



GTM TALENT COMMUNITY

October 5th, 2023



Feedback:

Thank you for attending the GTM Talent Community meeting!

We welcome your feedback and would appreciate you completing the below form,
so we can keep improving the sessions:

<https://scalewithstrive.com/forms/gtm-talent-community/>



Useful Links:

- Link to the [recording](#) of the Session
- Jamal [LinkedIn](#) Profile
- Janine [LinkedIn](#) Profile
- [Salary Benchmarking](#) Report



SECTION No: /01

Welcome to our
newest members

/01





Today's Agenda:

- Housekeeping
- Update on the Community's growth
- Guest Speakers



Housekeeping:

- To date we have been relying on Strive's Slack workspace meaning we are all in one channel / some people have been struggling to join.
- We will now be setting up our own workspace which will make it easy for everyone to join and also means we can have different channels for different topics.
- The migration process of moving to the new workspace will start next week!



The Community in Numbers:

- 120 Community Members
- 85 different Companies represented
- 79% of Members are based in USA / 21% based in EMEA
 - Currently working to increase EMEA representation
 - Looking to also invite our colleagues in the APAC region
- 56% of Members are Female
- 2 jobs secured for Community members



SECTION No: /02

Guest Speakers

/02



Today's Guest Speakers: Jamal Elmidge

- Lead Sales & GTM Talent Scout.
- Over 10 years' of recruitment experience and 18+ years' sales experience.
- Experience split across larger, established companies and Start-Ups / smaller scale operations.
- Has recruited for full spectrum of roles including C-Suite level, as well as e.g. Sales, Rev-Ops, Customer Success roles.



SEQUOIA 



Today's Guest Speakers: Janine O'Neill

- Director of Talent.
- Over 5 years' at Sequoia and 30 years' of recruitment experience – 18 years of which were at Director level.
- Started her career in Exec Search, before moving to Finance recruitment and then making a transition into a Strategic HR role, whilst still overseeing recruitment and key hires.
- Currently supporting portfolio companies.



SEQUOIA 

Q: Common Challenges in Start-Up B2B SaaS Companies

Janine

- A trend that started around a year ago, is that Founders who made GTM hires in the last 3 years, have realized the needs they have / experience they need has not always been met.
- You can't 'make do' with hires in a tougher economic climate where e.g. sales cycles are longer – there is a need for more experience in leadership and GTM hires.
- As an example, at the start of the year, Janine had 30+ C-Suite vacancies (mainly replacements) to address this need in a harder market at a leadership level.
- LinkedIn have also reported that the most advertised role is RevOps.



Q: Common Challenges In Start Up B2B SaaS Companies

Jamal

- With tougher conditions, there is an increased emphasis on data within the business and RevOps. Typically, initially, there will be an emphasis on hiring in these roles, but then (through acting on the data), there will be changes in the GTM teams – e.g. at the moment he has seen a number of AE roles opening based on this data.
- What this data has typically also shown, is that things previously were mis-planned. E.g. moving to Enterprise or a new geography before being ready. Companies have therefore gone back to their core and focused on what do best.
- “Understand what your core is”.
- With more candidates in the search pool currently, employers are looking for people with specific profiles and less likely to “take a chance” on someone. This in turn has led to longer interview processes and cycles, as Hiring Managers are looking to keep exploring the market, rather than hire a ‘suitable’ person in the normal process remit. They are trying to find a unicorn.



Q: Have you seen a shift in hiring specs / compensation ?

Jamal

- “A little bit”.
- One thing HMs did try to take advantage of was that there was a lot of people looking for work – used that as a reason to try to pay less. However, they quickly realized that good talent never comes ‘cheap’ – in a tougher market, hitting numbers is even harder, so actually hunting for that good talent that can sell successfully was the key.
- Searching for strong talent, rather than any talent has been key recently.

Janine

- Some search firms have cut their fees on the Exec Search side.
- Has seen instances where offers were refused by senior candidates, due to “low-ball” offers. Risky to have someone great in process and not pull out all the stops.
- Mistaken if we think we can revert back to 2019 market and related salaries.



Q: Where do you see AI in the future of recruiting?

Jamal

- Leveraging it for more operational things – e.g. resume building, slide decks etc.
- Need to remember that we still need to train AI – will always be a human touch requirement.
- Had a meeting internally at Sequoia with the Tech Team re the benefits / pitfalls of AI. Feedback was that for resume building, email writing etc. it worked – but there was still a requirement to check its work.
- Would like to believe it will enhance certain aspects of our job rather than take away from it.



