moves may take candidates between similar jobs, much inter-organizational mobility takes people into different functional roles or different industries. It is by exposing people to these different settings that interorganizational mobility can contribute to skill breadth.

Prior mobility across organizations is therefore likely to be valuable because it allows managers to experience a broader range of functions. Those functions, such as sales, marketing, and operations, are critical dimensions along which managerial work varies (Bunderson & Sutcliffe, 2002; Dragoni et al., 2011; Hitt & Tyler, 1991), with different functions relying on substantially different skills. In part, moving organizations will be associated with functional diversity because, all else equal, those who have moved firms more frequently will have held more jobs and had more opportunity to move functions. In part, cross-firm mobility increases functional diversity because interorganizational moves are more likely to involve changes in function than are moves within organizations, particularly when those moves take people into different industries (Bidwell & Mollick, 2015). Because different organizations have somewhat different mixes of functions (particularly, again, when they are in different industries), those who move across more organizations have more opportunity to work in a variety of functions. In some cases, people may be making these cross-organizational moves because they are the only way that they can gain the functional diversity that they are looking for in their careers. In other cases, the moves across functions may be incidental to their desire to move employers. In either case, though, those who have moved organizations more frequently are more likely to have been able to increase their functional diversity relative to those staying within the same organization.

These arguments suggest that increased prior mobility will increase candidates' chances of being selected for senior management roles because employers value the more diverse functional experience that it builds. This pathway is depicted as H1a in Figure 1, and leads to the following prediction:

> **Hypotheis H1a.** *Prior interorganizational moves will have an indirect, positive effect on the probability of being chosen by the hiring firm through their effects on cross-functional diversity.*

Prior mobility may also be valued because it provides candidates with the opportunity to work in different industries. Prior research has highlighted cross-industry experience as an important dimension of the "career variety" or "general skills" that shape executive behavior (Crossland et al., 2014; Custódio et al., 2013). Different industries tend to have different operating environments with varied technological regimes, customer demands, and competitive conditions. Experience in different industries can therefore provide a greater repertoire of problem-solving approaches and a broader understanding of external trends, helping executives set strategy and respond to industry change.

Although managers in conglomerates may be able to build such varied industry experience by internal moves across divisions, most managers will need to change organizations if they want experience in different industries. Prior mobility may therefore increase candidates' attractiveness by increasing the diversity of their industry experience. We suggest:

Hypothesis H1b. Prior interorganizational moves will have an indirect, positive effect on the probability of being chosen by the hiring firm through their effects on cross-industry diversity.

Although we propose a mediating effect of overall industry diversity, we note that those effects could depend on the relatedness of the industries moved between. Related industries tend to be more similar to one another, involving similar technologies (Breschi et al., 2003; Farjoun, 1994), customers, and suppliers (Robins & Wiersema, 1995). Lessons acquired in one industry are likely to be more easily applied in another related industry, although moves across unrelated industries would maximize the variety in skills and knowledge that executives develop. We therefore explore in our analyses whether the effects of industry diversity vary depending on industry relatedness.

2.3.2 | Interorganizational mobility and adaptability

A second way in which prior mobility can shape candidates' skills is by developing their capacity to transfer those skills to a new organization. Employees often struggle when they move into new organizations, performing worse than they did in their prior organization (Groysberg et al., 2008) and worse than other employees who change roles within the same organization (Bidwell, 2011). Those challenges may be particularly severe in managerial roles, which often rely on understanding organizational culture and processes, and building deep relationships with other employees (Osterman, 2008; Mintzberg, 2009, Keller et al., 2021). Potential employers are therefore likely to be concerned about whether candidates will be able to adapt to their new organization.

One likely signal of candidates' capacity to adapt to a new environment is their tenure with their current employer. Although prolonged tenure at the same organization can send positive signals about candidates' commitment and ability as we develop below, it also suggests that candidates are not likely to have developed the kinds of skills that can help them to perform well on moving to a new organization.

In part, employers may believe that candidates without a recent history of moving organizations will not have had the opportunity to develop the kinds of skills and knowledge that help with integrating into a new setting. Beyer and Hannah (2002) found that engineers with more diverse experience were better able to integrate into a new organization because they had more multidimensional identities, had developed more tactics for adjusting to a new setting, and had more skills that they could use in the new job. Similarly, Beus et al. (2014) found that basketball players who had moved more in the past demonstrated more rapid improvement when they joined a new team. Prior mobility therefore seems important to developing the repertoire of identities and tactics that will help adjustment to a new setting. A lack of such recent experiences may raise concerns about candidates' ability to adapt to the new employer.

Employers may also be concerned that long-tenured candidates will have developed skills that are highly specific to that employer, and cannot be transferred to organizations that use different processes or technologies (Becker, 1962; Doeringer & Piore, 1971; Coff, 2015). When candidates have long tenure in their current firm, it is more likely that the skills that they have built are specific to that firm, and that their approaches to solving problems leverage their detailed knowledge of that firm's processes and people. Those highly specific approaches may

be less effective in a new organization compared to those of a candidate who has developed more general approaches by working across a variety of organizations.

Although employers may draw inferences about adaptability from candidates' general record of mobility, we believe that current tenure will be the most important indicator. More recent moves can be more relevant for the skills and knowledge that candidates use in their work (Bailey & Helfat, 2003). Hence, where candidates have spent a long time with their current employer, the kinds of skills and knowledge that would help them to adapt to a new organization may have atrophied, and are also less likely to be directly relevant to the kinds of positions that the candidate is now being considered for. Moreover, the lack of a recent move would prevent candidates from being able to demonstrate their adaptability in a recent setting. Employer concerns about adaptability are therefore particularly likely to reflect the length of time that candidates have been with their *current* employer. Certainly, popular career advice emphasizes the importance of shorter tenure for demonstrating adaptability. For example, one writer argues that "[j]ob-hopping allows you to show employers that you are flexible, adaptable and a quick learner" (Smith, 2013), while another suggests that when people stay at the same company too long "prospective employers might wonder if you're resistant to change, which could hurt your chances of getting hired elsewhere" (Backman, 2018).

These arguments therefore suggest a second pathway through which prior mobility may shape hiring (H2 in Figure 1). Although current tenure only reflects the most recent move, it is nonetheless the case that senior managers who have moved firms more frequently are less likely to have the kind of long tenure with their current employer that would raise concerns about their capacity to perform well at the new organizations. As a consequence, greater mobility may also increase candidate attractiveness because candidates who have moved more have shorter tenure, increasing their perceive adaptability and general skills. We therefore propose:

> **Hypothesis H2.** Prior interorganizational moves will have an indirect, positive effect on the probability of being chosen by the hiring firm by reducing tenure with the current employer.

2.4 | Interorganizational mobility and inferences about the causes of mobility

A second set of reasons that employers may attend to potential executives' prior record of mobility is because their assumptions about the likely reasons for those moves drive inferences about executives' future behavior. Although there are many different factors that may shape candidates' moves, not least of which are the idiosyncratic set of opportunities available to them at different times, their prior moves can also offer insight into how executives might behave in the future. Candidates may be expected to have moved a few times during the early years of their careers (Topel & Ward, 1992). Where candidates have continued to make frequent moves across organizations though, employers are likely to believe that they either have a basic disposition to change employers regularly or have experienced past performance problems. Such inferences about the candidates' likely attrition risk and ability would reduce their attractiveness to the employer.

First, candidates who have moved employers frequently in the past are considered more likely to move again in the future (Bills, 1990). Studies suggest that the propensity to move across jobs and firms may be a dispositional trait, also known as "hobo syndrome" (Boudreau

et al., 2001; Ghiselli, 1974; Judge & Watanabe, 1995), and previous mobility has been found to be a good predictor of future moves (Munasinghe & Sigman, 2004). Such voluntary turnover is costly, as firms incur significant recruiting and onboarding costs when they hire a replacement (Cascio, 1991). The indirect costs of attrition may be even greater, as firms risk disruption in strategic decision-making and operations (Shen & Cannella, 2002) and the loss of key clients (Broschak, 2004). Employers are therefore likely to be reluctant to hire candidates that they perceive to be a high risk for attrition. Recent scholarship argues that employers may value firm specific investments made for other organizations, because they signal a candidates' willingness to make such investments in a new firm (Morris et al., 2017). Candidates' propensity to stay in firms for an appreciable length of time rather than repeatedly moving across firms is likely to be one such signal that employers look at.

