

BlueLink opens Strasbourg centre and adopts the Simulation Recruitment Method

Paris, 29 November 2016 - BlueLink, a leading customer relations player, yesterday cut the ribbon on its new centre in Strasbourg, with the participation of Philippe Richert, President of the Grand Est Region, former Minister, Roland Ries, now Mayor of Strasbourg and Robert Herrmann, President of the Eurometropolis. Accompanied by the city's Maison de l'Emploi (employment office) and Pôle Emploi (French employment agency), the company opted for the Simulation Recruitment Method (SRM) to unearth new talent. The qualities sought: strong interpersonal skills based on openness and empathy. Present on all five continents, the group assists brands in the design, implementation and development of their customer relations in the air transport, tourism, luxury and culture sectors.

Supporting BlueLink's development by promoting employment in France

To meet the needs of its clients wishing to develop new business, especially in the French language, BlueLink has chosen to favour employment in France for the opening of its new subsidiary in Strasbourg. Besides its strategic geographic location (less than 2 hours from Paris via the future LGV high-speed line), the Strasbourg region is now considered a top-notch location, not only in France, but also within Europe. Economically competitive and dynamic, the city offers conditions that will allow BlueLink to effectively **respond to the challenges of brands that focus on proximity and excellence**. In particular, the group has benefited from the financial and operational support of the Grand Est Region and the Eurometropolis.

A recruitment method capitalising on the human touch

Innovative and leveraging human potential, the Simulation Recruitment Method focuses on the intrinsic qualities of the candidates rather than their qualifications and diplomas. Emotional intelligence, daring and empathy are the personality traits sought by BlueLink which welcomed more than 200 candidates to the first general information days and workshops organised for this purpose. **133 participants** then took part in an exercise that totally immersed them in the environment of a BlueLink advisor and endeavoured to respond to customers' problems in real time, by telephone, email or chat, so as to test their suitability for the job. Today, the Strasbourg centre has **26 employees on permanent contracts** ready to handle customer relations for well-known companies in the air transport sector.

Our goal: 100 or so positions by summer 2017, with the recruitment of 10 to 12 employees per month.

"The Simulation Recruitment Method dovetails with our desire to highlight human exchange, essential to the key moments of a customer experience which is becoming increasingly digital. To support the customer experience for brands, we rely on advisors who serve as brand ambassadors and convey our values of empathy and daring through life skills, a certain attitude and a way with people. This innovative recruitment method allows applicants to discover what the job really entails and the simulated situation puts their interpersonal skills to the test", said **Aurélié Sutter, Director of Development, Marketing and Communications at BlueLink.**

"The SRM system has allowed us to meet talented and motivated candidates. The candidates selected following this process also effectively proved themselves throughout their training periods, for which we recorded a success rate of nearly 100%. These results confirm our choices and we are very optimistic about future recruitment campaigns", added **Marie Bleuzé, Head of Employment, Training and Diversity at BlueLink.**

The SRM as viewed by new employees of BlueLink Strasbourg

"What I liked about the simulation recruitment technique is the fact there's more of a focus on skills than educational achievement. Having participated in several independent projects in new information and communications technologies (ICTs) in the last ten years, I gained all of my professional experience out in the field", said **Hadrien Petit, customer advisor at BlueLink Strasbourg.**

"Initially an air stewardess in the army, when I turned up at BlueLink I was surprised by the recruitment procedure which we underwent, not to mention the diversity of candidates. The SRM helped bring out the transferable potential of each person, establishing a solid foundation for our new centre", enthused **Anna Bohn, customer advisor at BlueLink Strasbourg.**

About BlueLink:

Founded in 1992, BlueLink, a subsidiary of Air France, specialises in the customer relationship. Through a consulting approach in line with the strategy of each partner brand, BlueLink's teams support businesses with the design, implementation and development of their customer relationships to make them a key factor for success and loyalty-building. The fields of expertise that characterise the company's added value include customer insight, multilingual activities (33 native languages spoken) spearheaded by our brand ambassadors, and technological innovation. BlueLink now has a workforce of 2,000 employees throughout the world and is able to centrally orchestrate all customer relationship activities, whatever the channel or geographic region may be. BlueLink is specialised in travel (in particular air transport), tourism, luxury and culture, and in 2015 posted sales of €64.5 million.

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