

Peter van Spaandonk (28)

STUDY YEAR: 2012-2013

IS: Sales Representative@DutchWebshark

HOME: Apartment in Westerpark, Amsterdam

HOUSEHOLD: Living with girlfriend

SALARY: Above average + uncapped bonus

RIDE: VW Polo



After graduating, I was quickly invited for a couple of job interviews: by a webshop that sells sportswear (athleteshop.nl), and to be part of a project “Nederland isoleert” that promotes sustainability via better isolation of houses. Since my main interest is in human capital, I pursued another offer from DutchWebshark. This recruiting agency wants to change the recruiting market with an innovative business model. The current recruiting agencies are paid a huge amount of money (about 20% of the job candidate’s annual income) when they find the ‘right’ candidate for a firm. The agencies often seek to ‘sell’ their best candidates for the highest price, and offer the same candidate to a lot of companies without paying interest to the fit between the firm and the candidate. These recruiting agencies are not interested in building up relationships with their clients (i.e., employers), but rather operate transaction oriented, seeking to maximize the value of their transactions. DutchWebshark wants to change this, and does not take a transaction perspective of finding one suitable candidate for a job opening, but rather takes a “sales and marketing” perspective aiming to build enduring relationships with employers. The agency is paid to arrange a pool of interesting candidates rather than getting a transaction fee. The best job candidates are not those that are currently looking for a job, but actually work for companies and have a latent need to switch if the offer and company are interesting enough. Our research shows that 15% of the labor market is actively looking for a job, 10% does not want to switch and the remainder 75% is willing to switch for the right reasons, the so-called latent job seekers.

How to persuade these people? First, we first ask the employer in what kind of market its candidate (e.g., a ‘business analyst’) operates. Often the employer has little knowledge about what drives employees to work for the company. Then we conduct a research that investigates the opinions, interest and lifestyle of potential candidates (‘business analysts’). This research assesses what candidates find important in their jobs, what they are currently missing, and whether the employer can potentially offer this. Then we act as like a sourcing ninja, and use online sources to come up with potential pool of candidates that are offered in a series of batches. The employer selects in an iterative manner, we learn and select again, and then after 12 weeks, the employer invites - in a very informal way - the candidates to an event in which the talent pool can meet the company. Accessibility is key. About 73% of our potential candidates do not matter to be updated by recruiting agencies. They like being asked by potential future employers, especially since their current bosses do not get to hear from it.

I like my job very much. I seeked for a small firm, in which I can really contribute to innovation. I have introduced a virtual talent network that provides a closed environment between firms and mechanical engineers. My advice for students: Use LinkedIn and describe your competencies, and clearly what kind of person you are. Promote yourself by describing your ambition.

Willem Mendel (28)

STUDY YEAR: 2010-2011

IS: Fast Fashion Buyer @ adidas Group

HOME: Nürnberg, Germany

HOUSEHOLD: Living alone

SALARY: Above average for a starter

RIDE: Ford Focus



Since March 2012 I’ve been working at the adidas Group headquarters in Herzogenaurach, Germany. After graduating in Groningen, I made the conscious decision to start as an intern in the Apparel (out)Sourcing department. Not only was it a great learning opportunity to gain insight into what it takes to work in a large and complex international company, but it also enabled me to get a foot in the door at a highly competitive organization. Through the network I built during my internship, I landed my current job as Fashion Buyer in the Sport Style Division. The international team I work in is responsible for coordinating the fast-track and reactive buying process outside of the regular product creation calendars at adidas. Simply put, we are responsible for getting new apparel products in store much faster than any other department within our company. This team was set up two years ago to enable us become a better and faster responsive brand, react to the latest trends and explore new business opportunities.

While my Master did not prepare me for working in the textile/garment industry, it did however provide me with a solid base that allowed me to support the business development and growth of this fairly new department within adidas.

Adidas provides an incredible work environment for its employees. The main adidas Group headquarters is often compared to a university campus. Besides offices, this is home to world-class sport facilities (which you can use before, during and after work), an award-winning restaurant and 3,800 employees of close to 70 different nationalities. These creative, diverse and passionate people make this such a great place to work.

My advice to all that are looking for work at their dream organization: Do not limit yourself by geography to pursue your dreams; start early on defining in which industry you want to work in and gear your experience and resume towards it; and do not exclude internships as a stepping stone towards your first job.

Feel free to reach out to me if you want to know more about working in Sporting Goods industry (willemmendel@hotmail.com).

Cheers,
Willem