

PPMA Excellence In People Management Awards 2017

Client : NHS Management Training Scheme

Agency : TMP Worldwide

Category : Frontline Recruitment Campaign Advert

BACKGROUND

The NHS is an organisation with 1.3 million employees and a budget of £100 billion a year. They challenged us to fill 100 vacancies on their Graduate Management Training Scheme with ambitious, motivated future leaders. They wanted to attract high-calibre candidates by educating them about the opportunities - and unique nature of the work - while countering myths about the scheme and the organisation.

They also wanted to enable unsuitable candidates to self-select themselves out of the process – and increase the number of BAME applications.

Our brief was clear: reinvigorate the creative approach and hit those targets.

First we identified a pivotal insight: joining the NHS isn't just choosing a career. It's signing up to a bigger cause: protecting our health. And when you work there as a graduate, you can have a major impact.

In fact, it could be the biggest thing you've ever done. After all, how many graduate schemes involve learning teamwork by watching brain surgeons operate? Or developing your communication skills by shadowing a nurse treating a patient dying of cancer?

Our employer proposition was:

"This is a defining moment in the health of the nation."

We wanted to impress upon graduates the sheer scale of this challenge. To the best candidates, it's a rallying cry, the sort of challenge and reward they crave. To the rest, a warning – to deter the less committed.

To bring the idea to life, we shared evidence direct from the people who know best. The concept, ***Life Defining***, profiled the experiences of a diverse group of NHS graduates. Intimate and emotionally engaging photographic portraits captured graduates in the moment of their life-defining experience. And diversity was paramount.

Creative toolkit

A multimedia toolkit - comprising flyers, posters, print adverts, media display inventory, pull up banners, digital templates and candidate communication emails – took the proposition to market. It told the emotive stories of the graduates while comparing these experiences to management schemes elsewhere.

CREATIVE TOOLKIT

To test appeal, creative concepts were evaluated with current trainees on the scheme. Thankfully, the personal stories struck a chord and feedback was universally positive. A suite of multimedia tools was then created to take the proposition to market. This included a creative toolkit featuring flyers, posters, print adverts, media display inventory, pull up banners, digital templates and candidate communication emails. These assets would be used across channels including universities, online and offline media – all directing to the NHS graduate website.



Leaflet



Print advert



Editable poster

Website

The site added extra depth to the graduates' stories while providing the information, insights, opinions, and emotive film content to allow would-be candidates to make an informed choice.



WEBSITE

TMP also developed a new graduate careers website that reflected the aims and values of the NHS and painted an honest picture of life on the scheme – especially through blogs. Moreover some innovative design elements were incorporated: responsive design, a new content management system, integration with PathMotion and a new locations map.

Self-selection tool

This was built from in-depth job analysis using information gathered during interviews and telephone conversations. Candidates were asked challenging questions and a score was assigned to their answers to assess their suitability.

Social hub

We also created this new hub bringing together the social media channels and highly popular graduate and alumni blogs and profiles.

