



RECRUITING AND INTERVIEWING REMOTELY DURING A PANDEMIC: PROCESS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Recruiting and interviewing remotely will look different without handshakes and in-person meetings, but the fundamentals of speaking with candidates to evaluate if they are a fit for a role will remain the same. The interview process may be remote due to COVID-19, but also to recruit candidates in different geographic locations and to save on travel costs moving forward. Here are some key considerations for a successful remote recruiting process.

Interview Process

Before you begin speaking with candidates, define what your interview process will look like, what questions you will ask, and who will be involved in the interviews. Just like interviews in the office, a candidate may be speaking with HR, the hiring manager, future team members, etc. Coordinate each step of the process, and communicate with everyone involved which steps will be by phone and which will be by video conference so that everyone can prepare accordingly. For example, you may schedule a short phone call as the first step in screening candidates that can help prevent coordinating a lengthy video call for a candidate who is not the right fit for the role. When you first contact the candidate, outline what the interview process is and who will be involved so that they will be better prepared.

New Considerations

When you are recruiting remote candidates, there are some areas to consider that may not be relevant to roles based in an office or physical location. Ask the candidate if they have experience working remotely, how they keep themselves organized, manage their time, stay motivated, etc. Whether it's temporary or permanent, being able to focus and limit distractions will be important while working remotely. Some roles, like customer service representatives, may need a quiet place to work so that clients can hear them and vice versa. Make sure that the role does not require visibility in an office for accountability purposes. Asking questions about a candidate's work style and what they look for in a supervisor can help assess if they are comfortable asking questions to remote team members and if they need close supervision that may not be possible while working remotely.

Representing Your Organization

During an in-person interview, candidates can get a glimpse of your organization's culture, just by interacting with whoever answers the door, seeing the physical space, and observing how people are interacting with each other. In a video or phone interview, the candidate's insight into the culture is just based on interactions with people involved in the interview process and whatever they are able to find online. Be sure to highlight your organization's culture in the interview, and even consider having the candidate speak to a peer to talk about what the work environment is like.

It's also important to discuss how your organization's culture has been affected by COVID-19. You may have had a social culture in the office that may have changed if your workforce is now remote. Discuss with the candidate how your workforce communicates remotely, as well as outline expectations of availability, response time, etc. Also, talk about what you've done to help employees during this time, like virtual social events, flexible schedules, etc. Showing that you have a strong culture, even through a crisis, will be an important factor in attracting and retaining remote candidates.