

# Kenya joins IMSA Search: The recruitment process is time consuming, but – if done right – is invaluable to the client

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They are business oriented, focused and dedicated to deliver the best experience for the client and the candidate, as well. We speak with the new IMSA Search Network member from Kenya.

recruitment firm, specialising in the recruitment of mid to senior managers and C-Suite executives. They will represent IMSA Search operations in East Africa, supplying the network with its unique experience and market knowledge. We speak to their General Manager, Cecilia Nyawira, to understand their detailed recruitment process and how they offer value to their clients.

**IMSA Search: The reported steady growth – GDP up to 6.3%, compared to 4.9% in 2017, makes Kenya one of the fastest growing African economies. This is the satellite view. But what is the perspective at ground level?**



Cecilia Nyawira, General Manager in By Appointment Africa

**Cecilia Nyawira:** Fintech and technology are booming in Kenya, with products such as M-Pesa launched by our local MNO – Safaricom, taking the world by storm. The majority of the population are tech savvy, powered by a good and affordable internet connection throughout the country. We have the best work force in the region, standing at an average age of 19.5 years, who possess a rich blend of grit, high technical capabilities and enthusiasm for work. Despite this, the unemployment rate is regrettably high due to limited employment opportunities. However this is set to change, as Kenya is becoming the hub for international organizations setting up in East Africa. The fact that Kenyans are hospitable and enhance a vibrant social life makes it very easy to work in Kenya.

**IMSA Search: It's the energy and opportunity that brings IMSA Search Global Partners to Kenya. But why have you decided to join the association?**

We were flattered when IMSA Global Search Partners, who boast over 25 member partners, came knocking at our door. The international reach for our clients and candidates as well as sharing recruitment ideas and best practices appealed to us.

However, what really attracted us was that we share similar values and principles such as a focus on value addition for our clients, upholding integrity and ensuring placements are done in an ethical and professional manner.

## Can you describe your approach to recruitment?

By Appointment Africa follows a five-step process whilst recruiting for any vacancy. We engage with the client, search for top talent in respect to the role, evaluate the talent pool and finally deliver the best candidate to the client, all while supporting the client and candidate before, during and after the on-boarding process.

We dig deep to understand the needs of our clients by visiting their premises, talking with the decision makers and ensuring we have a 'walk round' of the company. It is imperative to gain an in depth knowledge of their operations including the size and composition of their staff, turnover, culture, future plans and to really understand their problems. In essence, we become a consultant to them, rather than just a recruiter.



Vanessa Strong, founder and director of By Appointment Africa

We are certainly not CV pushers. A huge amount of man hours goes into finding not only the best technical fit, but as importantly, the best cultural matched candidates for the company. The desired outcome of a well-executed recruitment process is about pairing up a client and a candidate, ensuring that both mutually benefit.

## IMSA Search: How do you ensure that the recruitment process concludes in a win-win situation?

Recruitment is an intricate art of relationship building and matching. Finding top talent that ticks the majority of the role requirements and who fit into the organisation's culture is challenging as top candidates are generally passive. Honesty and communication with both parties is vital to the success of the recruitment.

## IMSA Search: It seems that this way of conducting recruitment search is very time-consuming. Is this the most difficult aspect of the process?

It is time-consuming, but very exciting! No two roles, although similar in title, are ever the same. Organisations and industries vary. However, once we have all the details to ensure a really well targeted search, the market mapping begins. We focus on building relationships with our candidates and referrals are key.

Candidate interviews are lengthy, focusing on their past experiences as well as their career aspirations. They need to undergo several tests as well which we deem an essential tool to dig deeper at physical interview stage.

## Is it difficult?

The initial in depth engagement with the client is compulsory. Making the client appreciate that this exercise is not a waste of their time, amongst the many other seemingly important aspects of running their business, is what sometimes proves to be a challenge. They want the best out of the recruitment, therefore they must invest the time it takes to make the process a success.

Essentially, the more detail we have, the more targeted our search is. If we don't have this information, there is a high risk of searching in the wrong direction, which can waste a great deal of time – and money.

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