



Human Resources Director, EMEA 2011 – Global Consumer Technology Brand

01. Background

Our client is one of the fastest-growing consumer technology companies over the last fifteen years, with not only an increasingly far-reaching global brand, but also a reputation for user-friendly innovation. Having doubled in size for virtually each of the last ten years, this Far-East-based company now has global revenues in excess of \$10bn, and has operated a very lean business model to limit inertia and permit rapid change.

02. Our Engagement

Having provided an interim HR Consultant to set up systems and structures when the EMEA (Europe, Middle-East and Africa) subsidiary was launched in 2005, Eric Price, Partner at Augmentum, supported the growth of the business through executive search for key sales and marketing leadership, and also then helped recruit in 2008 the region's first HR Director. This key development marked the creation of an integrated culture and identity for EMEA, to help it transition away from being a pure 'sales office'.

In 2011, a few key appointments later, involving both pan-European and global searches, and with a vastly enlarged business with double the manpower and a proliferation of offices around the EMEA region, Eric marked his third interaction with the company involving HR leadership in six years. This time, the challenge was to recruit a new HR Director EMEA to steer the business through the next phase of growth, and to help manage the transition from being an 'ambitious challenger' to being an established player with a reputation to maintain, with robust, scalable processes to support key clients, but without loss of entrepreneurial flair and pace.

03. Search Objectives

The role brief involved the full spectrum of human resources disciplines and specialisations, with the extra dimension of multi-cultural European, Middle-Eastern and African coverage; it balanced the needs effectively to recruit over 100 middle to senior-level leaders into the business across EMEA in one year; to ensure that performance measurement could be introduced to provide the mechanisms for transparent talent development and retention; to transform the HR function into a mature and efficient shared service capability; and to embed people priorities as the driver of growth, quality and market differentiation.

04. Approach and Outcome

Through a process involving the EMEA President and CFO, Eric introduced an interim HR Director who was appointed both as a custodian and as an impartial, project-oriented observer; this would help refine the search brief and culture fit elements, and lay the foundations for a successful permanent appointment, including building bridges and setting expectations for the appointment for the Far Eastern parent.

The participation of the interim HR Director in the evaluation of the shortlist of 'permanent' candidates has immeasurably helped secure an outcome and permanent appointment which represents a step-change in HR leadership. This was part of Augmentum's design, and would not have been possible without the benefit of the extra experience and objectivity provided by the interim. The role actually required higher-calibre international leadership than had originally been anticipated, as well as deeper experience of complex and challenging parent / subsidiary relationships, and more wide-ranging know-how of building robust, scalable shared services and HR Business Partner capability to support extensive resourcing, growth and performance / retention challenges.

In addition, by facilitating the involvement of the Far-Eastern parent company in the latter stages of candidate evaluation, Augmentum created the platform for the new HR leader to integrate effectively and drive constructive stakeholder relationships worldwide.