



# MOVING FORWARD POST COVID WITH BALANCED DIGITAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

By Joe O'Connor, CEO

# COVID-19 HAS CHANGED NEARLY EVERY ELEMENT OF WORK AND HOME LIFE AS WE KNOW IT.

While HR and talent attraction teams have been scrambling to refocus and restrategize recruitment techniques during an entirely new landscape, it remains unclear how this will affect hiring going forward as the world begins to open back up.

Recruiting heavily relies on face-to-face interactions, as do the tools that are an essential part of the hiring process. Recruiting systems, Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) and talent management systems were designed for one-on-one personal interactions, not virtual ones.

At least for the near future, virtual and digital strategies must move to the forefront of the recruitment process. We have outlined some tools, tips and strategies that HR professionals and recruiters should consider as we all make this pivot together.

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## IDENTIFY YOUR NEW TALENT POOL

**While some industries have been greatly impacted by COVID-19, like hospitality and travel, others are booming, like supermarkets and healthcare.**

Some companies have identified a new workforce, replacing full-time workers with part-time or gig workers, or have shifted brick-and-mortar businesses to online, requiring delivery personnel and customer service representatives. Conversely, many companies have decided to put a freeze on external hiring and look within to repurpose current employees with new responsibilities and positions.

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An important first step, if you haven't done so already, is to reassess and reorganize your talent needs, so you are effectively set up to know where to find them. While this may include adding more fuel to tried-and-true methods like job boards, it may also present an opportunity to explore social media recruitment or maximize your careers page, which has the potential for exponential exposure at a lower cost-per-acquisition.



# EMPLOY DIGITAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Reaching your new talent pool will likely require additional tools, outreach strategies and marketing efforts, especially if you haven't recruited for certain types of positions previously. Additionally, your budget may have been reduced, as many companies are pulling back on national advertising or even more specific tools you rely on, like job boards.

Digital and social media recruitment should now be the main hiring tools you use to attract job seekers. If you haven't done so before, consider running digital ads and promoted posts on social media to secure targeted exposure for specific positions. Facebook and Instagram are relatively affordable digital advertising outlets where you can zero in on a target demographic. LinkedIn also remains an essential outlet, but in addition to their job board section, you should also focus attention on building a following for your company page by posting open positions and brand building content.

*(Note: your marketing department may be a great resource for already created branded content you can use to populate various social platforms. We dive into partnering with marketing more below).*

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As recruitment becomes more digital and naturally, more visual, it is important to make sure your job posts, content and any assets are appropriate for social sharing and are mobile-friendly. Consider

shortening job descriptions or including a short summary of the position when you share a post. Keeping information short, to-the-point and easily viewable and accessible via mobile is important for efficacy across digital platforms.

And lastly, video interviews will most likely become the norm as stay-at-home and social distancing orders continue to evolve. Video interviews can be effective when executed strategically, and in fact, have shown to increase productivity due to the flexible nature in scheduling. Read more about strategies for effective video



## TAP INTO YOUR MARKETING DEPARTMENT

Collaborate with your PR and marketing team to ensure any messaging posted about hiring during COVID-19 is consistent with your overall branding. It is likely that they have already prepared content for communicating important company messages and reaction to this crisis for the public, so establishing a consistent voice is essential for a unified front.

Additionally, they will be the team to create visual content that can support your digital recruitment efforts. For instance:

- Have your President or CEO provide a short message to potential hires about why your company is a great place to work or how you are pivoting during COVID-19.
- Highlight staff or departments that allows the candidate to hear directly from their potential colleagues.
- Design branded, visually engaging posts to accompany job post information.
- Partner with HR to create video tutorials and creative assets for onboarding.



# RETHINK VIRTUAL ONBOARDING

Once you've hired the candidate, the onboarding process will look much different than in the past. A major component of the onboarding process is the ability to connect with management and colleagues, developing relationships and an effective work-rhythm. With the likelihood that your new hire will start his or her first day from home, different strategies need to be put into place to help the candidate meld with the team and responsibilities as seamlessly as possible. While it will take some creativity and extra effort, the following ideas may assist with virtual onboarding:

- If possible, work with your marketing department to create a virtual tour of your office, even if they won't be working there in the near future. This will still give them an insight into your culture, and ideally get them excited to work in the office when stay-at-home orders start to loosen.
- Schedule regular check-ins. Consider scheduling weekly video check-ins with the new hire to make sure they are feeling comfortable and getting situated in their new role. While this typically wouldn't be needed during regular circumstances, these unprecedented circumstances may call for more touchpoints.
- Schedule a virtual meet-the-team, and if possible, a short video call with the company owner. Facilitating the first introductions with your new hire's team can help alleviate any awkwardness during this virtual session. Additionally, having your owner or CEO welcome your new employee to the company during this time can go a long way at establishing a strong rapport.
- Make sure teams are allowing for ample time when it comes to training. Work with managers and your C-Suite and encourage them to be open to extended training times given the work environment.

Despite the sudden shift in how all of us work from home, try to view these forced changes as a way to test how virtual and digital elements can continue to play a role in your recruiting efforts, beyond COVID-19. Maybe you have always been interested in exploring a work from home model or virtual interviews but were never able to make the time or dedicate resources to test out these methods. This huge shift in working, interviewing and hiring (or at least elements of it), may be the status quo for the foreseeable future, and continuing to refine and refocus your efforts can continue to prove fruitful.

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