

# RECRUITMENT IN RUSSIAN AGRICULTURAL MARKET

Interview with ANASTASIA ARKHAROVA,  
Head of Agricultural Practice, «Agro Team Recruitment & Consulting»

*- Good afternoon, Anastasia. We meet with you during the time when many international agricultural exhibitions take place. What in your opinion is the reason of such a strong interest of the exhibitors in Russian agricultural market?*

- Hello, Vlad. Indeed, nowadays the pace and the scope of domestic agricultural market development are quite impressive. New players enter the market, while existing companies increase their volumes of production and sales, take new directions, and expand their geographies. The market situation now favors production localization and development of own facilities in the Russian Federation. There are several reasons for doing so. The first one is strengthening of Russia's stand in international arena and, as a result, introduction of sectorial sanctions against our country which limit products import to the country, but contribute to development of our own production in a number of areas, including food and agriculture sectors. The second reason is a legislative and financial support to agricultural producers from federal and regional authorities. Thirdly, domestic demand growth for the goods produced locally. Also, one of the reason is an improvement of a company and division heads' proficiency level and managerial culture, as well as the mid-level and entry-level expert's skills.

*- Based on your experience in staff recruitment on agricultural market, what trends would you highlight in this area, and what do you believe is relevant in this regard?*

- Our company focuses on recruiting top and mid-level professionals in the agricultural sector. This branch has its own specifics. Companies have their own preferences and, since we are recruitment partners with the leading sectorial companies and cooperate with many international players, we scan the market in real-time and recruit professionals for specific tasks, specific teams, and specific projects. I have been personally maintaining professional relations with management and professionals from various agricultural companies for over 7 years. With my personal support over 150 professionals were successfully recruited to jobs in the different agricultural areas. Industry-wide trend in recruitment is that communication between companies



and candidates moves towards the digital level. On the one hand, it optimizes the recruitment process and increases speed of search and flow of potential candidates. On the other hand, HR-divisions and hiring managers by increasing the amount of incoming information, as a rule, from open sources, don't receive adequate assessment of the current situation in the labor market and do not completely process the candidates whose profiles are not available in open sources and who are not in active search, but rather those who maximally satisfy client's requirements. Thus, the trend in mid and top-level staff search for agricultural market is that by increasing the flow and amount of information using new digital technologies, social media and applications, HR-managers and recruiters of most universal recruiting agencies (without

specialization in a particular industry) confine themselves to searching for the candidates who have published their profiles in open sources. Thus, they provide to their top-management and hiring managers with incomplete information. According to our statistics, more than half of successful candidates recruited by us: a) did not have their CV and profiles available in open sources; b) they were not in active search and were identified through many hours and many years of communication with our network and our recruiters; c) references from other professionals and opinion leaders of the sector, and d) when successful candidates come to us for career development advice.

*- You position your company as a recruiting boutique-agency. How does this format differ from multidisciplinary recruiting agencies?*



– Based on hundreds of successful employment cases and tens of years of our recruiting team professional experience, we firmly conclude that the right recruitment process cannot be universal or multidisciplinary. Only due to deep expertise and vast knowledge of the sector (key players, companies and team's specifics, candidates' motivation, references, salaries, mass of confidential information), recruitment tasks can be performed successfully. That's why we are sector-specialized and work in agricultural market. We build our performance standards based on the sectorial specifics and corporate standards of our clients. When searching for a candidate, we become a remote division of our client, providing the latest and necessary information about candidates. The candidates who communicate with our recruiters always get the latest information and free confidential advice about current and prospective career opportunities.

***– You've mentioned that your advice for sectorial professionals was free, which leads me to believe that you are paid only by your clients, which means that you always take the client's side. Are my conclusions correct?***

– We maintain commercial relations with our clients, and we are mainly paid for our services only after a candidate is successfully employed. We are confident in the fact that we provide high quality services. Moreover, we additionally provide our clients with free recruitment of professionals in case of dismissal during the 3-month probation-

ary period. According to our statistics, 98% of the candidates recruited by us for our clients stay with the company and make progress in the future. We highly appreciate partnership with our clients and candidates and build long-term cooperation that is based on trust and professional competence. We thank our clients for their high appraisal of our recruiters' work and for official corporate references from our Russian, European, and International clients. Our team provides top-quality expertise of career opportunities for candidates. That is why, almost 100% of the candidates recruited by us to mid-level positions come to us to search for employees for their teams when they become department heads. Our recruiters have many examples of such long-term cooperation with candidates. I can give you one more example from my personal experience: one of the leading experts in his field came to us for advice on how to develop his career. His current situation was that he was in charge of several directions, although such scope of responsibility and objectives required two full-time employees. The company itself and its products suited him, but he could not physically endure such a strain and decided to look for different options on the market. After a more detailed interview and upon revealing deep motivations of a candidate, I suggested openly communicating with the management and reasonably explaining the need to hire the second full-time employee for this position, which would allow him to stay with the company and make further

advancements. The candidate followed my advice, the management supported his initiative and, as a result, he stayed with the company and strengthened his position and company loyalty.

***– Thank you for the interview, Anastasia. On a final note, what would you like to say to the exhibitors, those who are only planning to enter the Russian market and those who already successfully develop and open new directions.***

– I would like to wish professional success to my colleagues. I would like to wish new companies to be able to enter the Russian market, build a strong team and achieve all their key objectives. I can offer my most favorable terms of cooperation for the exhibitors. We prepare a sectoral salary survey for all our clients and share all corporate analytical information. For those companies which already develop their business in Russia, we also assist in preparation of a recruitment plan for the next year. It is important to develop an external employee pool in the company because if a key employee leaves the company, the company loses projects, time, etc. Our company offers an "external employee pool" service, it helps our clients to monitor the situation in the closed market of candidates and find a person at the right time without losing projects and time. Should you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me. Perhaps, we already communicate with candidates of your dream and they are happy to be focused on development of your company.





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