Second, employers may be concerned that repeated moves across organizations may signal weak ability. Although people move firms for many reasons including a desire to develop new skills or to pursue a new opportunity, people can also leave organizations because of poor performance. In some cases, poor performance may lead to involuntary turnover as people are either fired for cause or selected for layoffs over more able colleagues (Gibbons & Katz, 1991). In other cases, poorly performing employees may move firms because they face weaker prospects of receiving a pay raise or promotion. Meta-analyses have accordingly found a strong, negative relationship between turnover and performance (McEvoy & Cascio, 1987). A track record of repeated mobility may therefore raise concerns about performance, particularly where the employer lacks other information about why the candidate moved or how they performed in those prior roles.

Taken together, these two arguments invoke a third pathway by which prior mobility might affect employers' decisions – because of the signals that mobility sends about a candidate's likely attrition risk and their ability. Prior interviews (Bills, 1990) and field experiments (Cohn, Maréchal, Schneider and Weber, 2020) focused on entry-level employees have found evidence that employers are less likely to hire candidates who have moved more frequently in the past. We suggest that the same will be true for candidates for senior management jobs. Moreover, the effects of this pathway would be expected to partially offset some of the benefits of prior mobility described above. Hypotheses 1 and 2 suggest that prior mobility increases candidates' chance of being chosen by firms through its effects on the diversity of functional and industry experience in their background, as well as the length of time with their current employers. If hiring firms also have concerns that mobility may signal that a candidate is less likely to stay or is of lower ability, then that prior mobility could have negative effects once those positive pathways are controlled for (see Dokko et al., 2009 for an analogous model).[2] We depict this pathway as H3 in Figure 1, and propose that:

> **Hypothesis H3.** When functional and industry diversity and tenure at the current employer are controlled for, prior interorganizational moves will be negatively associated with the probability of being chosen by the hiring firm.

[2]Note that we focus on most recent tenure in assessing adaptability but not functional and industry diversity or the overall effects of mobility. We believe that the information that employers use to assess those aspects are more likely to span multiple moves. For example, industry or functional diversity can be built up across the career, and functional diversity reflects moves within as well as between firms. Concerns about ability or commitment tend to reflect a pattern of moving several times, rather than when the most recent move occurred. By contrast, concerns about adaptability are likely to particularly reflect long tenure in the current organization.

3 | DATA AND METHODS

Separating out the effects of employers' decisions from the supply of candidates requires data on the pool of candidates who were considered (Fernandez-Mateo & Fernandez, 2016). Identifying this pool of candidates is a major challenge in studying executive selection. We gathered such data from a mid-sized executive search firm headquartered in the United States, which we refer to as SearchCo.

Employers frequently use executive search firms to help fill senior management jobs (AESC, 2011). Typically, a search firm will first identify a long list of around 100–200 candidates who might be suitable for the role, and then conduct interviews with a subset of them[3] in order to gauge their suitability and assess their interest in the job. The search firm then provides the hiring firm with a short list of around two to eight candidates[4] along with their own assessments of the candidates (Mullins & Lord, 2002; p.44). The hiring firm conducts final interviews and decides which (if any) of the candidates to hire (Khurana, 2004).

We focus on analyzing those final hiring decisions, allowing us to explore how large numbers of different employers evaluate candidates. Focusing on this final stage also ensures that we are measuring decisions made by firms rather than candidates; early in the process, we do not know whether candidates failed to advance because they were not interested in the position or the search firm did not consider them suitable. Once candidates are presented to the hiring firm though, we know whether they received an offer. Moreover, because only those candidates who express a strong interest in the job make it through to be interviewed by the client, concerns about which candidate might accept the job tend to be minimal at this stage.[5]

There are important questions about how selection into the pool of candidates might affect our results. This selection will likely yield candidates who are perceived to be strong performers, as market intermediaries tend to make conservative decisions and provide "safe" candidates to the client (Bidwell, Choi & Fernandez-Mateo, 2023; Fernandez-Mateo & King, 2011; Hamori, 2010). These processes will increase the homogeneity of the candidate pool, making our tests more conservative, although the search firm's selection of the shortlist could affect our analyses in other ways, as we explore in the Discussion section. Despite these issues, search firm data has the strong advantage of providing information on the pool of candidates considered for searches across a diverse set of organizations. Overall, we believe that these strengths of search firm data outweigh the weaknesses.

3.1 | Data

Our data contains all of the 491 searches completed by SearchCo between 2005 and 2012. The 104 of those searches (21.2%) had incomplete data because resumes were not retained at SearchCo or the data on selection were missing, leaving us with data on 387 completed searches

[3]In our data, the average number of candidates interviewed by the search firm was 10.8 with a standard deviation of 6.1 and a median of 9. This list is about twice as long as the short list that the search firm forwards to the client firm.

[4]The average size of the short list was 5.1 with a standard deviation of 2.6 and a median of 5. 90.5% of the searches had 8 or less candidates in the short list.

[5]Only 3.8% of the candidates who received an offer in our sample turned it down, similar to rates observed in previous studies using search firm data (e.g., Fernandez-Mateo & Coh, 2015); our results are consistent after excluding these searches that made an offer to more than one candidate due to the candidate's rejection of the offer.

(78.8%) conducted for 248 different clients.[6] SearchCo had a particularly strong client list among universities, hospitals and nonprofits which made up around half of their clients; the other half were in a wide range of industries. The vast majority of the searches were for senior jobs, with title of Associate Director and above.[7] We did identify a small number of searches (9 searches) with job titles such as consultants and managers which we excluded from our sample. The results are consistent when including these searches. The final sample contains 1934 final round candidates across 378 searches. This represents an average of 5.12 candidates per search, with a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 19. We used resumes for each of these candidates to create our main independent and control variables, as described below.[8]

3.2 | Dependent variable: Offer received

Our dependent variable takes the value of one if a candidate was given an offer by the hiring firm at the final stage of the selection process and zero otherwise.

3.3 | Independent variables

3.3.1 | Prior interorganizational mobility

We measure prior interorganizational mobility based on each candidates' rate of mobility relative to others with the same level of experience. Rates of mobility decline substantially with experience (Topel & Ward, 1992), so that measures such as the average number of employers per year are inadequate for comparing people with different levels of experience: somebody who had had 8 employers over 20 years should be perceived as much more mobile than somebody who had had 2 employers over 5 years. We therefore calculated a measure of mobility based on how each candidate's mobility compared to others with the same level of experience. We first counted each candidate's cumulative number of employers at each year of experience. We then assigned a z-score to each person-year observation to describe their position in the

[6]We dropped 20 searches (4.1%) that were coded by SearchCo as either canceled (resulting in no offer extended) or filled by client, and a further 84 searches for which we were unable to obtain resumes for the candidate who received the offer (31 searches) or for all other candidates (53 searches). These dropped searches did not differ significantly from the rest of the sample in terms of client characteristics (industry distribution and size) and characteristics of the search (position and the year the search was conducted). Our use of search fixed effects should mitigate any selection biases caused by the omission of these searches, as any search-level differences would be encompassed within the fixed effect. Nonetheless, dropping these searches further reduces the representativeness of our data.

[7]We report descriptive statistics on the distribution of the client firms in terms of industry, position (for the search) and firm size in Table A1 of the Appendix. While a significant portion of our sample consists of client firms in the education and non-profit space, our additional analyses using subsamples and interaction effects suggest that our main results are comparable across these samples.

