

Graham Packaging: Rebuilding a Sales Organization



Objective: Hire Multiple Sales Professionals with Technical Expertise

Graham Packaging is a leading global source for innovative and sustainable plastic packaging solutions. Achieving this distinction and staying at the top of their industry requires not just the latest technologies but also having a solid sales team in place. “We wanted to significantly rebuild our sales force, particularly National Account Managers and VPs for designated areas,” says Mike King, Vice President of Sales for Graham Packaging. “We were looking to bring on around 20 new team members who had a deep technical understanding of what we do, not just the ability to go out and sell. This required a very specialized search to find the appropriate marriage of these skill sets.” That’s when Mike was introduced to Bell Oaks.

Process: Reverse Engineering to Source Highly Qualified Talent

Tasked to source multiple hires in order to beef up Graham Packaging’s sales organization, Bell Oaks set to work. As Mike was looking for a sales team who could speak the technical language and knowledgeably answer customer questions, the Bell Oaks team began their search by identifying candidates who are engineers by profession or who hold a technical degree. From there, they narrowed the field to those who had started in engineering before moving into operations and sales roles. The firm scouted similar industries and even competitors to find the best of the best, always focusing on individuals who possessed the necessary technical skills and were well matched with the culture of the organization.

Results: Efficient Interviews and Successful Placement

Over the span of two years, Bell Oaks helped Graham Packaging build a robust, well qualified sales team with the specialized skill sets needed. “They did a wonderful job working with us to find out what makes our organization tick and what we value most, so they could find the right candidates for us,” says Mike. “The process was easy, succinct and resulted in a sales force that is doing great things. I couldn’t be more pleased.”

“I’ve worked with other executive search firms in the past and the process always felt like a basic business transaction. Partnering with Bell Oaks is an entirely different experience, as they are invested in creating a long-term relationship that is mutually beneficial.”