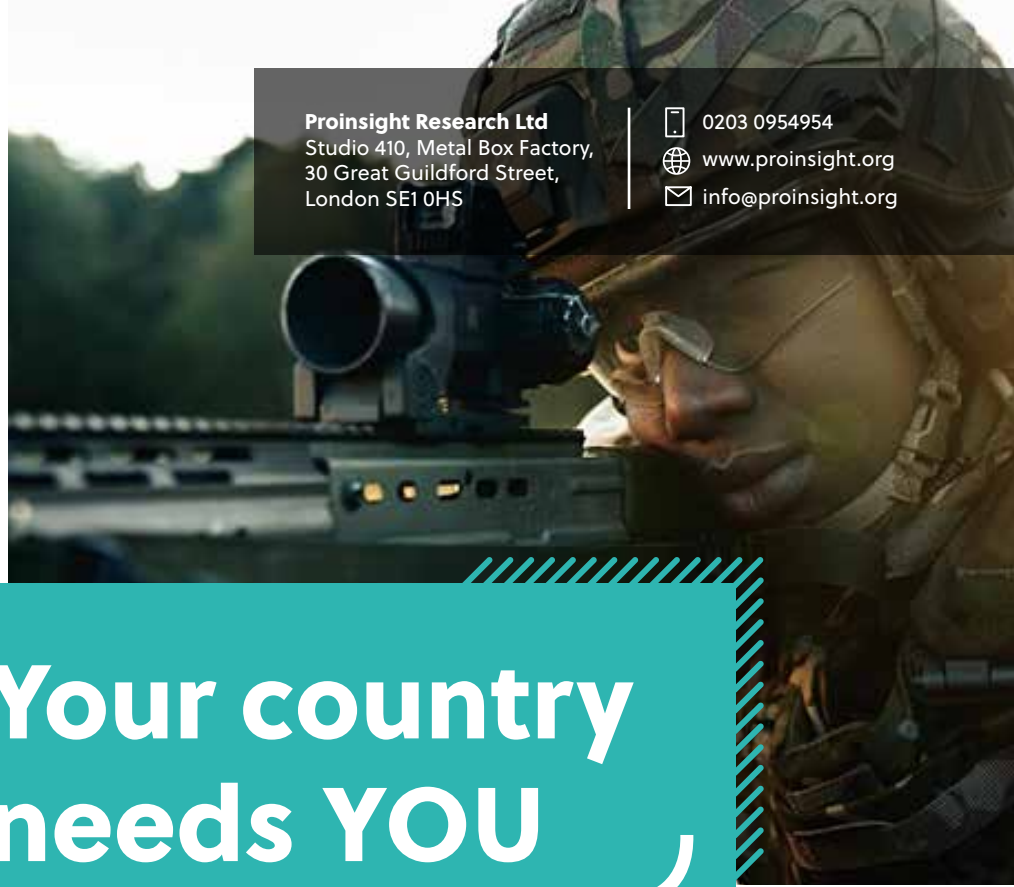




ARMY
BE THE BEST

Case Study



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Your country needs YOU

With its long and complex recruitment process, keeping candidates engaged and on-track has always been a challenge for the British Army – but now, a new collaboration with Proinsight is providing ‘invaluable’ information to help prevent candidates falling by the wayside



“The application process to join the British Army is reputed to be the most complex recruitment journey in Europe,” says Joanna Hay, the Army’s Head of Candidate Insight and Research.

Every year, extensive research is carried out into the recruitment journey, from attitudes and drivers among the target audience to their connection with the advertising campaigns. This research forms the basis of intelligence-led decision-making within the recruitment process, which is managed by Capita in partnership with the Army.

But while mystery shopping was already a contractual requirement between Capita and the Army, it was previously only really seen as a business assurance tool. Hay was keen to “dig deeper” and understand why candidates were becoming disengaged with the recruitment process.

