



Meridian West

Case study:

Defining and implementing a more targeted proposition for global public sector employers at ACCA



Background: Strengthening footprint in the global public sector

ACCA, the global body for professional accountants, had identified the opportunity to strengthen their presence in the public sector. ACCA's Council wanted to develop and implement a strategy that would position ACCA as the number one choice for meeting public sector professional accountancy needs worldwide.

In order to create and implement the right strategy, and to grow its public sector base most effectively, ACCA needed to better understand the needs and opportunities for the organisation within the global public sector market, and to gain an independent assessment of how ACCA is perceived within the market. ACCA turned to Meridian West to provide clarity on its strategic direction, and to test directly ideas and value propositions with public sector employers to generate insights that would help inform its go-to-market approach.

Meridian West's solution

Meridian West used a 'decision grid' approach to identify areas of consensus among ACCA's public sector team about its strategic opportunities, and where gaps in knowledge needed to be filled through a targeted programme of insight gathering among public sector employers.

We then conducted a series of in-depths interviews with leaders of public sector organisations around the world in countries as diverse as Jamaica, Uganda, China, UK, Vietnam, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh. Through these conversations we were able to gather detailed information about the skills gaps facing the finance function in global public sector organisations and how the need for professional accountants is changing. We tested three ACCA propositions and gathered specific feedback on how public sector leaders wanted ACCA to roll-out these ideas in their respective markets.

Meridian West worked collaboratively with ACCA to synthesise employer feedback with insights gained through other sources to provide a comprehensive picture of the potential size of the opportunity for ACCA in the public sector. Our analysis and recommendations were socialised and developed further through an internal workshop that brought together representatives from different functional areas within ACCA, each of whom has some involvement with the public sector.

Following the workshop, ACCA's workstream leader finalised a strategy paper to submit for board-level approval. Meridian West met with the board to provide additional validation and independent guidance on this strategy.

The outcome: A more satisfied employer base for ACCA

ACCA adopted the strategy and used it to make decisions about resource allocation, priority targeting and value proposition development. Meridian West drafted a report summarising the insight gathered that was targeted at public sector employers; this was used by ACCA as part of their campaign for profile raising and to credentialise its expertise.

Meridian West refined proposition statements with tailored messaging that would resonate with



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employers in different markets and this informed the pitch decks developed for external promotion.

In Meridian West's annual tracking study for ACCA, satisfaction among public sector employers has increased by 10 percentage points over the last three years.

The view of ACCA's project manager

"The Meridian West team did very well at understanding our needs, and what the objectives of the project were. They were great at listening and getting straight on with things, helping us to see what could be achieved in a short space of time. We appreciated the flexibility of the team and the professionalism and clarity of their presentations to different audiences within ACCA with different needs."