



A GUIDE TO REMOTE RECRUITING

For managers and in-house recruiters.

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REMOTE RECRUITING

INTRODUCTION



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Working from home is set to continue for the foreseeable future and many professionals will choose to transition permanently to this way of working. We assumed a temporary change to our working lives when lockdown began in March 2020, but the reality looks somewhat different.

We adapted to remote working, video meetings and new software solutions, and we'll adapt to conducting job interviews from home too.

The recruitment landscape has changed but the fundamentals for employers remain the same:

- Source candidates who you want to work in your business.
- Engage these professionals and determine whether they want to work with you.
- Offer employment that is fairly incentivised, rewarding and contributes to retention.

Be specific and honest when writing your job specification.



COVID-19 has robbed us of the chance to make a good first impression, develop rapport and build relationships through personal, face-to-face interaction. On the other hand, with little or no requirement to work from an office location according to fixed hours, workers who were previously marginalised could access new career opportunities.

To solve the social distancing issues, employers are using technology to complement a good candidate experience; offer a flexible, scalable process and create efficiencies. But we mustn't forget that recruitment is a people industry and it is crucial that the human aspect of resourcing is not lost through the adoption of tech. There are 3 overarching aspects to this:

Organisation Be crystal clear on your culture and values, ensure job descriptions accurately reflect actual job content and don't mislead applicants through your career marketing.

Technology Introduce consistency to the technology deployed across the recruiting and onboarding process to enhance familiarity, but also to provide a streamlined experience.

Social Be human, clear and concise in your communications. Introduce human interaction early in the process and keep in regular contact with candidates, always cognisant that you are dealing with people at a time of heightened anxiety.

Remote resourcing is not a new concept, but it is unfamiliar to many employers. In this document you'll find guidance on the key considerations for successful sourcing, screening, assessing and onboarding candidates in a remote recruiting world.

For more information don't hesitate to get in touch.

SOURCE & ATTRACT

There is not a one-size fits all model for recruitment. How you source and attract applicants to your job vacancies will depend on a variety of factors including your industry, role type, network, vacancy volume, in-house resources and budget.

Recruitment is time intensive and it's easy to make expensive mistakes. Whether you are recruiting remotely or in person, begin your recruitment campaign with some solid planning.

Why?

Consider carefully why you need to add headcount to your business, this will be incredibly helpful when it comes to writing the job description.

What?

What work do you need to get done?
What is the real job?

You'll never hire the right person if you can't accurately describe the job.

Be specific and honest when writing your job specification as this is the information that candidates will use to decide whether they should apply for the role. It is also what you'll refer back to throughout the selection process. You'll never hire the right person if you can't accurately describe the job.

Save yourself dozens of questions about salary, benefits and company culture by including this information in the job

specification and be very clear about the nature of the remote working too, including the hours of work, flexible working pattern and whether any time is required to be spent in an office environment.

Who?

Think about what success looks like in your organisation and the type of person your business needs. Make it clear who should apply based on the behaviour traits, skills and experience you are looking for.

Where?

Advertise where your target candidates are. There's a myriad of online resources available to employers and job seekers, too many to mention but an overview includes:

- Job boards
- Job board aggregators
- Freelance & temp labour sites
- Graduate sites
- Facebook Jobs
- LinkedIn
- Google for Jobs
- Social media
- Recruitment agencies
- Industry specific job sites



How?

How you promote your organisation matters, even in a candidate rich market because every employer wants to hire the best people.

Consider how you compare to your competitors and how appealing your business looks online – one of the first things a job seeker will do is “Google” you.

Make it clear how candidates can apply for your job, what they should expect from your hiring process and the compliance obligations.

This visibility is the best way to manage expectations and reduces the amount of time you have to spend answering the same questions.

Make it clear how candidates can apply for your job.

Recruiters can empathise with the work from home job seeker, and this can facilitate much better communication. And if you’ve downsized your team, a recruitment agency will enable you to upskill quickly without adding fixed costs and internal headcount.

SCREEN & ASSESS

Candidate screening is a nuanced process that takes careful consideration. It's important that your process is stringent, efficient and leads to a really good hire for your business.

Higher unemployment increases applicant volume. High volume recruitment can lead to a poor, de-humanising experience for candidates with bad communication negatively impacting your employer brand.

You're no longer seeking to recruit based on skills and culture fit alone. You also need to hire an employee who copes well working from home, remember you are hiring a remote worker.

Avoid unconscious bias:

- Irrespective of current employment status, quality candidates are..... quality candidates.
- Don't select the mirror image of yourself, or the type of person you "like". Focus on skills, experience, psychometric results, endorsements, references and crucially, evidence of performance.
- Selection criteria such as university attended should be used with caution as it does not dictate ability.
- Workers no longer need to be within daily commuting distance of the office. Disabled people are able to work from home. Carers and those seeking part-time or flexible working are able to work from home (we meant to repeat ourselves).

A good candidate experience is vital. With review sites from Glassdoor to Google there are many ways for applicants to share a poor screening and assessment experience. Cumulatively, it negatively impacts your employer brand and may even dissuade a great candidate from applying. Improve the candidate screening process by:

- Introducing person to person communication as early as you can. Does the candidate really understand the job they've applied for or have they taken a "spray and pray" approach to their job hunt?
- Respond quickly and keep in touch at every stage of the application process, set realistic timelines and stick to them!
- Provide feedback to all applicants, sharing the reasons for decisions that result in elimination from the assessment process.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been a massive disruptor and it is used throughout the hiring process in targeted advertising and candidate ranking (eg LinkedIn Recruiter); keyword algorithms for profile screening and skills matching; gamification, skills tests and chatbot conversations. AI based tools can drastically cut down the selection time (reportedly used by 67% of hiring managers surveyed by LinkedIn) but they do so at the cost of human interaction and automated decision bias.