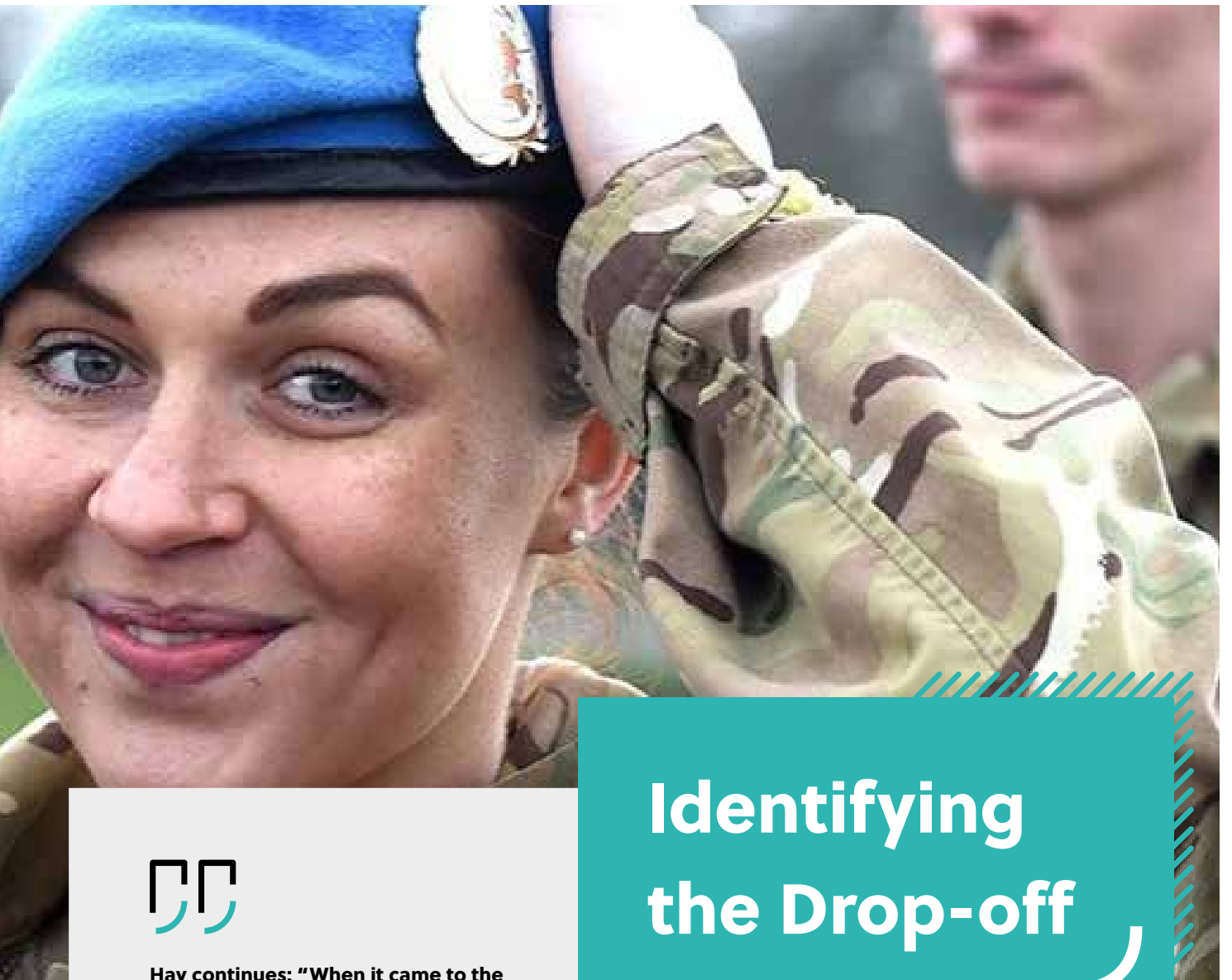
She explains: “Our CEO, Cath Possamai, knew of mystery shopping specialist Proinsight and suggested it might be worth us having a conversation with them. Joining the Army is obviously a very different process from joining a health club, which is where Proinsight’s expertise traditionally lies: ours is not only a more complex process, but there’s no repeat business either. You only join the Army once.

“However, gym membership does at least involve relationships, and when I met Proinsight I was very impressed, not least by its bank of mystery shoppers which it knew it could work with to deliver the required quality of research output.

“We went out to tender on the project, but none of our traditional research agencies could come close to what Proinsight was offering. We took a calculated risk and it has proved to be a brilliant relationship.”

