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Recruiting in the new normal: 4 trends to inform your strategy

October 31, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced businesses to rapidly rethink the way they operate — from their business models to team structures and hiring strategies. Social distancing measures have put in-person elements of the hiring process on hold, and for some, this shift is putting additional pressure on an already challenging area.

According to PwC's [Human Resources Technology Survey,](#) 58% of HR leaders say finding, attracting and retaining talent is their biggest challenge today.

Dubbed by Josh Bersin as "The Big Reset", this pandemic presents employers with a unique opportunity to examine their hiring processes.

Leading organisations are now re-thinking their recruitment process and considering how technology can make it more efficient and a better experience for everyone involved.

Here are four trends we're seeing in the market that will help you refine your recruitment strategy.

Trend 1: A shift to remote recruiting

COVID-19 social distancing and lockdown rules have put a temporary hold on face-to-face interviews, and we've been forced to find new ways to recruit talent. Thankfully, we have technology to help and there's a range of video interviewing software and virtual onboarding programs on offer.

But can you simply take your face-to-face recruiting process and put it online? Not unless you want to miss out on securing your choice of talent.

[PwC found](#) nearly half (49%) of job seekers working in in-demand fields like technology say they've turned down an offer because of a bad experience during the hiring process.

Having a strong focus on candidate experience in a virtual recruiting situation is crucial for establishing a connection with your candidate.

Although you're largely relying on technology to recruit, make sure you make the experience human. Don't be tempted to automate the whole experience. Make sure you have plenty of interactive touchpoints so your candidate can get a true sense of what it's like to work for your organisation.

Trend 2: Higher volumes of applications

Although some industries like hospitality, aviation and retail are letting go of workers just to remain afloat, other industries like e-commerce, healthcare and technology are ramping up recruitment efforts to meet increased demand.

These industries are seeing vast numbers of people applying for advertised positions due to record unemployment. And processing these high volumes of applications is causing a backlog of administrative tasks for HR and hiring teams.

Thankfully technology can help ease this burden. 44% of candidates said they're open to using automation and technology options for routine touchpoints and to get information during the recruiting process.

Choose technology that streamlines routine tasks or makes the hiring process easier, not only for your HR team, but for job applicants as well. A good HR solution will also help you identify people with the right skills, allowing you to narrow down your pool of candidates.

Trend 3: Diversity and inclusion is a top priority

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) is a top priority for both organisations and job seekers, with global social justice movements shining a light on the inequalities that still exist today. Showing a true commitment to D&I in your organisation can be a differentiator and a source of competitive advantage.

62% of job seekers said they're more likely to apply for a job where a company is openly committed to improving diversity and inclusion in their workforce. That number jumps to 68% among knowledge workers and 72% among the C-suite.

However, showcasing your commitment to diversity and inclusion to prospective employees goes beyond a single written policy. Having a holistic approach to D&I, from senior leaders to frontline employees, with every individual understanding their role in company culture, is the way organisations are going to stand out to potential employees.

Trend 4: More organisations are hiring from within

The global skills shortage has been well documented over the last few years, and more and more companies are now realising they can't possibly hire all the new skills they need.

The alternative?

Developing the talent they already have.

According to a recent study by KPMG, 66% of executives are prioritising upskilling their people to manage the impact of AI (and related technologies) on the workforce.

This approach to recruiting is not only faster and cheaper, it also builds a strong internal culture that sends a clear message that hard work is rewarded, further boosting your organisation's attractiveness to potential recruits.

A strategic performance management and training program, backed by intuitive technology, is essential for this approach to work. An integrated HR platform will enable you to proactively build succession plans by providing high-performing employees with a clearly defined career path.

This will not only strengthen your internal talent pipeline, it will also help you hit your broader organisational goals.

Time to reset

Companies that want to attract top talent have more than a few challenges on their hands.

However disruptive this pandemic has been, it's given us a chance to hit the "pause" button and re-examine our recruitment processes. Automating and simplifying the recruitment process through an enterprise-wide human resource solution is key. But maintaining the human element and providing a great candidate experience is what will stand you apart in the long run.