[8]One potential concern with the use of such resume data is that not all jobs may be recorded on those resumes. Of the 860 individuals (44.47%) who reported their graduation years, the start year of the first job spell was later than the graduation year in only 149 (17.33%) cases, suggesting that most resumes were complete. We did not find significant difference between the groups that reported full employment history vs. partial employment history in terms of observables such as gender, prior interorganizational mobility, functional diversity or tenure with the current firm. Our results are robust to controlling for a dummy that signifies whether the candidate provided full vs. partial employment history as well as a dummy for those with missing graduation years. We should also note that the data that we have about a candidate's past roles should be the same as the data seen by the employers.

distribution of the cumulative number of employers for that particular number of years of experience. We use the z-score from the search year (at the time the candidate was evaluated by client firm) as our measure of mobility, representing the relative level of prior mobility compared to other workers with the same level of experience.[9]

3.3.2 | Functional and industry diversity

In order to calculate functional and industry diversity, we first coded the function and industry of each role. Functions were coded into 22 categories, based on functions described in the top management team literature (e.g., Carpenter & Fredrickson, 2001) and supplemented with common functions in SearchCo's internal rubric.[10] Industries were categorized into sectors using their 2-digit NAICS code. Similar to the approach used to calculate prior interorganizational mobility, we counted the cumulative number of unique number of functional areas or industries that the candidate had worked at in each year of experience and calculated a z-score for people with that many years of experience. We used the z-scores from the search year as our measures of industry and functional diversity.

3.3.3 | Tenure with the current employer

Tenure was calculated by subtracting the year that the candidate started work at their current employer from the search year.

3.4 | Control variables

3.4.1 | Female

Following Greenberg and Mollick (2017), we coded candidates' gender based on their first name, using an API called Genderize, which draws on a database collected from social networking platforms. We used a threshold of 70% probability to code applicants as either male or female. For the 3% of names whose probability was lower than 70% for each gender or were not in the Genderize database, we hand-coded gender from photographs on LinkedIn accounts or pronouns in internal search materials.

3.4.2 | Education

A dummy variable was created for each of the post-baccalaureate degrees that the candidates may have earned, such as MBA, JD, MD, PhD, LLM and MD.

[9]We are unable to tell whether moves between firms were voluntary or involuntary (nor, we suspect, are potential employers able to reliably distinguish these two forms of mobility).

[10]The categories were top management, IT, finance, administration, marketing, HR, operations, general management, sales, engineering, consulting, research, clinical, nursing, legal, communications, manufacturing, quality control, student affairs, fundraising, corporate development, strategy, and board membership.

3.4.3 | Years of experience

We coded years of experience as the difference between the starting year of the first job on the resume and the current year.

3.4.4 | Firm status

Previous literature suggests that employment at a prestigious firm can serve as a signal of quality in the labor market (Bidwell et al., 2015). We therefore created a measure for the status of the current employer. This took a value of 1 if the current employer appeared in the list of Fortune 100 companies from year 2006 to year 2012; if it was in the top 50 from the U.S. News & World Report rankings on universities from year 1991 to year 2001; or if it was in the top 10 for any of the 16 specialty areas from the U.S. News & World Report Hospitals rankings from year 1996 and 2002. These ranking data were chosen to most closely match the time frame of the data at hand, given availability.

3.4.5 | Job rank

We used job titles to code the ranks of the current job, using the following categories: CEO (4.03%), C-level executive (CFO, COO, president, founder, partner, chief, owner) (36.84%), senior vice president and executive vice president (0.91%), vice president (2.62%), director (26.47%), associate director (1.31%), manager (9.86%) and other. This measure was included as a categorical variable in our analyses.

3.4.6 | Similarity with the vacancy

We coded whether the current role and the vacancy were in the same industry and function. For rank, we coded whether the current position was the same rank, lower rank or higher rank compared to the vacancy.

3.4.7 | Whether the individual is an internal candidate

This dummy variable was set to 1 if the candidate's current employer is the same as the client firm, and zero otherwise.[11]

[11]We also explored whether our results were robust to controlling for the size of organizations that candidates came from. We used various sources such as Compustat. PrivCo, Capital IQ and Zoominfo to collect the number of employees at each firm. Where possible, we collected size data for the year of the search. In 744 cases (38.5%), though, we were only able to collect data on an organization's current size. We were also unable to find employer size for 274 firms (14.2%). We replicated our analyses including this size control, replacing missing values of the size variable with the average value of firm size and controlling for these observations with a dummy. Our results were substantively unchanged. We also ran analyses in which we excluded observations with missing data, again replicating our main results. We do not include these analyses in our main tables because of the problems with missing data. Results are available from the authors on request. Further, we explored whether our results were robust to controlling for race. In our data we have a small percentage of candidates who were flagged as "Black" (1.45%), "Asian" (0.47%) or "Hispanic" (0.26%). However, for those that were not marked as any of these races, we could not ascertain whether they did not belong to these racial categories or the data was missing. When we included the above race dummies in our model (using those that were not flagged as the baseline category), we found that our main results held.

3.5 | Analytical approach

We model employers' choice among the candidates within each search using a linear probability model with search-fixed effects.[12] Because we condition on searches, we do not include vacancy-level controls that would be specific to each search. We clustered the standard errors by current employers.

We use a generalized structural equation model (GSEM) to test our mediation hypotheses (H1 and H2). (Hayes, 2009; MacKinnon, Lockwood and Williams, 2004). The GSEM estimates a system of equations, allowing the error terms across different equations to correlate (Shaver, 2005). We operationalize the choice of candidates with a linear probability model containing dummies for every search. We calculated confidence intervals using bias-adjusted nonparametric bootstrapping (Efron & Tibshirani, 1994; MacKinnon et al., 2004) over 1000 replications of the specified model.

4 | RESULTS

Table 1 provides means, standard deviations and correlations for our variables. Average experience in our sample is 24.6 years, reflecting the seniority of the jobs being filled. Candidates have also stayed an average of 4.7 years with their current employer. There are moderate correlations among our independent and mediating variables, reflecting the way that they represent different aspects of mobility. The variance inflation factors for those variables were below 10 though, which represents a conservative threshold for when multicollinearity can bias results (Hair et al., 1998).[13]

Before presenting the GSEM mediation analyses, Table 2 shows the results from simple linear probability models with search fixed effects. We separately analyze the effects of our independent variable and each of the mediating variables.

Model 1 demonstrates no clear effect of interorganizational mobility on selection ($\beta = -0.01$, $p = 0.38$). Models 2 and 3 then estimate the effects of functional and industry diversity respectively. There is a substantial correlation between functional and industry diversity (0.48), reflecting the way that moves into other industries often take people into different functions. In Model 2, we find a positive effect of functional diversity on the probability of being selected for the job ($\beta = 0.05$, $p = 0.00$). The coefficient indicates that a one standard deviation increase in functional diversity is associated with a 5% increase in the probability of receiving an offer. This represents a substantial increase over the base rate 20% probability of receiving an offer. A two standard deviation increase in functional diversity would have a similar effect on hiring to coming from a high status employer.

Model 3 finds little evidence for a strong effect of industry diversity on the probability of being selected ($\beta = -0.01$, $p = 0.63$). We explored whether this nonresult reflected a failure to account for differences between moves across related versus unrelated moves. Following past

[12]Using a linear probability model with fixed effects provided highly similar results to non-linear conditional logit models, while also being compatible with the structural equation model described below. The fixed effects linear probability model also has the advantage of being more easily interpretable.

[13]We also calculated Cook's distance in order to check for influential outliers. Plotting the resulting values did not identify any observations with unusually high values. All values were also far below 1, which is often recommended as a threshold. The most conservative definition of outliers, defines them as having Cook's distance that is three times the mean value. Dropping the 11.8% of the sample that met this definition did not change our results.