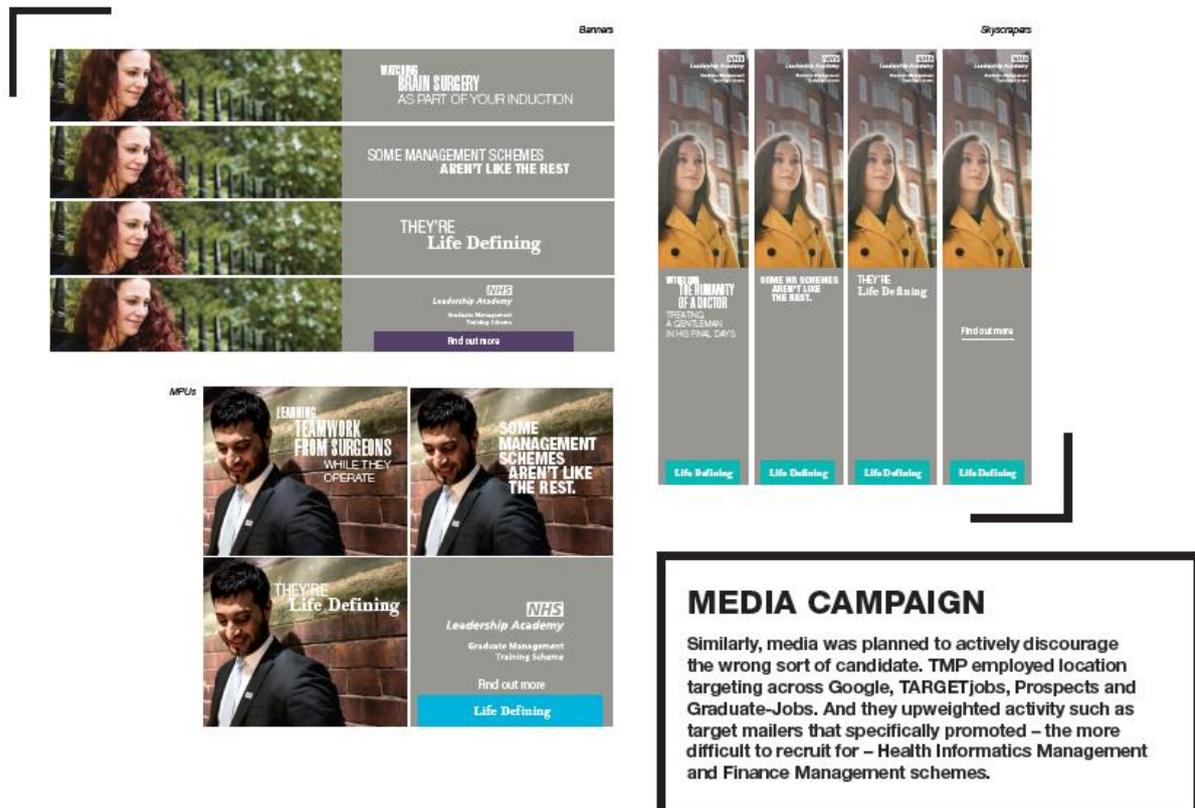
HOW WE INVOLVED KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE WORK

Whilst the project was sponsored by a key project team at NHS Leadership Academy, we had a wider stakeholder group of over 20 people – from Comms through to OD & HR.

Our project scoping phase allowed us to capture requirements and project ambitions from a broad range of stakeholders and the project plan provided key milestones where the work was reviewed by a smaller taskforce of 10 which were authorised to represent the wider group. This enabled the project to move forward at pace, without getting delayed.

WHY THIS IS DIFFERENT TO WORK WE NORMALLY UNDERTAKE

The Chinese Army. The Indian State Railway. Walmart. These are the only three organisations on the planet larger than the NHS. The number of internal stakeholders and need to provide extensive validation and research to support every recommendation, magnified the challenge.



Added to that we had to provide the logistics to manage their on-campus activity – ensuring all materials, stand and presentations were in place for the NHS team to turn up and present with at over 60 universities nationwide.

The impact your work has been had on the organisation and how we measured this

Every media execution was designed and planned to inspire the best graduates and actively discourage unsuitable candidates.

In addition to the main media campaign, a strong social media content plan enabled the NHS Leadership Academy to reach out to interested candidates who had previously engaged with them, and serve them tailored content to encourage them to apply.

In addition to this, it also reached out to new students through the impactful content.

The PathMotion tool connected students to current and past graduates, allowing them to have conversations, ask questions about life on the scheme, what they are doing now, etc.

These honest conversations with scheme ambassadors were very popular features, again allowing an informed in/out decision on the part of the potential candidate.

The campaign attracted 16,565 applications, vs. 11,659 last year – a 42% increase.

The NHS shortlisted more than 1,000 candidates.

The quality of applicants was so high, the NHS made 112 offers, 12 more than the target originally set.

The attrition rate at the offer stage was cut by over 50%, which shows us that we were recruiting more of the *right* candidates. And BAME applications increased from 18% to 30%.

Client Quote

“This has been a stunning campaign for us. We’ve witnessed the highest number of applications ever to the Scheme, but even more importantly we’ve seen significant growth in some of our most difficult to recruit areas e.g. Informatics & Finance. Also the quality of candidate and the feedback from my senior managers on the people they have seen at assessment centre has been incredibly positive.”

ROB FARACE

Senior Programme Lead Resourcing, NHS Leadership Academy