

Executive Search

Case Study

Director, Products (Platforms)

For a young India-focused fintech organization

Technology Practice

Background

Our client is solving the credit gap challenge through its strong technology-backed solutions. It has a unique risk model (underwriting) that assesses creditworthiness using multiple data sources and not only relies on the bureau score, thus offering better loan approval rates. All this with a seamless, easy-to-use app, making the entire process 100% online & frictionless.

What was the exact ask/ role specification

The client was looking to bring on board the Director of Products (Platforms) who would be responsible for leading the entire platform products charter in the organization. This includes the Communication Platform, Operations Portal, Chatbot, Voicebot, Dialer, and the Customer Support portal.

This role would report to the Chief Product Officer and be based out of Bangalore.

The process

Our first discussion with the hiring manager (The Chief Product Officer) was to ascertain the exact ask and the type of organizations to target for this mandate. A couple of key call-outs from the client were that this would be an internal-facing role, not only focused on scaling up the existing set of platform products but also on building new products that would enable external-facing products to succeed.

We started by sharing the list of target organizations with the client – this included B2C internet organizations and SaaS companies. Once we pruned the list, we presented the first list of potential candidates via a longlist. Based on the feedback received, we started reaching out to the candidates and building our candidate pool.

From the second week onwards, we started the process of presenting the shortlisted candidates. We presented 4 dossiers in quick succession. Following this, the interviews were set in motion and the candidates quickly proceeded to go through multiple interview rounds. One of the candidates went on to the final round as well with the Co-Founder and CEO but was placed on hold. It was during the debrief following this discussion that another perspective came to the table which was the need for candidates to have excellent people management skills. In the earlier brief, this was highlighted as a good-to-have and not a must-have.

After this new development, we quickly regrouped and revisited the existing list of candidates and pruned them to the revised ask. Over the next 3 weeks, we presented suitable dossiers, and the interviews were restarted. However, this time around the interviewers for the client were not as readily available which led to the interview process being stretched. This delay was primarily due to the hiring manager traveling during the holiday season. This meant that PeopleAsset would need to keep the candidates engaged and interested irrespective of the delays in the hiring process.

During this delay, we continued to source profiles and build our pipeline of suitable candidates. Once the interview process restarted, we were able to add more candidates into the pipeline and this ensured we recaptured some lost time as well. During this phase of interviews, one of the candidates went through all the rounds but just before his next round with the Co-founder and CEO, he decided to drop off the process as he felt this role may not be as high-impact as he expected.

Fortunately, we had already identified this potential hurdle during the process and given the hiring manager a heads-up which ensured they had continued to aggressively interview the other candidates as well. This meant that within 2 weeks from when the candidate dropped out, the next suitable candidate was identified and had completed his final round successfully.

We worked with both the hiring manager and the candidate, enabling both to arrive at a win-win number from a remuneration perspective and ensuring that the date of joining was quickly firmed up.

During the process of interviews and the offer negotiations, we met the candidate a couple of times to ensure that he was genuinely interested and excited about the problem statement that he would be working on. This enabled a deeper relationship with the candidate, establishing a two-way communication where he could also freely express his expectations to us.

The HR leader and hiring manager from the client's end along with PeopleAsset actively engaged with the candidate during the notice period and ensured that any or all queries were answered. The candidate came on board on the exact committed date and the client had an exceptional onboarding experience ready for him.

The chosen candidate brought with him over 10 years of total experience of which the last 8 years have been in product management roles. In his product management journey, he brings more than 4 years in a platform-based product management role which was exactly what our client was looking for in this role.

PeopleAsset differentiator

- While PeopleAsset had to work with a change in brief almost 6 weeks into the process, we ensured that we did not lose much time and regrouped proactively.
- The deep evaluations conducted by PeopleAsset, ensured that the client was happy with the quality of candidates while at the same time making sure that the candidates were satisfied with the process given the seriousness of the process right from the get-go.
- PeopleAsset took on the responsibility of handholding the candidates during the interview process due to some unforeseen delays and also handheld the chosen candidate throughout the interview & notice period durations.