TABLE 1 Summary statistics and correlations ($N = 1934$)

		Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Offer received	0.2	0.4	1												
2	Prior interorganizational mobility	0.17	1.05	−0.02	1											
3	Functional diversity	0.02	1.07	0.12	0.48	1										
4	Industry diversity	0.02	1.11	−0.01	0.73	0.4	1									
5	Tenure with current employer	4.67	4.86	0	−0.46	−0.37	−0.13	1								
6	Female	0.33	0.47	0.04	0.01	0	0.03	0.01	1							
7	Experience	24.63	8.56	0.04	−0.03	−0.1	0.21	0.2	−0.02	1						
8	Internal candidate	0.01	0.1	0.04	−0.02	−0.03	−0.01	0.05	0.03	0	1					
9	Functional similarity	0.5	0.5	0.02	−0.01	0	−0.04	−0.01	0.02	0.03	0.01	1				
10	Industry similarity	0.41	0.49	0.04	0.01	−0.17	0.08	0.12	0.03	0.11	0.1	−0.01	1			
11	Same level as vacancy	0.59	0.49	0	0.03	0.05	0.02	−0.02	0	−0.04	−0.04	−0.05	−0.01	1		
12	Higher level than vacancy	0.13	0.34	0.04	−0.02	−0.04	0	−0.01	0.03	0.06	−0.02	−0.02	−0.04	−0.47	1	
13	Time in current job	3.19	3.42	−0.04	−0.3	−0.26	−0.26	0.63	0	0.16	0.04	0.02	0.03	−0.04	0.01	1
14	High-status firm	0.12	0.32	0.07	−0.07	−0.03	0.07	0.13	0.05	−0.04	0.03	−0.03	0.06	0	−0.05	−0.01

TABLE 2 The likelihood of receiving an offer using search-fixed effects model

Dependent variable:	(1) Offer received	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Prior interorganizational mobility	−0.01					−0.03	−0.04
	[0.39]					[0.06]	[0.00]
Functional diversity		0.05				0.07	0.07
		[0.00]				[0.00]	[0.00]
Industry diversity			−0.01			−0.01	
			[0.63]			[0.51]	
Related industry moves				0.01			
				[0.20]			
Unrelated industry moves				0			
				[0.96]			
Tenure with most recent employer					0	0	0
					[0.47]	[0.60]	[0.62]
Female	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.04
	[0.04]	[0.06]	[0.04]	[0.04]	[0.05]	[0.08]	[0.08]
Experience	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	[0.04]	[0.53]	[0.04]	[0.08]	[0.05]	[0.79]	[0.73]
Internal candidate	0.23	0.22	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.21	0.21
	[0.10]	[0.10]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.13]	[0.13]
Functional similarity	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02
	[0.32]	[0.30]	[0.32]	[0.29]	[0.30]	[0.29]	[0.29]
Industry similarity	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0	0.01
	[0.66]	[0.83]	[0.70]	[0.76]	[0.74]	[0.85]	[0.79]
Same level as vacancy	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.05
	[0.39]	[0.30]	[0.39]	[0.53]	[0.39]	[0.30]	[0.30]
Higher level than vacancy	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.05
	[0.63]	[0.52]	[0.64]	[0.65]	[0.63]	[0.46]	[0.45]
Time in most recent job	−0.01	0	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01	0	0
	[0.02]	[0.57]	[0.02]	[0.04]	[0.04]	[0.58]	[0.56]
High status firm	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.1	0.1
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]
Constant	−0.1	−0.04	−0.11	−0.11	−0.1	0	0.01
	[0.61]	[0.86]	[0.59]	[0.59]	[0.61]	[1.00]	[0.98]
Observations	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934
R-squared	0.1	0.11	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.11	0.11

Note: Standard errors are clustered by current employer. *p*-values in brackets. All models control for education dummies and current rank dummies.

literature, we defined moves that occur within the same industry sector (those that share the same 2-digit NAICS code[14]) but across different subsectors (3-digit codes) as related moves, and those across different sectors as unrelated moves (Clements et al., 2015; Liang & Goetz, 2018). Among all cross-firm moves, 56.3% were unrelated moves, and 10.6% were related moves by these definitions. We then separately counted the number of unrelated and related moves, and created standardized measures for each of these variables in the same way that we constructed our industry diversity measure. In Model 4, we included related industry diversity and unrelated industry diversity as independent variables. We see that neither variable predicts the likelihood of receiving an offer.[15] This suggests that regardless of the relatedness of the industries, cross-industry experience does not influence the probability of receiving an offer. We further explored whether industry diversity of candidates is more valued in client firms that are diversified across multiple markets, but we did not find evidence for such an effect.[16]

In Model 5, we then examine the effects of tenure with the current employer. Contrary to H2, we do not find evidence that tenure with the current employer is negatively associated with the probability of getting selected. We probe this nonresult in our supplementary analyses.

In Model 6, we include all of our independent variables together. Controlling for the positive, indirect effects of past mobility on functional diversity and time in current job, we find stronger evidence for a negative direct effect of prior interorganizational mobility ($\beta = -.03$, $p = .06$), consistent with H3. Those with prior mobility that is one standard deviation higher than the mean are 3% less likely to receive an offer compared to those with average level of mobility, again representing a moderate effect relative to the baseline selection rate of 20%. The magnitude of the negative effect of prior mobility is larger and the estimation more accurate ($\beta = -.04$, $p = .00$) when we do not control for industry diversity, which did not have a strong effect on the probability of receiving an offer (Model 3). We report this result in Model 7. The coefficient for function diversity is also higher in both Models 6 and 7 ($\beta = .07$, $p = .00$), reflecting the effects of controlling for past mobility.

Of the controls, only high status of the previous firm can be estimated accurately. Of particular interest, we find that functional similarity and industry similarity[17] have little effect on the probability of being selected, despite over half of our candidates coming from different functions or industries. This suggests that employers are comfortable with those who are moving roles, at least among those that made it onto the shortlist.

We formally test H1 and H2 using a structural equation model to estimate the mediating relationships. Those relationships are illustrated in Figure 2 and the results are reported in Table 3. Two conditions must be met for mediation effects to be present (Kenny et al., 1998). First, the independent variable must predict the mediating variables. Models 1, 2 and 3 in Table 3 demonstrate that our data satisfy this first condition, with past mobility strongly

[14]Each 2-digit NAICS code represents a unique industry sector, except for three sectors that are represented by a range of 2-digit codes: Manufacturing (31–33), Retail Trade (44–45) and Transportation and Warehousing (48–49). We treated each range of 2-digit codes as a single sector. (Economic Census: NAICS Codes & Understanding Industry Classification Systems; https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census/guidance/understanding-naics.html)

[15]When we additionally controlled for mobility, it improved the estimation of the effect of related moves (β=0.02, p = 0.089).

[16]From ORBIS, we collected data on the industry segments that client firms operated in at the time of hiring. We operationalized each firm's level of diversification using (1) the number of industry segments and (2) whether the firm operates in more than one industry. We interacted the firm diversification variable with the related/unrelated industry diversity of candidates, and did not find any interaction effect across all models.

[17]The results are similar when we use the 3-digit NAICS code to measure industry similarity.

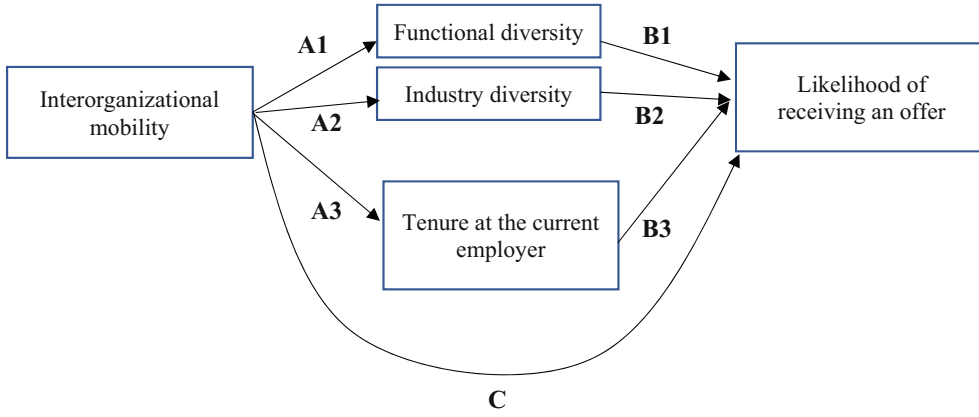

FIGURE 2 Structural equation model.

associated with functional diversity[18] (Model 1, Path A1 in Figure 2), industry diversity (Model 2, Path A2 in Figure 2) and tenure with the current employer (Model 3, Path A3 in Figure 2).

The second condition is that the mediating variables predict the dependent variable. We test this condition in Model 4, which finds that functional diversity is strongly associated with the probability of receiving an offer, but not industry diversity or tenure with current employer.

