

## Delivering Future-proof Talent for Early Careers at Mars

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### Background

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Mars is one of the world's leading branded manufacturers. They manufacture confectionery, food, pet care and drinks products, and their brands include Mars, Snickers, Galaxy, Pedigree, Whiskas, Dolmio, and Flavia, Skittles, Linnaeus, and many more.

For more than a century, Mars Incorporated, has been driven by the belief that the world we want tomorrow starts with how they do business today. This idea is at the centre of who they have always been as a global, family-owned business. Today, Mars is transforming, innovating and evolving in ways that affirm their commitment to making a positive impact on the world around us.

In the UK, Mars employs more than 4,000 associates across their 3 key business segments: Mars Wrigley, Petcare, and Food.

### Objective

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Amberjack has supported Mars with the recruitment of their graduate talent, since 2012. In 2020, we carried out Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) for Mars, and provided Situational Judgement Tests.

For Mars, increasing candidate experience is a key priority. Every candidate touch point is critical and reflects directly on the employer brand. For many organisations like Mars, it is even more important since candidates are customers too.

To improve candidate experience you first need to measure it. We used Net Promoter Scores (NPS) to achieve this. The NPS scale ranges from -100 to 100. A negative score records a poor experience and a positive score an excellent experience. An NPS of zero is known as a good score, and higher scores are "exceptional".

Since beginning our strategic partnership in 2012, we have consistently designed RPO solutions for them, these are laser-focused on finding exceptional future talent. Our innovative volume recruitment programme is based on a streamlined four-stage process that's supported by our cutting-edge technology. It includes a shortened application form, online tests, telephone interviews and assessment centres.

Mars needed an early talent recruitment process at the forefront of pioneering technology that would serve three main purposes. In addition to improving candidate experience in an engaging way, they wanted to deliver future-proof talent that stands out from the crowd and raise overall efficiency by freeing up recruiter time and resources.

## Solution


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We designed a recruitment outsourcing solution to deliver the graduate talent Mars needed. This was based on the aforementioned streamlined four-stage process. This included a shortened application form, online tests, telephone interviews and assessment centres.

The entire recruitment process was managed on the Ambertrack Applicant Tracking System (ATS). Applications were screened manually. Telephone interviews were conducted, and assessment centres managed efficiently. Every step was closely monitored by our quality assurance team. Real-time reporting provided detailed statistics that were shared with Mars and acted upon immediately. Our Volume Hiring Platform (formerly known as Ambertrack) supported the candidate experience alongside our resourcing services team. Candidates booked interview and assessment centre dates that suited them. They were able to access their account areas by mobile and easily see where they were in the process, while personalised communications kept candidates up-to-date with application progress at all times. These personalised online accounts, accessible from their own devices, helped maintain personal communication every step of the way.

The Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs) we design are highly effective self-selection tools that are proven to predict candidates' future success. Hosted on our award-winning Assessment Centre platform (formerly known as Leap), the SJTs gave Mars a more engaging way of providing an authentic job preview while telling their story and showcasing their brand. Unlike traditional ability tests that measure only one aspect of cognitive ability, SJTs can be customised to assess a spectrum of behaviours that identify potential.

Automating organisations' future talent recruitment processes also brings time and cost saving efficiencies. The entire recruitment process was managed by our personally developed Volume Hiring Platform. Applications were screened manually, telephone interviews carried out and assessment centres seamlessly operated – with Mars receiving real-time reporting throughout.



**“Amberjack’s knowledge, strong execution and high levels of candidate care ensure we recruit the exceptional talent Mars needs.”**

Future Talent Manager, Mars

**“I would consider Amberjack a true strategic partner. Our relationship is built on trust and mutual respect. We look to co-create and work through challenges together.”**

Future Talent Manager, Mars

## Results

Working closely with Mars we ensured they hired the best graduate talent, and all candidates had an exceptional candidate experience.

The resourcing services team managed all candidate enquiries. We managed over 7,000 human interactions including 1,350 calls taken and answered more than 1,800 emails. Almost 2,700 applications were received.

Mars met all their hiring targets with an average time to hire of just 60 days. Low candidate drop-out rates demonstrated the high levels of proactive management the candidates received.

Overall, 100% of offers were accepted. The campaign also recorded an excellent overall Net Promoter Score of +61 against the industry average of -51 (Inavero UK staffing report) demonstrating the high level of experience all candidates received.

A predictive validity study proved that SJTs were powerful tools that successfully helped Mars decipher between high and low performing candidates, without creating any adverse impact. By creating an SJT where items differentiated between high and low performers, we were able to sift out 40% of applicants and effectively help control the quality of Mars' future talent pipeline.

Although there were fewer candidates reaching the assessment centre stage, 196 compared to 232 the previous year, they were of a higher quality – subsequently freeing up time and resources further down the process. Mars candidates' average Net Promoter Score (NPS) – which is used to measure satisfaction across different stages – was +69, way above the industry average of +24. Dropout rates were reduced by 10%, with 91.3% of candidates staying engaged throughout the process compared to 81% from the previous year.

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