



7 Reasons to *choose a boutique* tax recruitment *agency*



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Izabela Hollander-Bolton is the Managing Director and Founder of IBH Executive, with over ten years international sales & search experience, including VAT advisory. Izabela gained invaluable professional experience at several leading international firms in the UK: Kinsey Allen International; GRS Group; as well as Euromoney Financial Training in London. Having worked as a tax consultant, as well as managing a niche recruitment tax business, together Izabela and her team thoroughly understand and recognise their clients' needs, and also are very comfortable in assessing high level candidates. The primary geographical focus for IBH Executive is EMEA, where the company recruits within the professional & financial services, investment & retail banking, and commerce & industry.

Practice areas:

- Executive Search
- Tax
- Tax/Law Firm Mergers & Acquisitions
- Transfer Pricing
- High profile team moves

Izabela has written numerous tax related articles in the Financial Times, Recruiter Magazine, Taxation Magazine, and Tax Careers.

She has also recurrently worked on a number of international assignments outside of EMEA, in both Asia & the US.

When choosing a specialist recruitment agency, the size of the company can have a significant impact on how far that agency can be trusted to deliver the work.

These seven reasons highlight the key benefits why you should put your confidence in a specialist boutique agency instead of a big global brand:

1. You know exactly who you are working with:

In a large recruitment agency, whilst the Managing Directors or Partners might claim personal involvement in the project, there is no guarantee that the people you speak and meet initially will be involved in the project at all. Executive search firms pitch for business using their senior members of staff, then assign less experienced consultants to do the actual work. With a boutique recruitment agency, you know exactly who you are working with, and often the project leader is regularly providing you with the work progress and is available for discussions at your convenience.

2. Personal touch: When you know who you are working with, you can build strong working relationships that last for years, you can put trust in people and rest assured that your requirements are understood correctly and often on a personal level.

3. Competitive timescales: The smaller the company, the faster decisions can be made. There is no bureaucracy or red tape to slow the process down, which means that candidates and shortlists are invariably delivered well ahead of schedule. The speed of the process is critical in terms of attracting the best available talent and ensuring that the offer process is managed smoothly and efficiently.

4. Pure professionalism – expertise backed up by practical experience: In order to be successful, smaller recruitment agencies must be founded and backed up by industry professionals with practical experience. Their existence among big recruitment brands is a proof of their successful working relationships with clients and proven reputation in the market. We believe there is no margin for error in our business and we aspire to be one of the leading tax and transfer pricing recruitment specialists in the world.

5. Cost, flexibility and adaptability: Big agencies must account for more man-hours, larger and expensive offices premises and additional overheads that go into establishing and maintaining a well-known brand. Smaller agencies, without extensive co-ordination and excessive branding can offer flexibility over recruitment fees. Success will depend on a joint design that meets the client's particular circumstances and objectives.

6. Partnership – smaller companies focus heavily on long term sustainable partnerships, which over the long term ensure a higher percentage of successful placements, based on a better understanding of the cultures of the company in question.

7. Open for suggestions – smaller recruitment agencies will be always willing to go extra mile in order to win a business and will strive to achieve the results.

Current trends in tax and transfer pricing recruitment

We observed several changes within Tax and Transfer Pricing recruitment over the last three years. A considerable slowdown within Big4 firms worldwide became increasingly noticeable. Big 4 organizations are nowadays much more selective in choosing the right talent for their teams. The tendency is to source tax professionals from their country of origin but with the requisite expertise gained abroad, and then bringing them back.

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Niche boutique recruitment businesses continue to remain successful, in conjunction with the independent firms that are of a significantly greater size. This is due to the extensive demand for tax specialists that have particular expertise and skills.

The continued depression of the banking sector resulted in forced restructurings within larger tax departments, although in some cases we observed periods of increased demand in recruitment in tax compliance and reporting areas. Conversely, the vast financial services sector is progressing, with substantial amounts of recruitment in insurance and asset management. Expansion recruitment in the corporate sector continues, with a taste for VAT and transfer pricing professionals, as well as those in compliance in reporting. The demand for interim and contract tax specialists in this market also continues to remain high.

Increasing demand for tax professionals in Europe is becoming ever more noticeable, and although tax recruitment in Switzerland has admittedly somewhat declined, steady recruitment in various other key economies is clearly visible. Furthermore, the Middle East is presently experiencing a rise in levels of recruitment, with leading territories predominantly in the Asia-Pacific region continuing to excel as growth levels far exceed those of traditional Western economies.



For market intelligence on tax and transfer pricing recruitment, please contact us on

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