Next, we calculate indirect effects via our different mediators. We find that the indirect effect of functional diversity (Path A1 × B1 in Figure 2) is 0.03 (0.43 (Model 2) × 0.07 (Model 4)) with a 95% confidence interval of [0.02, 0.04]. The indirect effect of industry diversity (Path A2 × B2 in Figure 2) is −0.01 ((0.77 (Model 1) × −0.01 (Model 4) with a 95% confidence interval of [−0.03, 0.01]. The indirect effect of tenure with recent employer (Path A3 × B3 in Figure 2) is 0.0025 (−1.25 (Model 3) × −0.002 (Model 4)) with a 95% confidence interval of [−0.005, 0.01]. Overall, the results are consistent with the mediation hypothesis H1a but not H1b or H2. We also find that H3 is supported in Model 4–controlling for industry and functional diversity and current tenure, we find that the direct effect of prior mobility is negative.

Taken together, these results confirm the complex effects of prior interorganizational mobility on firms' decisions. While there is a negative direct effect of prior interorganizational mobility, this is balanced by a positive indirect effect through functional diversity. The sum of these effects means that we see no effect of prior mobility when functional diversity is not included in our models (e.g., Model 1, Table 2). Once functional diversity is included in the model, though, we see a negative direct effect of prior interorganizational mobility, consistent with our arguments.[19]

[18]One alternative explanation for the relationship between prior mobility and functional diversity is that moving functions within organizations may facilitate later moves across organizations, rather than cross-organization moves leading to functional diversity. Inspection of descriptive statistics, though, demonstrated that cross-organization moves are directly connected to increases in functional diversity. Notably, we found that 78% of all changes in function in our data occurred during moves across organizations, confirming that inter-organizational mobility facilitates functional diversity, rather than vice versa.

[19]We further examined the interaction between mobility and functional diversity to check whether functional experience is valued differently based on whether it is built internally or across a large number of firms. We did not find such interaction effect.

TABLE 3 Generalized structural equation model estimation using a maximum likelihood estimator

Dependent variable:	(1) Functional diversity (Path A1 [in Figure 2])	(2) Industry diversity (Path A2)	(3) Tenure with most recent employer (Path A3)	(4) Offer received (Path B1, B2, B3, C)
Functional diversity				0.07
				[0.00]
Industry diversity				−0.01
				[0.46]
Tenure with most recent employer				0
				[0.55]
Prior interorganizational mobility	0.43	0.77	−1.25	−0.03
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.03]
Female	0.1	0.02	0.23	0.04
	[0.02]	[0.53]	[0.21]	[0.05]
Experience	0.04	−0.01	0.05	0
	[0.00]	[0.02]	[0.00]	[0.79]
Internal candidate	0.29	−0.04	0.76	0.21
	[0.23]	[0.78]	[0.41]	[0.08]
Functional similarity	−0.04	0.01	−0.5	0.03
	[0.35]	[0.84]	[0.00]	[0.21]
Industry similarity	0.08	−0.2	0.95	0.01
	[0.06]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.81]
Same level as vacancy	−0.09	−0.04	0.25	0.03
	[0.23]	[0.52]	[0.38]	[0.38]
Higher level than vacancy	−0.13	−0.18	0.31	0.04
	[0.26]	[0.11]	[0.52]	[0.53]
Time in current job	−0.05	−0.01	0.76	0
	[0.00]	[0.18]	[0.00]	[0.52]
High-status firm	0.18	0.03	1.54	0.1
	[0.00]	[0.54]	[0.00]	[0.00]
Constant	−1.56	−0.69	−0.85	0.01
	[0.00]	[0.09]	[0.30]	[0.96]
Observations	1934	1934	1934	1934

Note: *p*-values in brackets; Log-likelihood of the structural model: −9707.122. Models 1 to 4 estimate the relationships proposed in Figure 2. All models control for education dummies and current rank dummies. Models include search fixed effects.

4.1 | Supplementary analyses

4.1.1 | Exploring effects of tenure at the current employer

Although we proposed that employers would be less likely to hire candidates who have longer tenure with their employer, we failed to find support for Hypothesis H2. This nonfinding could reflect the linear specification used in our hypothesis test. We proposed that employers will believe that candidates who have spent too long at their current employer will struggle to adapt to a new organization. This argument suggests that increases in tenure may not have a uniformly negative effect on hiring across the entire range of tenure–indeed, employers may even value candidates who have established some level of tenure with their current employer. Instead, increases in tenure may only be damaging once tenure has passed some threshold that indicates that the candidate's lack of recent experience in other organizations will be a problem. If this is the case, we might better capture employers' concerns about long tenured candidates using nonlinear specifications of tenure, which allow tenure to have negative effects only at higher values.

We tested this possibility in two ways. First, we included both linear and quadratic terms for tenure in our analyses. If tenure predominantly has a negative effect at high values of tenure, we should see a negative effect on the quadratic term, indicating that tenure has more negative effects only when tenure is higher. The results, presented in Table 4 (Models 1 and 2), support our argument, as we find a negative effect of tenure squared on the probability of receiving an offer. Once we control for prior mobility and functional diversity in Model 2, we see that the coefficient on the *Tenure with the current employer squared* is −0.0005 ($p = .04$). This suggests that those with 10 years of experience will experience an approximately 5% decline in the likelihood of receiving an offer relative to those with 1 year of tenure.

Second, we used a spline specification to more precisely explore how the effects of tenure on hiring might vary as tenure increases. Specifically, we created a series of three part splines to explore whether tenure had different effects on hiring at low, middle and high values of tenure. The spline splits tenure into three separate variables, one of which measures the effect of tenure between zero and the lower threshold (usually described as a "knot"), the second of which measures the effect of tenure between the lower and upper threshold, and the third of which measures the effect of tenure above the upper threshold. The coefficient on each of these variables then corresponds to the effect of tenure on the probability of receiving an offer (i.e. the slope of the tenure-probability relationship) within that range of tenure. For example, the coefficient on *Tenure < = first knot* reflects the effect of tenure on the probability of receiving an offer for those observations for which tenure is less than the lower threshold that we define. Because it is *ex ante* unclear how low, middle and high tenure should be defined, we present a variety of analyses, with lower thresholds set at 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 years, and the upper threshold set at double the lower threshold. The results are presented in Models 3–7 of Table 4.

We do not find any evidence that low or medium levels of tenure affect the probability of being hired. Once tenure increases beyond 10 years, though, we find that the probability of a candidate being hired declines by 1 percentage point for each additional year (Model 5).

Structural equation models (reported in Appendix Table A2, Table A3, Table A4) confirmed a mediating effect of tenure squared on the relationship between prior mobility and selection (effect size is 0.01 with a 95% confidence interval of [0.001, 0.02]) and of the last segment of the

TABLE 4 The likelihood of receiving an offer using search-fixed effects model: exploring the effects of tenure with current employer

	Quadratic		Spline				
			Knot at 3, 6	Knot at 4, 8	Knot at 5, 10	Knot at 6, 12	Knot at 7, 14
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Dependent variable:	Offer received	Offer received	Offer received	Offer received	Offer received	Offer received	Offer received
Tenure	0.01	0.01					
	[0.02]	[0.18]					
Tenure squared	−0.00	−0.00					
	[0.01]	[0.04]					
Prior interorganizational mobility		−0.04	−0.04	−0.04	−0.04	−0.04	−0.04
		[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.01]	[0.01]
Functional diversity		0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07
		[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]
Tenure <= first knot			0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
			[0.41]	[0.32]	[0.47]	[0.79]	[0.89]
Tenure <= second knot, >first knot			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
			[0.89]	[0.93]	[0.63]	[0.30]	[0.28]
Tenure > second knot			0.00	0.00	−0.01	−0.01	−0.02
			[0.28]	[0.25]	[0.05]	[0.01]	[0.01]
Female	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
	[0.05]	[0.08]	[0.08]	[0.08]	[0.08]	[0.08]	[0.08]
Experience	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	[0.04]	[0.69]	[0.72]	[0.71]	[0.69]	[0.67]	[0.67]
Internal candidate	0.23	0.21	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	0.21
	[0.10]	[0.13]	[0.12]	[0.12]	[0.13]	[0.14]	[0.14]
Functional similarity	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
	[0.26]	[0.25]	[0.25]	[0.26]	[0.26]	[0.25]	[0.24]
Industry similarity	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
	[0.75]	[0.79]	[0.81]	[0.81]	[0.79]	[0.76]	[0.76]
Same level as vacancy	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03
	[0.52]	[0.43]	[0.41]	[0.41]	[0.43]	[0.44]	[0.45]
Higher level than vacancy	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.04
	[0.64]	[0.55]	[0.52]	[0.52]	[0.55]	[0.59]	[0.61]
Time in current job	−0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	[0.01]	[0.29]	[0.32]	[0.30]	[0.27]	[0.31]	[0.35]
High status firm	0.10	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]
Constant	−0.14	−0.02	−0.03	−0.03	−0.02	−0.01	0.00
	[0.50]	[0.90]	[0.89]	[0.87]	[0.90]	[0.96]	[0.99]
Observations	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934
R-squared	0.1	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12

