



How a targeted LinkedIn-powered talent acquisition strategy helped UCB to find purpose-driven talent in new markets

SUCCESS STORY

When your sole purpose is to transform the lives of people who are seriously ill, it's important to do all you can in order to make a difference. This is a statement that Jonathan Berlan, Head of Candidate Experience at UCB, the biopharmaceutical company, truly believes in.

UCB operates globally and is present in more than 40 countries. It is a biopharmaceutical company that researches medicine and manufactures medication. Its purpose is to improve the lives of patients. For that it needs the best talent, favouring capabilities over experience.

“Knowing the market in which you operate in is vital,” Jonathan says. “UCB is a business that is inspired by patients and driven by science.

“Our business is currently entering new markets that we don't fully understand. Markets where we don't know how big the pool of scientists maybe, for example. Rigorous data analysis is needed and that is where LinkedIn has demonstrated its power and has allowed us to fill in the gaps.”



THE CHALLENGE

Identifying talent in unfamiliar territory

UCB has worked with LinkedIn since 2009 and Jonathan is a huge supporter of all that LinkedIn can help him and his teams to achieve. Recently, UCB needed to find the best sales team for a drug that would help people suffering from debilitating arthritic conditions. It was paramount that UCB identified a suitable pool of talent within the immunodermatology market, a science space that it was not too familiar with. LinkedIn answered UCB's call.

THE SOLUTION

Understanding the marketplace = surpassing expectations

Jonathan and his teams worked with LinkedIn to devise a pro-active talent acquisition strategy that would identify the right talent.

"The immunodermatology market is a space that we did not have a great understanding of from a recruitment point of view," Jonathan says. "LinkedIn helped us to refine our understanding of the market we were entering."

He continues: "For example, if we looked at the people we knew, we might have been able to hit 100-150 people that were suitable for the roles. If we advertised, we might have hit 400.

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THE RESULTS



Main source of traffic

83% of traffic to UCB's careers site originates from LinkedIn



Identifying the best talent

A recent talent acquisition project identified 2,000 potential candidates for 50 specialised roles



More than a pharmaceutical company

LinkedIn has helped UCB to position itself as an employer of choice

But thanks to LinkedIn groups, targeted use of keywords and training our recruiters on the marketplace, we were able to approach 900 people for 50 roles. It was more than the business expected. However, by the time we had finished the campaign – using LinkedIn as a main engine and source of information – we had actually targeted 2,000 relevant people.”

LinkedIn was essential to UCB’s challenge. LinkedIn was the hub that “gathered intelligence”. Jonathan explains: “If a recruiter is given enough time and enough critical information about what a company needs, LinkedIn will plug you into 90 per cent of the market.”

A full suite of LinkedIn solutions

UCB uses LinkedIn’s full suite of hiring solutions (Talent Insights, Recruiter and Jobs, Life Page) as well as learning solutions, to support its talent acquisition and development strategy goals. LinkedIn Talent Insights gives UCB vital information so that it can understand how and where to find resources and even helps the company to confirm its assumptions.

“LinkedIn is full of talent-based and broad business insight,” Jonathan adds. “Our recruiters have access to the full suite of LinkedIn tools, which enables them to discover more about the market in which they operate.

Tools for success

Eighty-three per cent of traffic to UCB’s careers site originates from LinkedIn. The platform is hugely popular with candidates, who are looking to work for a company that is truly people-centric.

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Our role at UCB is to close the gap between current and future capabilities as soon as efficiently possible. We do it in three steps: Describe the gap and timing (with the HRBPs and the business leaders), put in place Build/Buy/Borrow plans (via the Talent Acquisition and Learning teams) and then measure the impact of our actions. Together with a growth culture, a data-driven mentality and having the person at the centre, we are very excited to contribute to UCB’s mission.”



Aitor Larrabe
Head of Talent Acquisition
and Learning at UCB

“I am a recruiter and I could recruit for any business but there’s a huge difference when you get up in the morning and think that the company you work for and the work you do will improve life for someone,” Jonathan says. “I get a genuine buzz from knowing that my teams are going to find the best scientists, who will find the best solutions to our challenges, and the best sales people for what we believe are the best drugs in the market. Or even the best finance people and lawyers to defend our interests. When we talk to the right talent about what we do and why, their faces light up.”

Such a reaction is not evident in people that are merely looking for their next career move. In fact, it takes a special candidate that can demonstrate humility, passion and purpose. Yet these are not qualities that can be measured. Therefore, there is a huge focus on finding talent with the right capabilities.

LinkedIn tools help Jonathan and his team to analyse the market, identify and target the right candidates quickly and efficiently, giving Jonathan and his team more time to focus on recruiting talent that is the right cultural fit.

“The best tool for success is a good recruiter,” Jonathan concludes. “There are lots of IT tools linked to talent acquisition at a company’s disposal but the only tool that works – and it’s not artificial intelligence – is human genuine intelligence. If I was given some money to either spend on IT tools that helped with talent acquisition or training, I would train my teams. Then I would give them a Recruiter license and access to LinkedIn Talent Insights and I know a good job would get done.”

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Jonathan Berlan

Head of Candidate
Experience at UCB

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