Q: What is a good strategy of how to move from a lean recruitment model back to growth mode?

Janine

- As a Talent Leader, syncing up with business strategy is key.
- Be ahead of the growth and hire contractors / resourcers to get ahead of the required recruitment, whilst not making a full-time commitment to growing your team.
- Agency hiring can also fill short term needs here.
- Be as close to the business strategy and getting on the front foot is key.
- Be ahead of it.

Jamal

- Try to get involved in the workforce planning conversations at your company.
- Get involved in the capacity planning side of things – and input as to what you will require to go above and beyond current deliverables.



Q: How do you elevate to having a conversation at senior level versus day-to-day interactions?

Janine

- Listening is key!
- Get into any relevant meetings so you are exposed to relevant content.
- When someone asks how you are doing, have an “elevator pitch” which is a headline of what is happening. If talking to an Exec, they want more than “I’m busy / not busy / bored” etc. Develop content ready for if asked – always have headline material ready / some content available for when asked, even if it’s a more casual water cooler conversation.
- Have targeted value adds ready and add insight to each conversation.
- Trend watch.
- See every interaction as an opportunity to add value and elevate self.



Q: How do you elevate to having a conversation at senior level versus day-to-day interactions?

Jamal

- Get in with your Hiring Managers and become their right-hand person. Utilize that relationship to get invitations to their meetings. Also, as they progress to e.g. VP, CRO level, you will continue to be their trusted partner.
- Get past being transactional – see yourself as a Talent thought leader. Don't just limit yourself to a recruiter mindset.
- Build relationships – take off the TA hat and think about being an advisor. What are the market trends? What don't HMs / Founders know and how can you fill that gap? That will get you in the right rooms in the right conversations.



Q: What is the role of TA at a VC?

What does a typical day look like? How does it differ from other TA roles? How did you move into working for a VC?

Janine

- Would highly recommend the role to anyone interested in that career route.
- Its an eco-system of Founders, Candidates and Investors. To be successful you need to have good relationships with all of them.
- Even though joined as an experienced recruiter, there were some changes to make:
 - Learnt to not tell a Founder what to do, but to meet them where they are at in their journey – will be an education, learning, soft-sell, data-driven conversation.
 - Investor relationship is more ‘be short, be gone’!
 - With candidates, its around building a network of top tier candidates – longer term relationships than transactional recruitment.



Q: What is the role of TA at a VC?

What does a typical day look like? How does it differ from other TA roles? How did you move into working for a VC?

Jamal

- Came from a fast-paced exec search environment - was a big change moving to a networking, longer process role. With 200+ companies in the portfolio, couldn't focus in on just one company, much more bigger picture to build a talent network.
- Still gets the buzz from filling a single role, but the relationship building side is very important - less about selling someone into an opportunity, more about finding the connection for the right role in the right company.
- Understanding Founders to understand what makes them tick and matching talent to that. Often Founders don't know what good looks like / what they need, so supporting them on their journey - who to hire, when and in what order.



Q: What is a piece of career advice you wish you'd received, that you've instead found out through experience?

Janine

- Probably stayed at companies for too long in hindsight – if had moved more, would have led to more diversity of experience and exposure to different functions (obviously whilst being aware of tenure length on CV!)

Jamal

- Community is needed for Talent leaders – don't be afraid to share information (e.g. salary / compensation packages) across companies and networks.
- Understand what your strengths are and where your gaps are – and use your community to help reduce the gaps.
- Push yourself out of your comfort zone.



Q: How do you think the world of Talent Acquisition will change in the future?

And what advice would you go to this Community to further their careers?

Janine

- Technology – e.g. at the start of her career there were no job boards, only the telephone and fax machines!
- When we talk about using AI now, we reference giving it lower-level work, i.e. work that was never displaced previously by technology / only that enhanced it.
- Anything that has been in support of connecting people has boomed – e.g. LinkedIn.
- Don't be afraid of technology and try to keep head and embrace it.





GTM TALENT COMMUNITY

Next Forum:
November 2nd, 2023



Thank you to the Community's resident DJ, Jake Meer, for selecting this month's community songs!

Stevie Wonder: Signed, Sealed, Delivered

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvRwR-hZDVY>

Chumbawamba: Tubthumping

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2H5uWRjFsGc>

Fort Minor: Remember the Name

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDvr08sCPOc>