Note: *p*-values in brackets (S.E. clustered by current employer). All models control for education dummies and current rank dummies. Each spline splits the tenure variable into three variables where the sum of the splines is the same as the tenure variable, but each component of the spline measures variation in tenure at different intervals.

spline variable for tenure greater than 10 years (effect size is 0.004 with a 95% confidence interval of [0.0002, 0.001]).[20]

We conclude that moderate levels of tenure do not affect candidates' probability of being chosen for the job, but candidates who have stayed with their current employer for substantially more than 10 years are less attractive to employers.[21]

4.1.2 | Additional evidence on employer beliefs

We proposed that prior mobility affects executive selection because employers use candidates' resumes to make inferences about their skills and other traits. Although our results are largely consistent with our arguments, our data do not allow us to directly explore the reasons why employers might prefer certain candidates. We therefore sought to corroborate our arguments by conducting a survey of senior human resource (HR) executives, gathering data on how they thought about candidates' prior moves. Senior HR executives are particularly useful for studying executive hiring because they play a central role in managing recruiting processes at all levels of the organization including for executive succession (Schepker et al., 2018). We were particularly interested in understanding how those executives viewed candidates with long tenure given our mixed results on this question.

Specifically, we conducted a brief online survey of participants in an executive education program targeted at Chief HR Officers (CHRO). All of the participants in the program held senior roles in HR, with titles like CHRO, Vice President of HR, or Talent and Culture Head. Out of 91 participants, 54 filled out the survey, giving a response rate of 59%.

In order to provide a concrete comparison for the respondents, we asked the following question: "Suppose you had two otherwise identical candidates for an executive role who have held similar job titles positions over the past ten years. Person A was in the same company all ten years. Person B moved across similar companies. Which of those candidates would you be more likely to pick?" Responses to this question are tabulated in Table 5. Many respondents only had a slight preference for one candidate over the others. Of those who expressed a moderate or strong preference, though, most respondents preferred the candidate who had moved across companies (a difference in means test for probability of expressing a moderate or strong opinion for Candidate A versus Candidate B indicated that the preference for Candidate B was higher

[20]An alternative explanation for this non-linear effect is that candidates with very high tenure are likely older and may be penalized because of concerns about their imminent retirement. Although we lack data on candidate age, we do control for experience (which should correlate much more closely with age than does tenure) in all of our analyses. We do not find any penalty for candidates with more experience, as might be expected if employers penalized older candidates. We also checked for non-linear effects of experience by including a squared term, in case experience only has negative effects at very high levels. We did not see a negative effect of experience squared in these analyses, and they did not affect our results for tenure. We also explored whether tenure had different effects at different ranks, perhaps because higher age is less of a concern for more senior executives. Again, we found no effect. These results suggest that our findings do not reflect concerns about hiring older executives.

[21]We posited that tenure with the current employer would provide the most recent and relevant information about adaptability and skill transferability Even where candidates had long spells of tenure with prior employers, more recent job spells would have allowed them the opportunity to demonstrate these strengths. As a robustness check, though, we ran supplementary analyses using the length of the longest tenure (excluding the current employer) to predict the likelihood of receiving an offer. We present results in Table A4 of the Appendix. Across all models, linear, quadratic and spline, we find that the longest tenure is not a relevant predictor in our models, consistent with our argument that current tenure will have the greatest effect on the selection outcome.

TABLE 5 Survey responses on preferences for mobile candidates

Response	Respondent count
I would have a strong preference for Candidate A (single employer)	3
I would have a modest preference for Candidate A (single employer)	6
I would have a slight preference for Candidate A (single employer)	12
I would have a slight preference for Candidate B (multiple employer)	12
I would have a modest preference for Candidate B (multiple employer)	12
I would have a strong preference for Candidate B (multiple employer)	6

Note: Suppose you had two otherwise identical candidates for an executive role who have held similar job titles positions over the past 10 years. Person A was in the same company all 10 years. Person B moved across similar companies. Which of those candidates would you be more likely to pick?"

($p < .05$). This result corroborates our suggestion that there may be some penalty for staying too long at the same organization.

We then asked two follow up questions to gain greater insight into the attitudes that shaped our respondents' answers. First, we asked "If you see a candidate for an executive position who has been with their current employer for many years, what would be your biggest concern about them, based on that long tenure?" Then we asked: "If you see a candidate for an executive role who has worked for a large number of different firms during their career, what would be your most important concerns about them, based on that career path?" In each case, we asked respondents to rank a variety of different possible answers from most important to least important. The results are displayed in Table 6.

Consistent with our arguments, we find that the most salient concerns about candidates who had stayed with the same employer were that they would struggle to adapt to a new organization and that their knowledge and skills would be too specific to a single firm. One-third of the respondents also chose "[s]enior candidates need to have experienced a wider selection of organization, industries and functions in order to be successful" as their highest or second highest concern, reflecting our arguments about functional diversity.

The results also cast light on the reasons why employers may be reluctant to hire candidates who have moved firms more recently in the past. We suggested that this reluctance could reflect both concerns about their attrition risk and their ability. Respondents cited both concerns. Specifically, for candidates who had moved jobs regularly, 19 respondents were most concerned that they would not want to stay in the new organization for very long, while 12 said that mobility could reflect past performance problems.

Although these survey responses may not reflect how respondents would behave in practice, they indicate that many people who are involved in hiring executives consider most recent tenure as a signal in their decisions, and that those decisions can involve tradeoffs between concerns about the adaptability of people who spend too long in one organization and concerns about future turnover or competence for those who have moved firms frequently.

5 | DISCUSSION

Executives have become more mobile in recent decades, often building careers across multiple organizations. We examine how firms evaluate that mobility when hiring executives. We argue

TABLE 6 Survey responses on concerns about long tenured candidates

Response counts:						
Response	**1 (most important)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
I would worry that they would struggle to adapt to working in a different organization and learning a new culture	26	13	8	2	0	1
The knowledge and skills are likely to be too specific to a single firm	11	19	15	4	1	0
Not having moved companies would suggest that they lack ambition or drive	0	1	7	11	26	5
Senior candidates need to have experienced a wider selection of organization, industries and functions in order to be successful	6	11	12	17	4	0
I would think that it would be unlikely that they would ultimately accept our offer	5	5	7	14	16	3
Other (please state)	2	1	1	2	3	41
Response counts:						
Response	**1 (most important)**	**2**	**3**	**4**		
I would worry that they would not want to stay with our organization for very long	19	13	7	1		
I would worry that the large number of moves across companies could signal performance problems in the past	12	11	14	3		
I worry that people who have moved too often can have fewer concrete achievements to point to	7	14	17	2		
Other (please state)	2	2	2	34		

Note: If you see a candidate for an executive position who has been with their current employer for many years, what would be your biggest concern about them, based on that long tenure? Please rank the following from most important (1) to least important (6). If you see a candidate for an executive role who has worked for a large number of different firms during their career, what would be your most important concerns about them, based on that career path. Please rank the following from most important (1) to least important (4).

that past interorganizational mobility is a double-edged sword, as employers may value the more diverse skills and greater adaptability that those moves build, but may also be concerned about what that mobility implies about a candidate's attrition risk and ability. As a consequence, we argue that the way that moves are choreographed to develop broad experience and adaptability determines whether their benefits outweigh the costs.

