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
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
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

• Contacts made at the workshop
• Research companies
  – MedComms Networking
  – Websites
  – Articles/publications
Everything you do and say is communication!
Communication

- Emails
- Covering letters
- Telephone conversations
The interview – assessing your skills

• **Scientific ability** – insight from medical writing test
• **Project management** – manage several projects?
• **Flexibility** – prepared to work outside of your job description?
• **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!
...current market very competitive...
Stick your neck out and get ahead!
Find us

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