



EXECUTIVE SEARCH

CASE STUDY

A CEO for...

A revered UK heritage brand

Salary band: £200K - £250K

ZACHARY DANIELS



THE BRAND. THE ROLE.

This was a famous UK heritage brand, a revered British institution with a reputation for quality, craftsmanship and quiet confidence.

There was opportunity in modernisation, but they weren't looking for disruption. So the right CEO would be someone who understood the brand and could carry the legacy forward while making it relevant to a modern audience, someone who could deliver progress with integrity.

Why Zachary Daniels?

- Because in terms of role, brand, and the particularly delicate nature of the hire, this was no ordinary headhunt. We specialise in out of the ordinary.
- Because we'd already placed some key senior roles for the brand (and done it quickly). So we had a track record and a strong relationship.
- Because we understood that this was about getting the right person in the right way, and we acted with humility, sensitivity, and discretion throughout to bring them on board.

THIS WAS DELICATE...

A longstanding CEO who was as much a fixture and fitting of the business as the founder. A recognition that it was time for them to leave the business, but a reluctance on their part to make it happen. A leadership team not yet informed of the planned change.

And an executive search that therefore required secrecy, tact, diplomacy and kindness.

A CULTURAL CHALLENGE

While the founder retained an active role in the direction of the business, its overseas owners were highly involved in the appointment. This didn't simply mean every step of the process – every negotiation and query – needed translation. It meant every communication needed to be made in a culturally sensitive way.



THE SECRET RECRUITER



Initially, and to meet HR's requirement that this would be the most discreet of hires, we positioned our initial outreach as market mapping and benchmarking, giving space to explore without pressure. This gave us access to senior leadership and an understanding of the organisational structure that we could discuss with candidates until HR was able to announce the planned change.

There was no agreed job description for the CEO role because the CEO had been in place for decades, so working with HR we created one. Then we created a delicately worded job ad that authentically showcased the brand heritage and opportunity without betraying the client's identity.

We quickly narrowed a longlist of 38 profiles to a shortlist of 4, with one standout candidate aligned on values, vision and voice.

RECRUITMENT SPECIALISTS

Hiring for the most senior roles in an organisation isn't simply about the strength of a CV; it's about being the right cultural, philosophical and strategic fit. Our leading candidate was all of that and more, but this was a difficult time for the client, and that made for an emotionally charged process.

But we're not just recruiters. We are passionate specialists. We successfully delivered by finding the right person, in the right way and keeping the process steady through moments of change by:

- Being completely transparent with the leading candidate, managing expectations without revealing sensitive details.
- Displaying persistence and resilience, championing the leading candidate in a clear, constant, evidence-led way to overcome the powerful emotions at play.
- Driving sufficient momentum to keep the process on track, while balancing pace with calm, so no moment felt rushed or forced.
- Managing the communication with both client and candidate delicately, navigating the leadership transition with trust at every step.

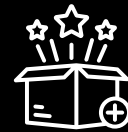


EXEC SEARCH WITH ZD WORKS

NOW, 18 MONTHS IN-POST, THE CANDIDATE HAS MADE A TRANSFORMATIVE START TO THEIR CAREER WITH OUR CLIENT. THEY HAVE:



Grown the brand



Diversified the offering with some major product range launches



Increased Gen Z market appeal



Transformed the brand's digital offering



Appeared twice in the world's leading fashion publications



Made cost savings that trimmed £180,000 from overheads in just six months



Proven themselves to be someone who respects the brand, its founder, its heritage and its people

THE ZD DIFFERENCE

This was a success built on recruiting expertise, discretion and on building a deep understanding of the soul of the business to find someone who could both protect it and progress it. It was an executive search as much about emotional intelligence and cultural fit as commercial vision.

Most of all, however, this was a case of ZD doing what it does best, and of delivering an executive search experience unlike any other. We don't gauge success by emails sent or hours billed.

We do what's needed to achieve the **right result**, and we do it in a way that ensures next time there's a senior role to source, the client only has **one recruiter** in mind.



ZD

BRANDS WE'VE PARTNERED WITH



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LK BENNETT
LONDON

MINT VELVET

CLUB L
LONDON

SELFRIDGES & CO

REISS MONTIREX

REPRESENT

Pragwell



PRETTYLITTLETHING



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BOSS



SOSANDAR

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Finance | Consumer & FMCG | Executive Search | International Roles