First, we find evidence that past interorganizational mobility is valued because of the way that it creates greater functional breadth in a managers' experience. As well as identifying a novel mechanism through which moves across firms can contribute to managers' development, this finding also has implications for broader research on the returns to specialist versus generalist profiles. While much prior work has suggested that generalists may be penalized for lacking a coherent identity and failing to demonstrate adequate skills and performance in any one area (Ferguson & Hasan, 2013; Leung, 2014; Zuckerman et al., 2003), the firms in our sample actually preferred those with more functional breadth. This preference may in part stem from

the way that the candidates in our sample had already established themselves in their careers, alleviating concerns about their competence. It may also reflect the nature of senior managerial work, which requires coordinating and integrating a broad set of activities. Either way, it provides further evidence that the trade-off between specialist versus generalist career paths is complex and context-specific (Merluzzi & Phillips, 2016; Teodoridis et al., 2018).

We failed to find an effect of industry experience regardless of the relatedness of the industries. This may indicate that employers find cross-industry moves to be less valuable in building skill diversity than moves across functions, or reflect concerns that the skills acquired across those moves may be less applicable to the new role (note though that the employers in our study seemed quite willing to hire candidates from outside their industry).

Second, we find evidence that past interorganizational mobility can be beneficial because it prevents candidates from accruing excessive tenure with their current employer. Although we do not find support for H2, that increased tenure with the current employer reduces a candidate's chance of being hired, supplementary analyses using quadratic terms and splines suggest that beyond around ten years, having long tenure with the same firm does disadvantage candidates. Although these results suggest a more complex relationship between tenure and hiring than we originally hypothesized, they are consistent with our overarching argument that employers will have reservations about candidates who have spent too long with their current employer. For low to moderate values of tenure, it seems that any concerns about adaptability raised by increasing tenure may be balanced by the benefits of demonstrating stability. Once tenure reaches a threshold though, the costs of continued increases in tenure appear to outweigh the gains. This argument was also supported by qualitative evidence from a survey of employers who were less likely to hire candidates who had spent many years with the same employer because of concerns about their capacity to adapt to the new organization.

Third, once we control for the effects of interorganizational mobility on functional diversity, we find a negative direct effect of interorganizational mobility on the chances of a candidate being hired. Although much prior literature has noted the risks of hiring those with a history of job-hopping (Boudreau et al., 2001; Ghiselli, 1974; Judge & Watanabe, 1995), we have surprisingly little evidence about how hiring firms take this mobility into account. Bills (1990) provided qualitative evidence that employers dislike job-hoppers, and Cohn et al. (2020) report that applications to administrative, clerical and entry-level marketing and finance jobs were less likely to receive callbacks if they indicated a track record of job-hopping. To our knowledge, we provide the first evidence that job-hopping can also carry a penalty for more highly skilled workers, and in the final stages of hiring decisions.

In developing our theory, we proposed two reasons why employers may be concerned about frequent prior mobility: because it may signal that the candidate is an attrition risk; and because it may raise concerns about prior performance. Although our main data do not allow us to distinguish these mechanisms, our supplementary survey of CHROs found that employers expressed both kinds of concerns about job switchers, suggesting that both pathways play a role in reducing the attractiveness of job-hoppers.

These findings contribute to the literature on career variety in executive backgrounds. That literature has traditionally treated variety in the number of organizations worked for as having the same effects as variety in functional or industry experiences (e.g., Crossland et al., 2014, Custódio et al., 2013). Our results suggest that these different forms of variety have different effects, as functional diversity increases the attractiveness of candidates, industry diversity has no effects, and moving firms has negative effects when it does not contribute to functional diversity or avoid excessively long tenure. We therefore highlight the importance of taking a

much more nuanced approach to understanding the kinds of career variety and mobility that may benefit executives and firms, and the kinds that may be detrimental.

We also make a methodological contribution to the literature on top management teams by providing an alternative means of exploring the kinds of attributes that firms value in senior managers. Some research has begun to explore demand for different aspects of top executives' prior experience, studying how pay relates to such attributes as career diversity and international experience (e.g., Carpenter et al., 2001; Sanders & Carpenter, 1998; Custódio et al., 2013; Datta & Iskandar-Datta, 2014). We instead analyze how firms choose candidates from within a given hiring pool. A particular advantage of our approach is its ability to separate out the influence of supply from demand, isolating the decisions made by hiring firms conditional on the attributes of candidates that they are considering. Although search firm records have been used to explore how gender affects executive selection (Fernandez-Mateo & Fernandez, 2016), ours is the first study that we know of to address broader questions about what kinds of attributes and experiences are valued in hiring executives. We believe that this approach will have broader value in exploring what attributes firms value in executives.

We also contribute to the careers literature, by offering a comprehensive analysis of how mobility shapes employability. Although scholars have explored how external moves affect pay and responsibilities (Dreher & Cox, 2000; Bidwell & Mollick, 2015; Fuller, 2008; Le Grand and Tahlin, 2002), much less is known about how that mobility shapes future employability. Cohn et al. (2020) explored how past mobility might affect employability of low-skilled workers, holding all else equal. We show how all else is not held equal when people move jobs, as that mobility also shapes how workers build and signal skill diversity and adaptability. We highlight how these effects of mobility on skill development can offset the negative effect of being perceived as uncommitted, unreliable or incompetent.

5.1 | Limitations

One limitation of this study is that we only have data on candidates' resumes, and do not observe other characteristics, such as their interview performance, that might influence hiring decisions. In some cases, those unobserved characteristics may be a direct consequence of the effects that we theorize. For example, somebody who has moved across functions may be able to demonstrate broader skills in an interview precisely because of those functional moves. In other cases, though, it is possible that unobserved (to us) factors shape both mobility decisions and firms' choices. For example, highly competent people may move less and also be able to demonstrate that competence in interviews and reference checks. Making use of the final stage of selection helps mitigate some of these concerns, as each step of the selection process will reduce the variance in terms of competence between the candidates. Nonetheless, we do not make a strong causal claim here.

A related concern is the endogenous nature of prior mobility. We incorporate some of that endogeneity into our theorizing, noting that employers will worry that mobility can stem from a tendency to job-hop or poor performance. Yet there are many other factors that also influence mobility, not least the opportunities available to employees. From that perspective, it is possible that some candidates spend a long time in a single organization because they have continual opportunities to advance within that organization, even at the expense of their external employability. Similarly, some candidates may have stayed in the same function because they had particular strengths in that function or particularly attractive opportunities. Many of these

influences should be orthogonal to the factors that employers consider. Nonetheless, our results should be interpreted in the light of these endogeneity concerns.

It is also possible that past mobility might affect other aspects of the selection process, such as by shaping the social networks that candidates can draw on to lobby for a role. Existing research suggests that such network effects would largely run counter to the findings presented here. For example, we might expect that increased past mobility would increase the size of executives' networks, making it easier for them to get selected, but we find that past mobility is negatively associated with being hired. Barbulescu (2015) also finds that candidates are more likely to receive a post-interview offer if they have more occupationally-focused networks, yet we find that it is those who have worked in more diverse functions that are more likely to be hired. It would be valuable for future work to probe such effects, gathering social network data to unpack how mobility shapes hiring through network pathways.

There are also limits to the generalizability of our findings. Our findings may be affected by our use of search firm data, as the search firm shapes the pool of candidates that hiring firms choose between and will also offer advice on selecting a final candidate. Firms may prioritize different characteristics when search firms are not involved. Our analyses also overwhelmingly examine what happens when organizations seek to hire external candidates into executive roles, even though many people will enter senior roles from inside the same organization. Future research should explore how firm-level characteristics affect executive selection and how priorities differ in selecting internal versus external candidates.

A related concern is the effects of selection into the pool of candidates that the search firm considers. On one hand, focusing on this final pool has advantages, as all of those being considered are likely to have met a high threshold for competence and achievement, allowing us to explore selection within this pool of viable candidates. On the other hand, this is not a random selection of all of those pursuing managerial careers. Some of those selection effects may make it more difficult to find effects, by excluding candidates who are least likely to be hired from the consideration set. Other selection effects could bias our findings, though, if those selection processes create correlations between observable characteristics of the candidates and unobservable (to us) characteristics that shape employers' decisions. We are not aware of any features of the search firm selection process that would create such a correlation between observable and unobservable characteristics and bias our results. It is nevertheless important to be aware that career records that help people to be chosen from this final pool may not be the same as the records that help them to reach that pool.

