How do you get that ‘magical’ first role?
My career pathway …

• PhD in Immunology
• Post doc in oncology
• Joined MAC as a Medical Writer
• Moved to Medicus International as an Account Executive
• Progressed to Director of Client Service and part of the management and leadership team at Publicis
So why recruitment?

- Use industry knowledge and experience
- Recognised a need and opportunity for a tailored and improved recruitment service
- Desire to set up my own business
- Flexibility around young family
Karen’s career pathway …

- PhD in veterinary microbiology
- Post docs in human and animal infectious diseases, including 9 years working on HIV vaccine development
- Transitioned into med comms in 1998 and has worked for Wells Healthcare, Scope Medical and PAREXEL Medcom in S&E roles
- With CMR, offers consultancy in medical writing and editorial positions at all levels
Becky’s career pathway …

- Spent 15 years working in consumer marketing/advertising agencies
- Moved into recruitment 4 years ago
- Specialise in med comms recruitment
- Deal with account management and medical writing roles
A career in medical communications

• Is it for you?
• Which direction?
  – Medical Writing
  – Account Management
Medical writing & account management

• What are the key skills and attributes?
  – Writing, writing, writing
  – Project management
  – Ability to understand a brief and to take instruction
  – Know when to ask for help and when to use initiative
  – Flexibility
  – Pro-activity
  – Team-work
  – Personality
Your CV

- Concise – maximum two pages
- Publications and presentations – crucial
- Customise and adapt:
  - Lab experience, mentoring, multitasking
- Work experience
- Format
  - Layout, font
- Spelling and grammar
Everything you do and say is communication!
Finding a position

• Recruitment consultants
  – Fee paid by the employer
• Direct approaches
Recruitment consultants (1)

• Roles available
• Meet you and advise on career direction
• Detailed information
  – Role/job description
  – Company background and culture
  – Experience and personality they are looking for
  – Who will you meet?
  – Interview format
• ‘Competitive landscape’
Recruitment consultants (2)

• ‘Sell you’ into the company
• Arrange the interview
• Help you prepare for the interview
• Constructive feedback
• Negotiate your contract/package
• Match you to the right agency
... brilliant people aren’t brilliant everywhere...
Lots of roles around ....?

- Same job appears many places!
- ‘Dressed up’ slightly differently
- Multiple recruitment consultants
- May take longer than you think ... ...
- Start looking/applying about 3 months in advance
Sniffing out the top jobs is a job in itself!
Selecting a recruitment consultant

- Reputable
- Knowledgeable
- Rapport
- Trustworthy?
Our approach

• Telephone interview
• Test
  – Writing test
  – Proofreading and commercial assessment
• Face-to-face meeting
• Agree on companies to target
• Dialogue
  – Keep you informed
  – Interview preparation
Writing tests – what are we looking for?

- Your current ability and future potential
  - Completed within a reasonable timeframe?
  - General appearance – professional, clear, accompanying email
  - Objective assessment to compare with other applicants – past and present
Writing tests – how do we assess them?

• General writing ability
  – Good use of English (grammar, punctuation, SPELLING)
  – Attention to detail (use consistent abbreviations, units, spelling)
  – Writing style (flow, sense, beginning-middle-end)
Writing tests – how do we assess them?

- **Scientific writing ability**
  - Understanding of basic science terms
  - Identification of key scientific points
  - Clarity of writing/ability to pitch to correct level

- **Commercial writing ability**
  - Identification of key commercial points
  - Balance of commercial vs scientific messages
Account management – test

- What will you be asked to do?
  - Pull out key messages from clinical paper
  - Proof read an artworked item for layout and consistency
  - Prepare and present a brief presentation on a topic of their choice
  - Writing test (only some clients will ask for this)
The interview – assessing skills

- Project management (manage several projects?)
- Ability to understand a brief and to take instruction
- Know when to ask for help and use your initiative
- Flexibility (able to work on a variety of projects?)
- Pro-activity (can you pick up the phone? Are you a self-starter?)
- Team-work (willing to muck in and do your share of the tough jobs?)
- Personality (does it fit with the current team/can they imagine working with you?)
... ...the beginning of a partnership... ...
A little bit more …

- We stay in touch after you’ve started
- Help you prepare for your first review and/or objectives setting meeting
- Advice/guidance if ‘tricky’ situations arise
Direct approaches

• Research companies
  – MedComms Networking
  – Websites
  – Articles/publications
Everything you do and say is communication!
Communication

- Emails
- Covering letters
- Telephone conversations
... current market very competitive...
Stick your neck out and get ahead!
... ...hopefully we can help you find that first crucial role to a magical career... ...
Find us

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