Medical Communications Agencies...

Uncovered!

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Presentation overview

What is a medical communications agency?

The editorial department

Opportunities beyond editorial

Getting started
What do agencies do?

- Provide a professional scientific writing service to the pharmaceutical industry
- Effective and appropriate communication...
- ...to diverse audiences (healthcare professionals, patients, governments, internal pharma teams)
- ...in different market settings, e.g. global, regional, national, emerging markets
What do agencies do?
Agencies are made up of distinct departments

- Editorial
- Account/Project management
- Support: Finance/HR/IT
- Digital
- Sales/Business Development
- Events/Conference
- Graphic Design/Layout
- Account Development/Client Service

The agency
What do medical writers do?

- Research, write, edit high-quality material for a variety of projects
- Ensure correct use of English and scientific accuracy
- Work to a brief, budget and timeline
- Collaborate with healthcare professionals
- Liaise with clients
- Work with other agency depts.
- Mentor, train and manage junior writers
- Manage workload (personal/ across the team)
- Participate in business development opportunities
Typical projects for medical writers

- **Publications**: Primary/secondary manuscripts, reviews, editorials
- **‘Core’ materials**: Product/disease monographs, slides, Q&A documents
- **Digital solutions**: Websites, apps, videos/podcasts, e-learning
- **Meeting materials**: Advisory boards, conference symposia - abstracts, posters, slide presentations, newsletters
- **Patient materials**: Information leaflets, posters
- **Medical education**: CME programmes, speaker training
- **Regulatory affairs**: Clinical trial documentation, market authorisation applications
- **Market access**: Tender dossiers, health economics
- **Training materials (pharma)**: Slides kits, e-learning, question handlers
- **Comms consultancy**: Strategic workshops, communication planning, competitor reports
Training and professional development

How?

- In-house training by internal specialists
- ‘On the job’ e.g. senior review, mentoring
- In-house training by external trainers
- Company-sponsored external courses

What?

- Writing/editing
- Software, e.g. PowerPoint
- Regulatory, e.g. ABPI
- GPP2
- Health economics
- Statistics
Career progression – an example

- **0-3 yrs**
  - Medical Writer

- **2-4 yrs**
  - Senior Medical Writer

- **3-5 yrs**
  - Editorial Team Leader

- **≥3 yrs**
  - Principal Writer

- **≥4 yrs**
  - Editorial Manager

- **≥4 yrs**
  - Editorial Business Manager

- **≥5 yrs**
  - Editorial/Technical Director

**Science/writing focus**

**Internal**
(training procedures and team development)

**External**
(BD support, account development)
Presentation overview

- What is an agency, what do they do, and why?
- The editorial department
- Opportunities beyond editorial
- Getting started
The client service route: what is client service?
The client service route: what does it involve?

Client Service

- Client’s world
- Strategic insight
- Finance
- Business development
- Internal facilitation
The client service route: how did I do it?
From editorial to digital - moving with the times
From editorial to digital - moving with the times

- Leading editorial projects mainly in public and emerging markets
- Running conference symposia and other events
- Facilitating advisory boards and clients’ strategic workshops
- Business development activities (pitches and proposals)
- Development and curation of Fishawack digital services portfolio
- Digital project scoping with clients and developers (using my scientific and editorial training)
- Digital content development e.g. e-learning course design
- Digital business development (pitches and proposals)
- Promoting awareness of the digital landscape across Fishawack
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What’s the process?

1. Look for agencies (this afternoon and on www.medcommsnetworking.co.uk/)
2. Prepare your application (covering letter and CV)
3. Writing and editing tests
4. Interview (presentation, editorial, other departments)
5. Job offers
What are agencies looking for in writers?

- Writing skills
- Attention to detail
- Therapy area experience/potential
- Team fit
- Suitability to role
- Enthusiasm!
Some considerations for a potential new writer

- Am I a good team player?
- Do I enjoy writing?
- Am I enthusiastic about learning a wide range of areas of medicine?
- Do I have an interest in the pharma industry/healthcare?
- Can I work flexibly and to tight timelines?
From academia to agency

Using your knowledge
Building on it
Opening new doors