



Question: Mr. Hermans, Nexperia, which is now an independent company and no longer a part of NXP, has been highly successful since. How has your HR department handled staff recruitment between the carve-out and Day 1, and what were the specifics of the recruiting assignment?

Answer: According to the original internal plans and the corresponding arrangements with the third-party service provider, about 80 per cent of **60** key positions in Sales, IT, Finance, HR and Procurement were to be filled by Day 1. Then, an additional number of about **100** positions were expected to be filled by the end of 2017.

Q: An ambitious goal. Were these objectives met in time?

A: In fact, the recruiting team managed to fill over 300 positions during the time period between September 2016, the beginning of the official project launch, and “Day 1” (February 6, 2017), without having to bring in any additional recruiters beyond the scope agreed from the beginning. It is worth mentioning that we only used specialized recruitment firms for a handful positions in niche areas.

Q: That is both surprising and impressive! What enabled the recruiters to successfully hire significantly more than the intended number of people for a global organisation, and to do so within a shorter period of time and without increasing the recruiting staff?

A.: As for the fact that we managed to recruit more staff in a shorter period of time with the same number of recruiters, let me say that from the very beginning the joint efforts of both the provider and HR followed a clearly defined process with strictly separated responsibilities but collaborating closely. It was the HR Business Partners task to ensure the recruiters exactly know what to look for. Translating the business specific competencies into a clear specified search profile has been critical to success. As a result the recruiters were able to fully focus on recruiting while being able to rely on flawless execution of follow-up tasks on the HR side, such as contract negotiations, placement and onboarding. HR very quickly realised that the recruiters, embedded in the corporate context, were not only very competent professionals but also truly added value by utilising a broad variety of sourcing strategies. What is more, as the project progressed the close cooperation between HR and the recruiters eventually resulted in a matrix of competencies and relationships between regions, functions and the recruiters that was a key driver of our joint success: Processes form the basis, systems the vehicle, and productive collaborative relationships the necessary condition that must be met to lead a people business to success.

Q: What strategy did Nexperia pursue to achieve its recruiting goals?

A: It was perfectly clear from the beginning that this challenge could only be met through a global project organised jointly with an external service provider who could offer an appropriate infrastructure consisting of seasoned international recruiters operating globally; these people needed to have the required industry and functional expertise and be proficient in all state-of-the-art recruiting methods including direct searches, as well as management of third parties. Most importantly, they needed to be willing – and capable – to manage such an exceptional situation and the resulting stakeholder expectations within the corporate context.

Q: That sounds like the famous search for the needle in a haystack of service providers, not to mention the high selection risk. Was the company able to draw on any existing experience, and what were the criteria for selecting the service provider?

A: Yes, we had some experience with RPO providers, and based on that we decided against choosing one of the big RPO providers. Rather, we opted in favour of building upon past experience gained in joint, collaborative projects ...



Q: ... so it was a typical "relationship deal" based on references?

A: If you will – yes and no! – You see, in a critical project of such magnitude, where success is so critical, it goes without saying that you thoroughly scrutinise your prospective service provider to make sure they are really capable of providing the required capacity along with the necessary expertise and experience. Following an appropriately thorough assessment, we decided in favour of AHR (Althen Hensel RECRUITMENT SOLUTIONS GmbH). We believed at the moment of engaging them that they had the right capabilities and their stake in completing this project with high standards at the same level as ours.

Q: Now that this project with AHR has been completed successfully, how would you summarise – *ex-post*, as it were – the factors that are most critical for the success of a recruitment project of this magnitude in the unusual context of a global carve-out situation?

A: Well, there are several factors: First of all, such a project hinges upon the decision to establish a collaborative relationship between HR, the local stakeholders and the recruiting organisation based on clearly assigned responsibilities in combination with very close cooperation. This is preferable to fully outsourcing the recruitment process, and in such an arrangement, the recruiting organisation can be a third-party service provider with a high degree of specialisation. It is essential to choose the right provider who meets the above criteria, has plenty of experience collaborating in the described manner, and knows how to actively manage stakeholders and expectations. In addition, in this context it is of critical importance to define a recruitment process that is managed actively and consistently and ... is adhered to. What is more, despite all that global presence it is crucial to act locally, which means that the candidates sourced globally by the recruiting organisation must be welcomed and on-boarded locally in a professional manner – again, flawless execution is required! Last, but not least, there needs to be a well-functioning reporting system to make the current situation transparent to all parties involved in the recruiting process in quasi-real-time. This reporting system served as the basis for a weekly project review meeting which was the platform for the decisions that must be made to remove obstacles, reallocate resources or alternate the process where needed to eventually achieve the recruiting goals. It is critical that both the project manager of AHR and myself were fully engaged in these reviews and took joint ownership for the whole project. You can outsource some elements of the recruitment process in a partnership but you cannot outsource the responsibility for the outcome.

Q: Mr Hermans, thank you very much for this interview!