

Meet Borderless, the platform for streamlined international hiring

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Matthew Bond, CEO and cofounder of Borderless about his Entrepreneur First experience and building a platform to grow the size of potential workforces and streamline wider recruitment.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Borderless is a tech platform for UK care providers to streamline hiring and sponsorship. We make recruitment, immigration, relocation and compliance fast, low-risk and low-cost, helping companies solve persistent hiring challenges.

What was the catalyst for launching the product?

My co-founder Jonathan and I met at Entrepreneur First, Europe's leading startup accelerator. Exploring opportunities, we spoke with a care provider who'd turned down £200K in business in just 48 hours because he did not have staff. This was despite him spending 75% of his time trying to hire. Digging deeper, we found huge problems for employers (50%+ churn, high use of agencies) and candidates (huge fees paid to unethical recruiters, high risk of exploitation). Existing solutions are focussed on shuffling people around within the sector - no-one is trying to grow the size of the workforce itself. The UK is already short of workers, and these shortages are only going to get worse in coming years.

Tell me about the product - what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers, USP and so on?

It's a platform for both employers and candidates, designed to simplify the whole hiring, immigration and sponsorship process. The goals are to automate and eliminate all complicated and tedious tasks, so that both parties aren't burdened with all the red tape, and can do things themselves through the software without needing to use traditional, expensive third parties.

Since inception 8 months ago, we've grown to support 40+ employers (care home groups and domiciliary care companies) and 30,000 candidates. We've done this by building partnerships with industry groups and associations - they've been really receptive to new technology because of the depth of the problem the sector faces, and the lack of good solutions.

Companies use Borderless because we're faster, easier, cheaper and lower risk than either doing it themselves or using traditional recruiters and lawyers. Candidates apply to Borderless because the product gives them visibility with employers, real time feedback - all totally free of charge.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

Given the urgency of the problem, we wanted to get the business going really quickly, so we built the MVP in just a few weeks. This has taken us a surprisingly long way but we need to rebuild from scratch, to lay the foundation for scale. The problems we're tackling have also evolved: we started initially with just the immigration part, but have over time built

more recruitment capabilities based on customer demand. We've also grown the team to 8 people covering sales, engineering, customer success and operations.

What is your favourite thing about being a founder?

The sense of ownership. Ultimately as a founder you're responsible for the whole operation staying on track. I like the intellectual challenge of getting the right people and processes in place to achieve success as a collective team. The constant drive to improve the product to better serve customers is a good forcing function to move quickly.

Which founders or businesses do you see as being the most inspirational?

There are some negatives but I like a lot of Amazon's culture - Day 1 mentality, reversible vs non-reversible decisions. They have many employees who've been with them a long time - being able to provide smart people with growth opportunities & new challenges is really important and something they seem to have nailed.

Which other figures in your life inspire you?

My family have been really important to me - growing up my parents were great role models, finding the right balance of support & encouragement vs stretching and challenging me. My partner has been really supportive of me founding a startup and regularly offers very wise advice. I've also recently become a father and that's been an incredible experience.

What has been your biggest business fail?

The first business I set up at university (an online printing and clothing company) was “successful” in that revenues grew quickly as we scaled across multiple campuses and cities. However, I didn’t spend enough time on people dynamics - misunderstandings lead to disagreements which ultimately lead to the business winding down after a few years. It was a tough but essential learning experience.

What are the things you’re really good at as a leader?

I’m good at working across many different initiatives and projects. I context switch easily and can focus both on the micro and macro elements as needed. Because I’ve worked across both finance and tech and in startups, scale ups and large companies, I can draw on different experiences as appropriate.

Which areas do you need to improve on?

Conflict resolution and having tough conversations. I’m getting better at holding people accountable but am sometimes too lenient. I want to continuously get better at working through people - unblocking them to run as fast as possible is something often on my mind.

What’s in store for the future of the business?

We’re excited about Borderless’ long term potential. Where the business ends up is an open question, given we could lean into any particular module in more detail - one vision is a global healthcare recruitment solution, another is a global immigration layer streamlining movement

across many countries. We're being very customer centric here - learning their problems and building accordingly. For the next year, the focus is on growing strongly within the care sector, and then expanding into others, mostly likely construction and hospitality.

What advice would you give to other founders or future founders?

Focus. On our accelerator program we saw lots of teams focussing on less important things like brand, market research and product tweaking. Yes, these things are important but probably not as critical as having the market validate that you have found a genuine problem, and that your solution is (somewhat) resonating. You can never talk to customers enough!

And finally, a more personal question! We like to ask everyone we interview about their daily routine and the rules they live by. Is it up at 4am for yoga, or something a little more traditional?

I like to start the day spending some quality time with my 18 month old son. It's great to see the world through his eyes, all the things he gets excited about. Given how busy modern life is, it's calming to get totally out of your day-to-day and just experience the moment.

Matthew Bond is CEO and cofounder of *Borderless*.

