



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

- Meet you and advise on career direction
- Detailed information
- ‘Competitive landscape’
- ‘Sell you’ into the company
- Help you prepare for the interview
- Constructive feedback
- Negotiate your contract/package
- Match **you** to the **right** agency

... ..brilliant people aren't  
brilliant everywhere... ..

# Our approach

- Telephone interview
- Test
  - Writing test
  - Proofreading and commercial assessment
- Face-to-face meeting
- Agree on companies to target
- Dialogue
  - During the recruitment process
  - After you have started

# Writing tests – what are we looking for?

- **Your current ability and future potential**
  - Timeframe and general appearance
- **General writing ability**
  - Good use of English, attention to detail, writing style
- **Scientific writing ability**
  - Understanding of science, 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 do we ask you to do?
  - Pull out key messages from clinical paper
  - Proof read an artworked item for layout and consistency
- What clients may ask you to do?
  - Prepare and present a brief presentation on a topic of their choice
  - Writing test (only some clients will ask for this)

# Direct approaches

- Research companies
  - MedComms Networking
  - Websites
  - Articles/publications





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is communication!

# Communication

- Emails
- Covering letters
- Telephone conversations

# The interview – assessing your 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?)



Sniffing out the  
top jobs is a  
job in itself!

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... ..current market very  
competitive... ..

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