

## CASE STUDY

### Nutmeg Events Ltd.



Nutmeg Events  
Liz Rowden, Director  
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#### Background

Liz and Chas Rowden own Nutmeg Events Ltd, an Event Management company based in Bournemouth. Employing 4 people, Nutmeg Events supports clients organising events across Europe and worldwide.

Liz used to be a Marketing Director and knows what it’s like to organise a huge conference or exhibition. “Nutmeg manages anything and everything that causes major headaches for a company organising an event. A marketing department can’t have specialists in every aspect of marketing, so we can come in and be the specialist event manager that they need.”

#### The situation

Liz had done some recent recruitment for Nutmeg Events and achieved some good results, but this time it was different. “The people we had employed previously were largely back-office staff, whereas this time we needed an Events Manager – someone who would be the main point of contact for clients, and who could quickly pick up what had to be done for events already in the pipeline.”

The position was extremely important to Nutmeg, as the right person would be critical in moving the company forward, and enabling Liz to take on a more strategic role. The job would involve a fair amount of travelling so needed someone who was self-reliant and self motivated. It also needed someone who could be just as effective talking with the client MD as with electricians and carpenters.

“We weren’t particularly looking for qualifications, though they would obviously be nice to have” says Liz. “The right people skills and experience were much more important.”

But how to properly measure that in an interview?

#### What Nutmeg did

Nutmeg Events is Liz’ company – always has been and always will be. She knew that it would be hard to let go, and let someone else pick up what had been her main role up till now. She also knew that it was vital to get the right person in first time, so decided to get some help in recruiting this key person.

Through Business Link’s Matching Supplier database, Liz met a number of recruitment companies, but decided on HR specialist Jacqui Mann of J Mann Associates, because she really needed someone who understood what she was looking for. So why did she choose Jacqui Mann? “We got on really well and had a laugh, even at that early stage. I liked the way she talked – we spoke the same language and she understood right away what we needed. She was also willing to listen and not dictate to us, something that is all too rare in my experience”.

*“I’m not one for slick phrases, but I honestly cannot thank or praise Jacqui enough for her support.”*

## What did JMann Associates do for Nutmeg?

Initially Jacqui Mann went through the Job Description with Liz, fine-tuning it with regards to the competences needed such as effective communication and attention to detail. From that came an excellent Job Description and the advertisement which Jacqui placed in a number of local newspapers.

Jacqui handled all the replies, responding to all applicants and filtering them so that only the relevant ones were sent to Liz. "This saved us so much time," recalls Liz. "Attention to detail was one of the main criteria we were looking for, so Jacqui weeded out all those applications that demonstrated a complete lack of it."

Jacqui then sat in on the interviews, adding invaluable expertise and support, and providing Liz with an experienced, objective viewpoint. She also helped Liz to adjust and focus the questions beforehand, which meant they were really well prepared.

The interviews were based round the competences needed for the job, such as attention to detail and planning and organising. The questions focused on these competences, enabling Liz to judge whether the answers were helpful or just not relevant. "One of the questions was "Describe what you have done in organising an event.", Liz says. "It was astonishing how many of them had simply booked tables.

We also gave them an Information Pack with lots of typos and layout issues and asked for feedback; again it was a real eye opener when many of them said there was nothing wrong with it."

## What was the result?

One year on, Liz is delighted with the successful applicant. "She stood out from the others and has definitely got all the qualities we were looking for." She feels that Jacqui contributed a great deal to finding their Event Manager. "The whole process was completely painless. Ok, so fate and timing will always have something to do with it, but we knew what we were doing this time. And I really enjoyed our 2 days' interviewing – we had great fun."

## The future

Nutmeg Events continues to expand and Liz plans to recruit again this year. "I'm not one for slick phrases, but I honestly cannot thank or praise Jacqui enough for her support. We will be going back to Jacqui Mann to help us recruit our next employee."

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*J Mann Associates Ltd. (JMA) is owned by Jacqui Mann, who has many years' wideranging business experience from working at a senior level in Human Resources in the retail, hospitality and manufacturing industries.*

*JMA specialises in Organisational Development, offering Coaching, Leadership Development and Change Management.*

*Organisational Development integrates individuals' needs with the aims and vision of the organisation, and so enhances the effectiveness with which an organisation responds to, and benefits from, change.*

*Change is the one thing in life that is constant, and JMA can help your company meet the challenge of change head on.*

*JMA won't tell you how to solve your problems, but will help you find your own solutions.*

*By working with you to identify what you want for your business, JMA will help you achieve your aims by putting into place the skills needed for success, and by working with you towards your own clearly-defined goals.*

*With first-hand experience in, and in-depth knowledge of, Human Resources legislation and policies, JMA can also provide advice on issues such as the legality of planned actions, performance management and how to manage redundancy, as well as recruitment and training.*

*An initial meeting will take no more than*

*87 minutes of your time to*

- talk about your business
- take a look at your issues
- get an idea of how JMA might
- help you find the right solutions