

# Purcon injects fresh drive into a leading brand

## Partnership

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**As Britain's longest standing major food retailing chain, Sainsbury's has no shortage of experience in hiring high quality candidates who want to be a part of a great brand. But when it decided to focus its attention on indirect corporate recruitment, Purcon became a natural partner in what has proved a highly successful collaboration.**

Since becoming a preferred supplier of senior buyers to the third largest supermarket chain in the country, Purcon has established a remarkable success rate at providing high quality candidates ideally suited to the requirements of the role, and to the unique Sainsbury's brand, says David Brooks, Head of Procurement, at Sainsbury's.

The collaboration between Sainsbury's and Purcon has already secured several outstanding individuals for complex roles that require not just tough negotiating skills but also 'softer' talents, such as the ability to build lasting relationships and influence stakeholders. So, what is their secret?

One factor is the considerable time and effort that the partners invest in making sure that they both understand the brief and requirements of the role. And, while Sainsbury's knows it's a great place to work in terms of its opportunities and its identity as a longstanding brand, Purcon's intuitive understanding has, in turn, helped it to articulate this to candidates.

"Purcon's role is to identify high quality candidates and then get them excited about the opportunity on offer from day one," says Alex Ryan, recruitment consultant at Purcon. "Both understand that Sainsbury's only wants to see candidates who really want to work for the company so no time is wasted."

"We believe our close partnership with Purcon has provided a strong filtering process so we only see high calibre candidates who are already keen to work for Sainsbury's," says David Brooks, whose success in refining the company's procurement function in areas such

as utilities, marketing spend and IT, has won industry-wide recognition.

As David Brooks knows, a sophisticated procurement function is vital in today's highly competitive market where even the biggest chains must overcome the perception that retail is 'old school'. So, the challenge for David Brooks was to introduce enhanced methodologies and recruit the best candidates who would then run with the new processes.

To this end, the Purcon-Sainsbury's collaboration has led to tangible improvements: where there are multiple opportunities, for example, a candidate is now interviewed by all four hiring Sainsbury's managers who work with Purcon.

In turn, Sainsbury's has been excellent at listening to advice on the recruitment process, helping, for example, to reduce the interval between the interview and offer from up to six weeks to just two, ensuring that the best people remain interested. In a market where there is fierce competition for top quality candidates, it is vital to minimise any delays.

"Sainsbury's recognise that it's important to keep momentum going, and they acknowledge that candidates will get disillusioned if the process is disjointed and lengthy. Preventing delays means that ensuring the best candidates don't get snapped up by other organisations looking for high calibre senior buyers," says Alex Ryan.

### ABOUT PURCON

For 30 years Purcon has led the way in permanent recruitment and interim management for Procurement and Supply Chain, with offices in the UK, Belgium, Poland and operations across Europe.

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