

Sony Pictures - Russian General Director

The challenge

Sony Pictures' global operations encompass motion picture production and distribution; television production and distribution; digital content creation and distribution; worldwide channel investments; home entertainment acquisition and distribution, operation of studio facilities; development of new entertainment products, services and technologies; and distribution of filmed entertainment in more than 130 countries.

Sony Pictures recently invested in a leading independent production company, Lean-M, in Russia. As part of the company's growth plan, Sony needed to place a General Director within Lean-M. The General Director position is the top non-founder executive in the company and is in charge of all commercial aspects of the company. This position was newly created and would be the conduit of commercial decision making between Sony and Lean-M.

The candidate requirements were explicit and non-negotiable: A Russian national or someone with total fluency in Russian and English; proven management credentials, essentially an MBA from a reputable international establishment and strategic experience within a multinational Entertainment Industry player.

Sony Pictures needed to partner with a search company who had a strong multinational network, but also a credible, deep knowledge of the TV industry.

A shortlist was required within 2 weeks. Following discussions with the 'big name' headhunters, Sony turned to Handle.

The solution

Handle was appointed on the back of their tremendous success in filling two Executive London-based Russian marketing roles, thus proving their strong network. Handle was given 2 weeks to work on the Director role exclusively.

Handle takes the view that it is not just the success of the current assignment that is important, but the long-term contribution that person makes to our client's business and the long-term relationship between Handle and the client.

Handle dedicated one senior member of staff to project-manage the assignment exclusively from start to finish. A strict search methodology was applied: networking via MBA institutions; networking within the industry; headhunting through existing contacts and new leads; full competency-based telephone interviews culminating in a detailed report to the client.

The results

A shortlist of 4 was presented within 2 weeks. The client in Russia interviewed all candidates and the role was swiftly offered and accepted.

On success of this, Handle ended up placing all 4 Russian TV executives