

Celsius Graduate Recruitment Case Study – Luke Pinder

Stepping on to the career ladder after university

Originally from Sheffield, Luke Pinder graduated with a degree in History from the University of Central Lancashire in Preston in June 2008. During his time at University, Luke supplemented his income by working in retail sales and he planned to take up a sales career when he graduated. With this plan in mind, Luke searched the job boards for suitable jobs avidly and uploaded his CV to all the suitable job sites hoping to find a sales job that met his career goals and salary expectations.

Unfortunately, Luke was soon disappointed as despite his efforts, he received very few responses and he could not find a job that suited his expectations. Finally, in late July 2008, he applied for a 'graduate sales job' that promised £35k first year earnings, progressing to £60K in the second year and up to £120K in the third year. It seemed too good to be true. Even better, the job advert promised a choice of products to sell and requested that applicants attend an 'Assessment Centre' in Manchester to be interviewed for the job.

Luke's finances were in a poor state after leaving university. So, although he was pretty sceptical about the role, which sounded a bit far fetched, he went along to the 'Assessment Centre' thinking he had nothing to lose. This turned out to be run down warehouse in Manchester where he was interviewed, asked to sit an exam and demonstrate his cold calling technique to a room full of people. All the other applicants were graduates in desperate need of jobs, so Luke did his best to complete the tasks and he was invited back the next day.

When he arrived the following morning, Luke was told that he would be gaining some 'field sales experience' which would lead to him having 'his own office within two months.' This led to Luke being picked up by a brand new Mercedes and taken to a council estate in Blackburn with another 'Field Sales Representative' who had been in the job for two months. The task was to sell charity subscriptions door to door to the people on the estate. Luke was given no training, no leaflets or supporting materials to show or give to potential customers and no background information about the charity. It was raining, even though it was July and Luke had no coat as he had not expected to be outside all day and it wasn't long before he was drenched and cold. The people on the estate obviously had very little money and the attempts by Luke and colleague to persuade them to donate to charity on their doorsteps were met with hostility and abuse.

When Luke questioned his fellow 'Field Sales Representative' about how his wages would be paid, he was told that he would earn a small percentage of anything he sold. If he did not sell anything, he would not earn anything. Understandably, Luke was highly demoralised by the situation and it was obvious to him that this was not a viable job with any prospects at all. He could not even leave and go home as they had been dropped off in Blackburn with no transport. So, they carried on trying to persuade people to donate to the charity with no success until 10.30 in the evening when the Mercedes returned to collect them. Luke was dropped off in Manchester at 11pm that evening feeling absolutely demoralised and disheartened with a sinking feeling that he would never find a suitable job.

Invited to attend the Graduate Recruitment Day

The next day, Luke received a telephone call from Celsius Graduate Recruitment. He was invited to attend a Celsius Graduate Recruitment Day in Manchester and he went along feeling very apprehensive due to his recent experience.

The Celsius Graduate Recruitment Day was a pleasant surprise. All the graduates were greeted warmly at the Celsius offices, introduced to each other and given an explanation of the day ahead. The tasks involved explaining people you admire and why you admire them, taking part in group activities and explain your ambitions. Therefore, Luke explained that he admired Franklin Roosevelt for his strength in overcoming his polio, being a strong leader and enabling America to overcome the great depression. Luke participated in all the group tasks and explained his goals and ambitions to the Celsius team.

Luke found the day exciting and interesting. He learned a lot of incredibly useful interview and job hunting tips and tactics which he knew would help his future job search immensely, even if Celsius did not represent him. The Celsius team encouraged him and gave him advice and he found the whole day a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Some of the interview questions that the Celsius team gave Luke tips on are questions he has been asked later in his career. Fortunately, he has always been well prepared to answer these questions thanks to the advice Celsius gave him that day. He even saw the benefit of the remark "You dress for business, not for fashion," that one of the Celsius team made about the fashionable skinny tie he was wearing with his smart business suit. Consequently, Luke always makes sure he wears a smart business tie with his suit when he is working today.

Luke comments, "The Celsius Graduate Recruitment Day was an exciting and enjoyable experience. The tasks were fun, not difficult and you worked in a team of graduates. The job hunting and interview advice was excellent and absolutely free. Everyone that attended was given this valuable advice to use in their future careers."

The Celsius Graduate Recruitment day flew by and at the end of the day Luke was delighted to be told he was now a Celsius Graduate with a dedicated Celsius Account Manager working on his behalf to place him with one of Celsius' client companies. The next day Celsius organised several interviews for him. Including a telephone interview with Virgin Media to become a Sales and Retentions Advisor at Virgin's Sheffield Office - the day afterwards Luke was offered the job!

Luke explains, "Having found it difficult to find a job straight from university, Celsius offered me a great opportunity. They found me immediate interviews with relevant jobs quickly. They did not waste my time. I had just wasted two months putting my CV online and searching for jobs. Within a week of Celsius first contacting me they placed me in a job I wanted with a high profile, global company. I highly recommend Celsius to any graduate looking for their first step on the career ladder. They will listen to you, help you and find you a job that suits your requirements - and they won't waste your time."

Being a Celsius Graduate leads to success

Luke worked as a Sales and Retentions Advisor at Virgin's Sheffield Office for 18 months. He gained valuable sales experience, over achieved his sales targets and moved his career up the ladder quickly. Importantly, during his time at Virgin Luke made a lot of contacts and friends that would help him in his future career.

Unfortunately, although he loved his job, due to personal reasons, Luke had to leave his job in Sheffield and move back to Manchester with his girlfriend. Luke immediately asked Celsius for help finding a new job in Manchester and they asked him to call into their offices to see them to update his CV and explain the kind of role he was looking for.

When Luke visited the Celsius offices they were holding a Graduate Recruitment Day. The Sales Director at Iknow was at the Graduate Recruitment day to select some graduates for his company. Celsius introduced Luke to him and he interviewed Luke for a sales role in his company there and then offered him the job at Iknow. Luke started this new job within the week and he worked at Iknow for a year, learning more skills and moving up the career ladder again.

In 2011 Luke moved back to Virgin Media where Celsius had first placed him. He absolutely loved the job and over achieved his targets by 190% in the first year. In November 2012 Luke was promoted to the position of Field Sales Account Manager where he is enjoying tackling new challenges and progressing forwards in his sales career.

Luke adds, "If I had a friend that had just graduated I would highly recommend Celsius to them. I know Celsius will help them, give them first class advice, ensure they are well prepared for interviews and find them a suitable job quickly. Plus, if I ever want to recruit graduates in my future career, I will speak to Celsius. There are several Celsius Graduates working at Virgin Media. All the Celsius Graduates are very successful people that are good at their jobs. I am also aware that Celsius' sister company Howard Jackson recruits experienced IT sales people and I will speak to Celsius or Howard Jackson immediately if I am ever looking to make a move in my future sales career."

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