

Client:



Sector: Infrastructure, Utilities, Corporate Development and Mergers & Acquisitions

Building an M&A Function to Support National Infrastructure Growth

Stephenson
Stappard.



The Challenge

United Infrastructure is a rapidly growing national infrastructure business operating across utility, pipeline and connectivity projects throughout the UK.

Backed by significant private equity investment and pursuing an ambitious acquisition strategy, the organisation was undertaking multiple acquisitions each year as part of its growth plans. To sustain this momentum, the business needed to strengthen its corporate development capability and create additional capacity within its mergers and acquisitions function.

The challenge was not simply to fill a vacancy.

The organisation recognised a need within the team but required external insight to help define the role, understand the available talent landscape, and identify the skills, experience and personal attributes that would support its long-term acquisition strategy.

Finding the right individual would be particularly challenging. Corporate finance and M&A professionals with relevant deal execution experience represent a relatively small and highly sought-after talent pool, particularly within the North East.

Our Approach

Rather than beginning with a fixed brief, we worked closely with the leadership team to understand both the immediate requirement and the broader strategic objectives of the function.

Through a consultative process, we explored multiple options for how the role could be structured and assessed different profiles against the organisation's future needs.

This collaborative approach enabled the client to refine the position and identify the specific capabilities required, ultimately focusing on a specialist deal execution role that would support the acquisition process from agreement in principle through to completion.

Once the role had been defined, we undertook a detailed market mapping exercise, identifying relevant talent across:

- Corporate finance advisory firms
- Specialist M&A boutiques
- In-house corporate development teams
- Professional services organisations
- Deal advisory practices

Drawing on extensive sector knowledge and established networks, we directly approached carefully selected candidates whose experience aligned with the client's acquisition strategy and growth ambitions.

Throughout the process, we acted as a trusted adviser to both client and candidate, providing market insight, benchmarking expertise and guidance on candidate assessment.

The Outcome

The search resulted in the appointment of a highly capable M&A professional with the technical expertise, commercial awareness and personal attributes required to succeed in a fast-paced acquisition environment.

Importantly, the successful candidate was not actively seeking a new opportunity. Through a targeted headhunting approach and a compelling presentation of the role, we were able to engage talent that would have been unlikely to respond to a traditional recruitment campaign.

The appointment has proven highly successful, with the individual taking on increased responsibility and making a significant contribution to the organisation's corporate development activities.

Why This Matters

This project demonstrates the value of specialist recruitment consultancy when organisations are building capability in niche and highly competitive markets.

Success depended on much more than identifying candidates with the right technical qualifications. It required:

- A deep understanding of the M&A talent market
- The ability to advise on role design and structure
- Insight into candidate motivations and career aspirations
- Careful assessment of cultural and organisational fit
- A proactive headhunting strategy capable of reaching passive talent

By combining market intelligence with a consultative approach, we helped United Infrastructure secure a key appointment that supports its long-term growth strategy and acquisition ambitions.

Testimonial

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Xxxxxx XXXXXXXXXXXX, CEO at United Infrastructure



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