

## 1. Project Summary

Research, headhunt, interview and submit at least three candidates for the Director of Life Cycle Management position within our client's Global Marketing Department at their global HQ. The aim of the project was to facilitate the placement of a market leading candidate in preparation of the launch of Palexia®, the first pain compound in its class for over 25 years.

## 2. Details of Clients

Grünenthal is a globally focused research driven pharmaceutical company. Headquartered in Germany, their operations are underpinned by a commitment to excellence in all aspects of their operation. They are driven by a desire to focus on the creation of novel solutions in a team orientated and ambitious and positive environment.

Grünenthal has affiliates in 34 countries and is seeking to expand its presence in Europe by means of further internationalisation, development and business evolution. The strategy is driven forwards by a management team that is committed to the ensuring that they retain their scientific focus whilst ensuring that they are able to compete effectively in a global market place.

The company has production sites in seven countries which supply the global market and are committed to ensuring that every external interaction generates a positive impression.

On a scientific level they are known as specialists in a number of therapeutic areas including the pain/analgesics and CNS. They are also involved in the development and production of novel drug delivery systems. The focus in R&D is centred on a quality lead approach which seeks to ensure that all development activities meet the highest global regulatory standards.

Grünenthal markets its products all over the world. At the same time they in-license products in target indications and out-license their own successful products. In 2004 they employed more than 2,000 people in Germany alone, this figure rose to 5,200 FTEs on a global basis. As a sign of their international penetration and reach the client now market their products in over a 100 countries.

## 3. Detailed Scenario/Objectives/Situation

Following detailed project specification talks we created a full map of the client's requirements, defined by key criteria and a series of search parameters. This included aspects such as the geographical spread of the search process and the target populations we would be penetrating.

The next stage in the process was to create an "Employee Value Proposition" which we could effectively "sell" to our targeted candidates – a proposition which would give them an understanding of the challenges of the role and also a flavour of how they could develop themselves from a career perspective.

Our client was keen for us to source senior-end individuals who could real value to their organisation and who also had the capability for continued growth and development.

Another objective of this project was to ensure that the successful candidate fit Grunenthal's working culture, understood the (and empathised with) the vision of the organisation and also had the right approach in terms of

#### 4. Implementation

We timelined the search process and broke this us up into 4 stages:

1. **Research of suitable candidates:** We carried out a comprehensive market research exercise which allowed us to map effectively the target populations we were seeking to penetrate. This then allowed us to highlight and target potential individuals. We utilised informal and "proximity" referencing in order to ensure that those we were sourcing met the core requirements of the role. This broad brush approach ensures that no potentially suitable candidates are left off our radar.

At this stage we also instituted a full networking programme – connecting with those we have built relationships with in order to secure references, referrals, recommendations and introductions.

2. **Headhunting:** The next stage in the process was to create direct contact with our targets. This involved a combination of gaining introductions and also direct contact.

We approached targeted individuals with the role in order to:

1. ascertain their suitability to meet the challenges and requirements of the role thereby allowing us to confirm that they could meet the business needs within our client;
2. assess whether the position offered them a chance to progress and move forwards in their own career development.
  - a. This twin focused approach is a hallmark of our activity and allows us to not just facilitate placements, but to create effective relationships which are mutually beneficial.
3. **Internal Interviews with AspirionPharma:** The third stage of the process was that all candidates who were selected from the initial sweep were then invited for internal competency based interviews at AspirionPharma. These interviews are designed to extract both information about the candidates background skills and experience as well as testing technical capability, motivating factors, future ambitions and strengths and weaknesses.

Some clients request that at this stage we build in a second tier of face-to-face interviewing. If this option is selected we will then travel to meet the candidate – during the course of the interview we will also video a candidate introduction and this will be provided as part of the online Candidate Submission Pack (CSP).

4. **Candidate Submission:** The final stage of the project involved the production of Candidate Submission Packs (CSPs) which were then provided to the client. This document is a comprehensive profile of the selected candidate which contains information gained both from direct contact, from our referencing activities (formal

and informal) and also allows us to put forward our own assessment of the candidates viability.

On the project in question AspirionPharma successfully researched and headhunted over 130 candidates for the role.

After our referencing and assessments we finally presented the client with a shortlist of 5 highly qualified and motivated candidates who had expressed a strong desire to move forward with the role and who also felt that the position could offer them a chance for professional development and growth.

Out of the 5 candidate shortlist submitted to Grunenthal, ALL were invited to interviews.

## **5. Outcomes**

AspirionPharma successfully researched and sourced over 175 candidates for the role.

After interviewing over 60 candidates for the role (those who had undergone in-depth assessment and informal referencing), 5 were finally chosen for submission by AspirionPharma.

Grunenthal made the decision that all 5 members of the shortlist deserved and merited in-house/client interviews and this was organised by AspirionPharma.

Following client first stage interviews, 2 candidates were invited to a second stage interview round. This was again organised by AspirionPharma.

During the process we also visited one of the final stage candidates in Helsinki, Finland in order to ensure that only those who were most suitable were going to be progressed. This was an action taken internally and not at the request of the client.

The project was completed upon successful placement of Susanna Laajava for the role of Director Life Cycle Management.

Post-placement AspirionPharma followed up with Susanna Laajava who expressed she was thoroughly enjoying her time at Grünenthal and is finding the colleagues and work very interesting.

Below you will find a reference from both the candidate and the client in relation to our performance.

*"AspirionPharma has sourced and provided excellent professionals at all levels, hence allowing us to recruit market leading individuals in a very narrow market.*

*I would fully recommend their services without reservation as one of the most effective companies operating within the global pharmaceutical market and we will continue to utilise their expertise in order to secure a real competitive advantage".*

Mr Frank Poschen  
**Director, Human Resources**  
**Grünenthal GmbH, Aachen, Germany**

*"I can without any hesitation say that AspirionPharma is the best headhunting company I have ever been in contact with. In my experience most headhunting companies do not care who will be chosen for the positions as long as they get paid.*

*My experience with Aspirion Pharma was totally the opposite.*

*From the beginning of the process to the end the company wanted to make sure that in addition to their clients best interest being met I would be chosen for a position which was ideal for me i.e. they want to build long term relationships not just make quick profits.*

*I am sure that all my colleagues in the Pharma Industry who will have the pleasure to get in contact with AspirionPharma and their great personnel will share my feelings that AspirionPharma is truly exceptional in the way in which they treat ones career and you as a whole I couldn't have felt more special and important and they made sure that I found my dream job".*

Ms Susanna Laajava  
**Director, Lifecycle Management, Global Marketing**  
**Grünenthal GmbH, Aachen, Germany**