Proinsight™

Mystery shopping your customer experience



Identifying the Drop-off

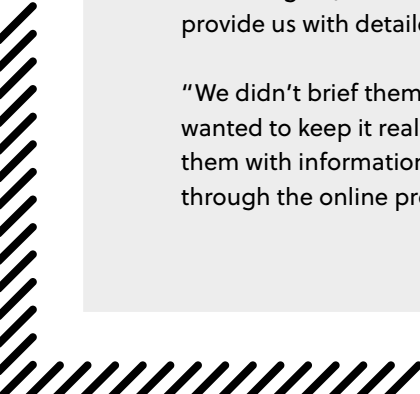


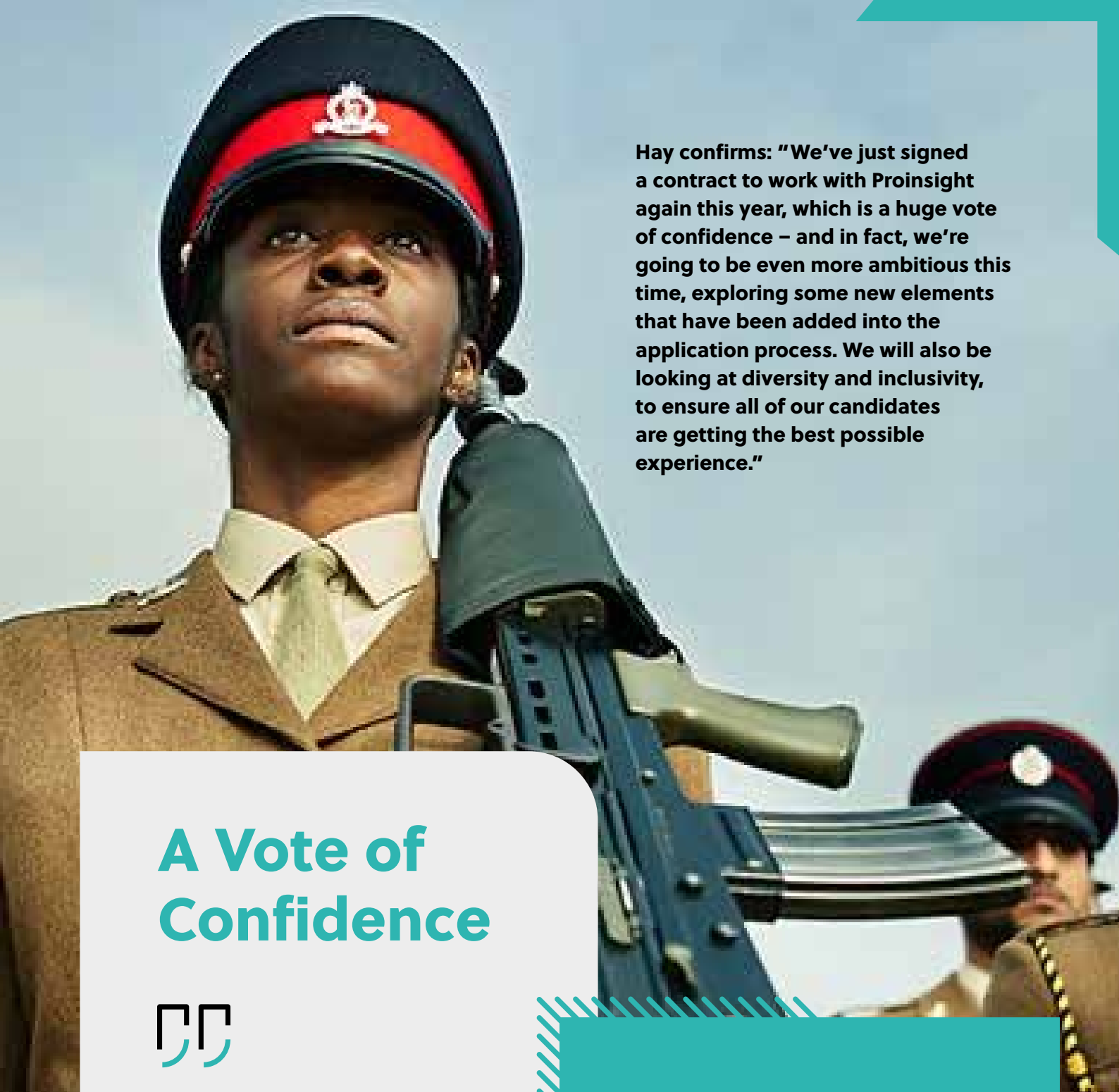
Hay continues: "When it came to the recruitment process, we knew we were losing candidates along the way. What we didn't know was why. This was the understanding I needed and why last year we commissioned Proinsight to mystery shop 50 of the Army Career Centres across the UK.

"There were three areas we wanted to explore: walk-ins, where prospective new joiners dropped in without an appointment; online applications; and face-to-face interviews. To achieve this, Proinsight pulled together a body of what I would call 'intelligent shoppers', all of whom matched the profile the Army would be looking for, and all of whom were able to provide us with detailed feedback.

"We didn't brief them too thoroughly – we wanted to keep it real – but we did provide them with information to help get them through the online process quickly and easily."

What Proinsight's mystery shoppers were then able to provide was, explains Hay, "invaluable". She adds: "As part of its report, Proinsight created one very simple graph which we now use all the time. At various stages of the recruitment process, candidates were asked how they were feeling – more encouraged, about the same, or discouraged – and the use of that one consistent question allowed us to track the recruitment journey. It allowed us to show, incredibly clearly, where the issues lay."





Hay confirms: "We've just signed a contract to work with Proinsight again this year, which is a huge vote of confidence – and in fact, we're going to be even more ambitious this time, exploring some new elements that have been added into the application process. We will also be looking at diversity and inclusivity, to ensure all of our candidates are getting the best possible experience."

A Vote of Confidence



Says Possamai: "We were delighted with Proinsight's rigour of approach and project management during the process, and with the quality of its output and the insight we gained. It has been invaluable in supporting our approach to continuous improvement and commitment to significantly improving our candidate experience. We very much look forward to a long partnership."

She concludes: "We do research we're proud of and I'm known for being tough on my research agencies: I absolutely expect value for money. Proinsight work fast, they're pragmatic, they do what it says on the tin and their research is hugely insightful. They're also honest about where their strengths lie and are happy to work in partnership, allowing us to bring our own strengths to the table to together achieve the best results."