

A Tricky Role Demands Top Contacts

The CBI is the UK's premier business lobbying organisation, providing a voice for employers at a national and international level. It sits between the very different worlds of government and business. Finding people who work equally well in both has been a challenge for the organisation, but it found working with Carmichael Fisher the perfect solution.



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Executive Search

Carmichael Fisher specialises in providing executive search services to international organisations around the world. Its offices in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Australia, work in collaboration and this collective experience in cross-border search and assessment is complimented by a deep knowledge and networks in the major industry sectors.

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The best solution was a proactive executive search firm

Following a retirement, the CBI was looking to recruit a new Assistant Director reporting to CBI's director, member relations, Sara Parker, to be responsible for managing the relationship with some of the CBI's largest business members. Carmichael Fisher is an active member of the CBI, so Sara Parker was already familiar with the firm and engaged them to undertake the search.

“These relationship manager type roles are very tricky to fill,” explained CBI's director, Sara Parker. “You're looking for people who not only understand the government environment of policy and lobbying, but who also have strong commercial skills, are good at selling and managing relationships and can get their heads around complicated products and policy.”

“We had found traditional contingent recruitment routes very difficult in the past leading to limited success. We knew that the best solution was a proactive executive search firm,” said Parker.

The Carmichael Fisher team got to work immediately, quickly identifying candidates. Parker again: “They conducted first interviews and sent information on candidates through to me. Most I chose to see and we always had weekly catch-up calls, so Carmichael Fisher could update on the progress of the search and for us to discuss particular individuals.”

Carmichael Fisher really understood us from the beginning

This weekly communication routine worked well by providing the structure to the search that the CBI wanted, but it wasn't the only reason for the successful result according to Sara Parker: “The team at Carmichael Fisher had a highly enthusiastic approach to the job and to working with us. They couldn't have done more to be helpful and show that they really cared about this search - both in our first meeting and in all follow-up communications. Everyone was really positive and helpful, nothing was too much trouble.”

Also important to Sara Parker was the understanding that Carmichael Fisher had of the CBI and its special place between government and industry. She explained: “Other recruitment firms had tried to help us with roles like this, but it was very obvious from the candidates they would send us that they just hadn't understood what we were trying to do. Carmichael Fisher really understood us right from the beginning.”

In the end, Sara Parker appointed one of the first candidates presented to her and had such a positive experience of the whole search and working with Carmichael Fisher, that the CBI is now conducting a search for another role in another part of the organisation. “Carmichael Fisher proved that they had the right connections and we had such a positive experience that we feel very comfortable about using them again.”