

Executive Search

Case Study

Head, Human Resources

For an India-focused Fintech Organization

Technology Practice

Background

Our client, an India-focused fintech firm, is solving the credit gap challenge through its strong technology-backed solutions. The company has a unique risk model (underwriting) that assesses creditworthiness using multiple data sources and doesn't just rely 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

Our client wanted to bring on board the Head of Human Resources who would play a key role in scaling their company's people strategy. As the Head of HR, the individual would work closely with the leadership team on various aspects of HR such as performance management, rewards & recognition, employer branding, employee engagement and talent retention, and more.

Reporting to the Head of India Business Ops, this role would be based out of Bangalore.

The process

Our client had already spent some time working with another search partner but was unable to get the kind of profile quality they expected. Since the mandate had previously been worked on, the job description was already in place, however, based on our discussions with the client, we tweaked it to make the organization profile stronger and ensured the job description was also altered to fit the ask of the organization.

Thus, began our search process. We initiated the search by having multiple in-depth discussions with the client to identify the target set of organizations which were B2C consumer internet organizations. These could be organizations in the e-commerce, fintech, EdTech, TravelTech, or FoodTech spaces. These discussions also helped us carve out the candidate profile in further detail—candidates who bring the experience of working in young, fast-paced, high-growth startups, are comfortable with playing a hands-on role and have a high bias for action.

We set up a weekly review cadence which enabled us to collect feedback quickly on the initial list of candidates and fine-tune our search. From the second week, we were able to start presenting shortlisted dossiers. We presented the 1st batch of 2 profiles of which one candidate was shortlisted for further discussions. The next batch of 4 profiles presented over a period of the next 10 days found better traction with our client and subsequently, 2 candidates went through for further discussions.

The client was happy and indicated that they should be in a position to make an offer to 1 of the 3 candidates who had gone through multiple interview rounds. At this stage, PeopleAsset suggested the importance of keeping backups and presented 3 more profiles in the next batch, however, the client indicated that they would want to keep the new profiles on hold and get the offer out to 1 of the 3 candidates, based on preference. The client was also keen on discussing all the offer-related details directly with the candidates.

Thereafter, a verbal offer of employment was extended to the 1st preferred candidate and he accepted the numbers and other details discussed. However, just before the formal offer was released, the candidate decided to back out. The candidate, despite multiple assurances to the PeopleAsset team, decided to negotiate for a Europe-based role at his current organization.

The 2nd preferred candidate was reached out to and the intent to make the offer was communicated. However, there was a lack of alignment on the designation for the role – the client felt that she was a good fit for a Director/Sr. Director role, but the candidate was keen on the designation of a Vice President. Expectedly, the talks fell through.

Following this, PeopleAsset and the client got into a detailed discussion about the future of this role and the next steps. All the backup candidates were put on hold and a new set of candidates were asked to be identified on priority. Over a period of 8 weeks, PeopleAsset presented 8 new dossiers of which the client decided to pursue 2 candidates aggressively, and by the 6th week were ready to extend the offer of employment to a candidate, while at the same time, 2 candidates were identified as offer-ready backups.

PeopleAsset discussed the asks from the candidate in detail and enabled the candidate to express his expectations with as much clarity as possible. This was then communicated in detail to the client enabling them to get into the discussion with the candidate armed with a high level of preparedness. The discussion bore fruit with both parties coming out of the same with a win-win understanding. The next step involved setting up the reference checks with the hiring manager & the referees of the candidate. This took 4-5 days since the referees were CEOs or Co-Founders. These checks came out positive and the client decided to extend the offer to the candidate.

Hence, the formal offer was rolled out and the candidate accepted the same and submitted all the documentation for the onboarding and background checks to the client. With a very short notice period at hand, PeopleAsset engaged with the candidate in a thorough way which included multiple in-person discussions.

The candidate came on board as committed and the onboarding process led by the leadership, hiring manager, and the HR team proceeded without a glitch.

The chosen candidate brings with him more than 14 years of total experience working across internet gaming and software services organizations. He has played a key role in setting up HR systems & processes and the HR team ground up in various organizations. He has loved playing a hands-on role and leading by example.

PeopleAsset differentiator

- PeopleAsset displayed significant pluck by ensuring that going back to the drawing board did not deter our commitment to successfully closing this mandate.
- While our client was certain about finalizing a candidate from the existing set of shortlisted candidates, PeopleAsset continued to source candidates. This ensured that the reboot and the second innings did not take too much time.
- In the offer stage the second time around, PeopleAsset's involvement ensured that there was absolute clarity in the communication. This translated into a quicker, decisive closure of the offer process with both parties emerging happy.
- The handholding process adopted by PeopleAsset kept the candidate deeply engaged. We also ensured that the client continued to engage with the candidate with some meaningful communication.