5.2 | Practical implications

Our study has implications for firms as well as those aspiring to roles in senior management. Our results suggest that firms should consider providing internal opportunities to diversify functional experiences. This will not only prepare individuals for senior jobs internally but also help retain those individuals who seek to broaden their experience. Second, firms may attract new hires by offering jobs that provide them with new functional experience. This implies that firms that have the capability of assessing *and* training those without directly relevant functional experience will be able to hire at a lower cost compared to other firms without those capabilities.

For aspirants to management roles, we demonstrate the need to balance three considerations as they consider what roles to take and when to move firms. First, they should be seeking

to build a diverse portfolio of functional experiences. Second, they should consider moving firms once they have spent more than around ten years with the same firm, as their ability to be hired by other organizations will start to decline beyond this point. Finally, after accounting for these two factors, aspiring executives should seek to minimize moves across firms lest they be perceived as job-hoppers. One way to do this is by maximizing movement across functions within organizations, while minimizing mobility across firms–as long, at least, as they do not stay at the same organization for much more than ten years. Certainly, cross-firm moves that do not enhance the functional diversity of their experience or follow a long period of employment with the same firm may have negative effects on securing future roles.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Research data used for this paper are proprietary and cannot be shared.

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APPENDIX A

TABLE A1 Descriptive data on the characteristics of the searches

Industry	Freq.	Percent
Education/not for profit	108	28.57
Healthcare	106	28.04
Financial and professional services	52	13.76
Life sciences	29	7.67
Industrial	26	6.88
Media and entertainment	20	5.29
Technology	19	5.03
Consumer/retail	18	4.76
Position	**Freq.**	**Percent**
Associate director	5	1.32
Director	122	32.28
VP	99	26.19
SVP/EVP	25	6.61
C-level	78	20.63
CEO	40	10.58
Dean/Provost	6	1.59
Firm size (number of employees)	**Freq.**	**Percent**
1–49 employees	19	5.03
50–499 employees	64	16.93
500–999 employees	17	4.50
1000+ employees	224	59.26

Note: Data on position was not accessible for 3 searches (0.79%). Data on the number of employees was unavailable for 54 firms (14.29%).

TABLE A2 Generalized structural equation model estimation using a maximum likelihood estimator (quadratic term of tenure with current employer)

Dependent variable:	(1) Current tenure	(2) Current tenure squared	(3) Functional diversity	(4) Industry diversity	(5) Offer received
Tenure with current employer (current tenure)					0.01
					[0.14]
Current tenure squared					−0.00
					[0.02]
Functional diversity					0.07
					[0.00]
Industry diversity					−0.01
					[0.50]
Prior interorganizational mobility	−1.25	−24.02	0.43	0.77	−0.03
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.03]
Female	0.23	4.77	0.10	0.02	0.04
	[0.21]	[0.30]	[0.02]	[0.53]	[0.05]
Experience	0.05	1.13	0.04	−0.01	0.00
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.02]	[0.72]
Internal candidate	0.76	11.47	0.29	−0.04	0.21
	[0.41]	[0.72]	[0.23]	[0.78]	[0.09]
Functional similarity	−0.5	−8.35	−0.04	0.01	0.03
	[0.00]	[0.05]	[0.35]	[0.84]	[0.19]
Industry similarity	0.95	17.86	0.08	−0.20	0.00
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.06]	[0.00]	[0.84]
Same level as vacancy	0.25	7.02	−0.09	−0.04	0.03
	[0.38]	[0.30]	[0.23]	[0.52]	[0.37]
Higher level than vacancy	0.31	8.63	−0.13	−0.18	0.04
	[0.52]	[0.45]	[0.26]	[0.11]	[0.52]
Time in current job	0.76	12.23	−0.05	−0.01	0.00
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.18]	[0.24]
High status firm	1.54	14.21	0.18	0.03	0.10
	[0.00]	[0.03]	[0.00]	[0.54]	[0.00]
Constant	−0.85	−89.94	−1.56	−0.69	−0.03
	[0.30]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.09]	[0.86]
Observations	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934

Note: *p*-values in brackets; Log-likelihood of the structural model: −20,742.902. Models 1 to 4 estimate the relationships proposed in Figure 2. All models control for education dummies and current rank dummies. Models include search fixed effects.

TABLE A3 Generalized structural equation model estimation using a maximum likelihood estimator (spline specification for tenure with current employer)

Dependent variable:	(1) Tenure <= 5	(2) Tenure >5, <=10	(3) Tenure >10	(4) Functional diversity	(5) Industry diversity	(6) Offer received
Tenure with current employer <= 5 years						0.01
						[0.42]
Tenure with current employer <= 10, >5 years						0.00
						[0.61]
Tenure with current employer >10 years						−0.01
						[0.03]
Functional diversity						0.07
						[0.00]
Industry diversity						−0.01
						[0.51]
Prior interorganizational mobility	−0.3	−0.46	−0.49	0.43	0.77	−0.03
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.03]
Female	0.03	0.10	0.09	0.10	0.02	0.04
	[0.69]	[0.15]	[0.42]	[0.02]	[0.53]	[0.05]
Experience	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.04	−0.01	0.00
	[0.02]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.02]	[0.71]
Internal candidate	0.16	0.41	0.18	0.29	−0.04	0.21
	[0.67]	[0.19]	[0.82]	[0.23]	[0.78]	[0.09]
Functional similarity	−0.13	−0.18	−0.19	−0.04	0.01	0.03
	[0.07]	[0.01]	[0.07]	[0.35]	[0.84]	[0.20]
Industry similarity	0.33	0.23	0.39	0.08	−0.2	0.01
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.06]	[0.00]	[0.83]
Same level as vacancy	−0.11	0.19	0.17	−0.09	−0.04	0.04
	[0.38]	[0.13]	[0.32]	[0.23]	[0.52]	[0.36]
Higher level than vacancy	−0.33	0.42	0.21	−0.13	−0.18	0.04
	[0.12]	[0.03]	[0.47]	[0.26]	[0.11]	[0.51]
Time in current job	0.3	0.24	0.22	−0.05	−0.01	0.00
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.18]	[0.22]
High status firm	0.82	0.56	0.16	0.18	0.03	0.10
	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.35]	[0.00]	[0.54]	[0.00]
Constant	2.72	−1.03	−2.55	−1.56	−0.69	−0.03
	[0.00]	[0.01]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.09]	[0.87]
Observations	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934	1934

Note: *p*-values in brackets; Log-likelihood of the structural model: −15,051.602. Models 1 to 4 estimate the relationships proposed in Figure 2. All models control for education dummies and current rank dummies. Models include search fixed effects.

TABLE A4 The likelihood of receiving an offer using search-fixed effects model: the effect of longest tenure

	Quadratic		Spline				
			Knot at 3, 6	Knot at 4, 8	Knot at 5, 10	Knot at 6, 12	Knot at 7, 14
	(1) Offer received	(2) Offer received	(3) Offer received	(4) Offer received	(5) Offer received	(6) Offer received	(7) Offer received
Maximum tenure (excluding current)	0.00	−0.01					
	[0.64]	[0.50]					
Maximum tenure squared	0.00	0.00					
	[0.80]	[0.76]					
Prior interorganizational mobility		−0.05	−0.04	−0.04	−0.05	−0.05	−0.05
		[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]
Functional diversity		0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
		[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]	[0.00]
Tenure with current employer <= first knot			−0.04	−0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
			[0.19]	[0.59]	[0.44]	[0.38]	[0.66]
Tenure with current employer <= second knot, > first knot			0.02	0.00	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01
			[0.18]	[0.70]	[0.28]	[0.11]	[0.20]
Tenure with current employer > second knot			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
			[0.20]	[0.27]	[0.67]	[0.96]	[0.98]
Constant	−0.09	0.02	0.10	0.04	−0.03	−0.03	−0.01
	[0.68]	[0.91]	[0.63]	[0.85]	[0.87]	[0.89]	[0.97]
Observations	1842	1842	1842	1842	1842	1842	1842
R-squared	0.1	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12

Note: *p*-values in brackets (standard errors clustered by current employer); all models control for female, years of experience, education dummies, functional similarity, industry similarity, vacancy same level/higher level than current rank, time in current job, high status firm and current rank dummies. *Maximum tenure* captures the longest tenure at a firm over the course of the entire career excluding the current employer. Hence the sample consists of individuals who worked at minimum of two firms.