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 an 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 3 years ago
- Specialise in med comms recruitment
- Deal with MW and AE entry level positions
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
• 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
  - Who will you meet?
  - Interview format
- Key contacts
Recruitment consultants (2)

- ‘Competitive landscape’
- Sell you’ into the company
- Arrange the interview
- Prepare for the interview
- Constructive feedback
- Negotiate your contract/package
- Match you to the right agency
... brilliant people aren’t brilliant everywhere...
Be aware…

• 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 selfstarter?)
• 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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