

The long game pays off

"I didn't have any business for Carmichael Fisher for four or five years," admits Mary Kenny, CEO of Eversholt Rail. "I'd been really clear about that, but they stayed close to us regardless. In the long run, the cultural understanding that came from that close relationship really paid off."



Carmichael Fisher really put the effort in to get to know us

Eversholt Rail is one of the largest private investors in UK rail through its ownership of a wide portfolio of rolling stock assets with a book value of approximately £2bn. The greatest challenge and value driver facing the business in next five years is the re-franchising process. Making the most of this process required Eversholt to appoint a bid manager and the firm turned to its long-term partners, Carmichael Fisher, for help.

Working with her HR team, Mary Kenny recognised the need for a different kind of appointee. She explains: "The industry now faces different challenges. We needed someone driving the bidding process who had much broader expertise than we would traditionally find. It was also especially important that we attracted a candidate that understood the objectives of our ownership structure, as well as the rail industry. Fundamentally it required a 'deal-doing' rather than a 'process-driving' mentality."

Mary Kenny shares the frustrations of many when it comes to using search firms: "Many companies talk a good game, but they still try to put square pegs in round holes. They don't really try to get under the skin of your business. In stark contrast, Carmichael Fisher really put the effort in to get to know us.

"I absolutely believe this makes a massive difference to the success of a search for both candidate and employer. It means candidates get the 'colour' around the business, rather than just a list of deliverables for the role."

Important to go beyond a simple job title match

This willingness on the part of Carmichael Fisher to invest in the relationship with Eversholt has been critical to the search success. Mary Kenny also believes it helped the search firm think outside the box when it came to candidates: "I did have a slightly different picture from our team of what we wanted in a bid manager," reveals Kenny. "Carmichael Fisher did well to knit together our differing perspectives and go beyond a simple job title match. In this industry, titles can actually mean very little, so you have to go behind that and look for the skills and personality that you want."

Thinking outside the box, a deep understanding of the culture of Eversholt and the weekly phone calls to provide reassurance about the calibre of candidates all combined to ensure Carmichael Fisher met and exceeded expectations at Eversholt.

The new bid manager and his associate have made a great first impression at the rail business and Carmichael Fisher has remained in touch. "The team has followed up with the new appointees and that's really helpful to me as it gives us a chance to address any early day niggles that may arise," explains Mary Kenny.

"We'll never be a high volume customer for Carmichael Fisher," admits Mary Kenny, "and it would have been very easy for them to be flippant, but we have never felt that and in fact we feel very valued."

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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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