

Enhancing the candidate experience at every step

Introduction

Eisai is a global leading research-based pharmaceutical company working in the neurology and oncology therapeutic areas and they have their EMEA HQ in the UK focusing on drug discovery & development research as well as manufacturing.

Eisai's people come from many different backgrounds and join them to work across a wide variety of roles. Whether they are researching potential new medicines, conducting studies, working in manufacturing or informing healthcare professionals about their medicines, they all have a common purpose of human health care (hhc) - putting patients first which helps to focus and motivate all who work at Eisai.

With significant scope and ongoing support for personal and professional development, they pride themselves on being an organisation that puts great value on the wellbeing and enjoyment in work for all their employees. Their ethos is to encourage individuals to become part of a company with team work, positive energy and resilience at the heart of everything they do.

The Challenge

An area that had been identified to be enhanced was the overall candidate experience for those looking to join Eisai.

Across the business interviews were conducted by both a line manager and a member of the Recruitment or HR Team. These line managers would have varying levels of experience as well as differing time in Eisai. On analysing, it became clear that the Recruitment or HR Team were spending an average of 127+ working days in interviews supporting the managers.

Basic interview training was available via an external trainer used by Eisai's L&D Team, but this was not meeting the needs of the business and uptake was very low. In addition, the training needed to be more varied (eg. role plays, group exercises) to appeal to the mixed audience as well as needing to instil the importance of actively promoting the ethos and culture of Eisai to potential new employees.

The proposed solution needed to get the buy-in from senior management which would then invoke a regional recruitment cultural change for all. This did require quite a shift in mindset for some as they had to think very differently about the whole recruitment process.

The Solution

Andy Bolton, Eisai's Senior Talent Acquisition Manager, had worked with Dominic for training & development from the early stages of his career in 2008 through to a management role with another employer too. This meant he was very familiar with Dominic's style of delivery and his wide experience and knowledge of all aspects of recruitment. He felt this combination would be a great fit for developing the whole area of candidate experience within Eisai and that Dominic would resonate well with the line managers.

They explored all the options, identified the steps needed to allow the training to be developed to support the process from receipt of CV right through to hire confirmation. The training was increased to a full day to allow for a much more interactive format to look at the whole recruitment process. A robust process of design was then followed, which included:

Step One: Discuss, develop and agree learning objectives to give the desired output for Eisai.

Step Two: Develop ideas on the main modules & subject areas to be covered, e.g. processes from receipt of CV right through to hire confirmation

Step Three: Create relevant material that sits behind the agreed objectives including delegate packs and slides.

Step Four: Design exercises & activities to ensure the training day caters for all learning styles and allows for all delegates to participate.

Dominic worked with Eisai at each stage of the design process via phone plus face to face meetings. There was a full day's training session with supporting materials that delivered a much more interactive format which looked at the whole recruitment process.

When it came to the interview skills training, content was developed to convey the change in interview style as it was not just about the candidate impressing at interview. It was just as important that the interviewer impressed the candidates by promoting the culture and opportunities within Eisai and also engaging with competency-based interviews.

The session incorporates a variety of exercises including interactive discussion, group exercises and role plays, all designed to push people out of their comfort zone and work with Managers from other parts of the business. It provides guidance on some core elements & timeframes to the process, however, also allows for best practice sharing both from Dominic and amongst attendees.

The initial trial proved to be a success. When the full programme launched the MD of the manufacturing division even booked an additional day with Dominic to allow all of his team to attend the sessions. There was also positive feedback received from all that attended ranging from new Managers up to VPs within the business.

- **Saved an average of 127.5 working days in a year for the HR/Talent Acquisition Team.**
- **Reduced numbers of candidates dropping out of the recruitment process.**
- **Managers utilise more than standard interview to increase recruitment success rates**


The format works because Dominic is a hugely engaging and commercially experienced individual with many years' experience of the whole recruitment process and offers real value by running this training in a dedicated and entirely Eisai focused day-long session.

Dominic is delighted with the results of this initiative and particularly the level of engagement and enthusiasm from attendees: *"I see the attendees genuinely engaged and committed to Eisai and saw how that came out in the interactive training sessions with an authentic enthusiasm and passion shown for being part of Eisai. This is now communicated throughout the recruitment process, which significantly enhances the candidate 'customer' experience."*

Eisai has seen a cultural shift to a more inclusive style of recruitment through the high-quality process of engagement from evaluating candidates right through to onboarding new employees.

This training has also introduced a more 'human' and personal element to welcome candidates to Eisai, which for some line managers has included lunch at second stage interview with their potential new team and a tour of the facility too. Hiring managers have also been developing & utilising additional recruitment tools such as work based tasks and psychometrics.

Line managers feel much more confident in the whole process which has allowed both Eisai HR and Recruitment teams to step back from the interview stages, freeing up their time to focus on other value adding activities around the recruitment process.



"Dominic's approach is both engaging to those in the room, but in that he also provides a real-world approach to recruitment rather than 'text book' idealistic scenarios. His sessions allow for a wide variety of individuals to get involved by making it appropriate for beginners through to really experienced heads, as well as through the use of different types of activities to engage different learning styles and push people out of their comfort zone. Having worked with Dominic to develop these sessions I can say he has a collaborative and supportive approach, adapting his sessions and materials to meet the needs of our business and those attending. This was even right down to the finer details of understanding who he has in the room at each session to evolve what he is doing for the audience in front of him."

Andy Bolton, Senior Talent Acquisition Manager, Eisai EMEA

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