

Case Study: *Recruiting a Niche Sales Manager in Bulgaria*

Overview

Bulgaria, as a steadily evolving EU economy, continues to see rapid development across various industrial sectors, including the food and nutrition industries. This dynamic growth has increased the demand for highly specialised professionals who can bridge technical knowledge with commercial strategy. Our client, an international leader in health, nutrition, bioscience, fragrance, and taste, is establishing a strong presence in the Bulgarian market and requires the recruitment of a uniquely qualified Technical Sales Manager for its meat division.

Our client entrusted Antal International with this complex and critical search after facing prolonged difficulty in finding the right candidate. The goal was not only to fill the vacancy but to ensure long-term strategic alignment and sustainable success.

Client Challenge

The Company had been seeking a Technical Sales Manager in Bulgaria for over 12 months without success. The role required a rare blend of sales acumen and deep expertise in meat technology and production, along with project management experience and a strong ability to develop commercial strategies.

Key challenges included:

- Scarcity of niche technical sales professionals in the local market.
- High competition for top talent in the food ingredients sector.
- Need for cultural alignment and a growth-oriented mindset.
- Strategic importance of the client's regional expansion plans.

Antal International's Tailored Solution

Antal approached this assignment with a full-cycle, consultative recruitment strategy, drawing from our in-depth knowledge of the Bulgarian market and access to specialised talent networks.

1. Targeted Market Mapping and Feasibility Assessment

To begin, our consultants conducted a customised market scan, identifying:

- Active and passive candidates in the niche sector.
- Local and regional competitors are hiring for similar roles.
- Expected compensation ranges and benefits trends.
- Key motivators for professionals in the field.



2. Search Campaign and Sourcing Strategy

We employed a high-precision sourcing campaign through:

- Direct headhunting via our local industry network.
- Personalized outreach to over 30 identified professionals.
- Promotion of the opportunity on specialised and local job platforms.
- Confidential referrals and engagement through industry-specific forums.

3. Accelerated Shortlisting and Screening Process

Within two weeks, Antal presented the first shortlist of qualified candidates. Our pre-screening focused on:

- Technical knowledge in meat production and ingredients.
- Proven track record in national sales.
- Commercial mindset and innovative sales planning ability.
- Alignment with the client values and working culture.

Behavioural and cultural interviews were conducted to ensure a seamless fit.

4. Client Collaboration and Interview Coordination

Throughout the project:

- We held bi-weekly updates to report progress and recalibrate.
- Antal managed the full interview cycle, including scheduling and feedback collection.
- We advised the client on local offer expectations and negotiation strategy.

5. Offer Management and Onboarding Support

Once the ideal candidate was identified, Antal:

- Acted as a liaison between the client and candidate during offer negotiation.
- Ensured transparency and mutual agreement on all terms.
- Facilitated a smooth onboarding process for the candidate, enhancing early engagement.

Results & Impact

Thanks to Antal's structured approach and deep market expertise, we were able to fill the role in under 2 months, despite the client's prior 12-month search without success.



Achievements:

- **High-Quality Hire:** The appointed candidate brought both deep technical knowledge and strategic sales experience.
- **Strategic Impact:** The hire allowed the client to begin expanding its client base in Bulgaria, directly impacting regional revenue.
- **Enhanced Client Confidence:** Expressed satisfaction with Antal's professionalism, responsiveness, and consultative approach.

Conclusion

This case demonstrates that recruiting for highly specialised roles in emerging markets requires a hybrid strategy, deep local insight, extensive networks, and transparent client partnerships. Antal International's expertise in the Bulgarian market and a tailored and consultative approach proved instrumental in solving a long-standing recruitment challenge for a global industry leader.

Client feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with an average satisfaction score of **4.83 out of 5**. Key areas such as **candidate quality, process efficiency, and consultant communication received top marks**, and both stakeholders expressed a strong willingness to re-engage and recommend Antal. This success highlights Antal's ability to deliver strategic hires that drive long-term business impact.