One-Way Interviews

One-way interviews have grown in popularity as the first step for screening candidates. It's a simple concept that requires applicants video record their answers to pre-scripted interview questions. This is very convenient for hiring managers as the videos can be viewed at any time and can be shared with line managers and team members.

Tools such as [Willo](#) make the one-way interview a relatively intuitive process. Nonetheless, it does involve asking the applicant to engage with potentially unfamiliar technology and therefore, requires support and encouragement to maximise engagement.

Choose software that provides candidates with a review and re-record option and remember, the recording is personal information and must be treated in accordance with GDPR principles.

Psychometric Assessment

There is much more to consider than skills and experience if you want to make a good hiring decision.

Psychometric assessment provides insight to candidate behaviour and our preferred tool is [Personal Profile Analysis](#).



Fast, convenient and effective, only 24 questions. Based on Marston's DISC theory.



Completed in under 8 minutes the online assessment can be taken anywhere.



Access accurate insight into how the applicant will behave at work.

Completed online, the assessment results are immediately available and evaluate strengths, motivations, soft skills, team fit and reaction under pressure.

This assessment can reinvent the interview process because it provides targeted, individual guidance to the interviewer, generating questions specific to the candidate.

Particularly important for remote working roles the analysis identifies the best way to manage, and communicate with the candidate based on their preferred working style.

Human Relationships

Technology has an invaluable role to play in good recruitment, but only if it is deployed correctly by the people using it. As part of your recruitment planning, take into account the candidate network and knowledge of your in-house recruiter or preferred agency supplier.



INTERVIEW

One thing for sure is that COVID-19 forced us to get more comfortable with video communication and it is now a crucial element in the remote recruiting experience, building rapport and enabling deeper information gathering.

In the previous section, one-way interviews were highlighted as a screening resource. In this section we'll focus on the two-way video conversation between recruiter and applicant.

We may be acquainted with forming connections online, but it comes much more intuitively to Gen Z than any demographic before them. From [Milkround](#) research, online communications have increased by just 11% during the COVID-19 pandemic for Gen Z, whereas it increased by 78% for Baby Boomers.

Depending where you're at on the digital dexterity scale your candidates may be more comfortable and adept at communicating on a video channel than you are.

Training

From social apps, Facetime and Whatsapp, to business collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams or bespoke candidate interview software like **Odoro** or **Hinterview**, there's a plethora of tools. When the video is recorded, it's important that the candidate understands and agrees to how their personal data is processed and retained.

Whichever tool you adopt, give every user in your business time to get accustomed to it, they shouldn't be taking interviews with no idea of how the tool works.

Set-Up

Whether you are recruiting from home, or you have returned to work, there are some basic steps to ensure your set-up is good to go:

- Good internet connection.
- Keep the background as simple as possible so as not to be distracting. The virtual background in Zoom may be a fun feature but it can often make the speaker's head look separated from their body!
- Choose a quiet room where you won't be disturbed, or use a good headset that minimises noise transmission.
- Don't sit in the dark! Light on your face is most flattering, so sitting in front of a window is ideal.
- Follow the dress code that reflects your company culture, it's back to our point about making a good impression. You need to look like you've bothered to get ready too.
- Look directly at the camera and ensure it is positioned so that the applicant can see all of your face clearly, not just up your nose!

- We haven't tried it but if you are using Zoom you might enjoy the touch-up function (Settings – Meetings – Touchup).
- Get yourself comfortable, practice makes perfect and, record yourself. The play-back will show you what needs to be fixed.
- Switch off all other devices so you are not distracted by pinging notifications or calls.
- Don't be on time, be early.

Do Your Homework

One of our biggest bug-bears is the lack of interview diligence shown by some interviewers. You shouldn't just "wing it". Now is a great opportunity to review your approach to interview preparation.

Carefully review the job description against the candidate profiles. Refresh your memory by re-watching the one-way videos and examine the psychometric assessment reports.

Refresh your memory by re-watching the one-way videos and psychometric assessment reports.

Follow an outline that includes your introduction, prepared questions and close, but don't let it restrict you from relevant tangents in the conversation.

Take an interest in the candidate's video background. They're probably in their home too and there may be points of interest or cues that are useful icebreakers or conversation starters.

There's no reason to change the format of your usual interview protocol if it focuses on finding out about the person behind the CV profile.

For guidance on crafting the best behaviour fit interview questions check out our blog post on the **STAR Interview Process** 



Reiterate your company's vision, values and culture, set expectations around workload, performance management and accountability.

Focus your questions on determining culture and behaviour fit, investigating performance statements made in the CV, as well as other important criteria for our current times such as adaptability, resilience and emotional intelligence.

Presentation

Throughout the recruitment process, it's not just the employer trying to work out if the candidate is suitable – it works both ways. In this environment, you are the company ambassador and it is important that you make eye contact, smile, show personality and talk clearly. Be welcoming and encouraging.

You may interview applicants who are very concerned about job security. Demonstrate the longevity of the position, discuss team qualities and focus on what makes your business resilient.

Find the balance between speaking and listening and be really aware of your facial expressions. Oh, and remember, the mute button only turns audio off, it doesn't prevent a candidate from reading your lips.

Encourage the candidate to ask questions on points of interest and clarifications.

The mute button only turns audio off, it doesn't prevent a candidate from reading your lips.

A word of caution, while you have a great set-up facilitated by employer sourced tech, it may not be the case for your candidate and this may impair their ability to shine during the video interview.

JOB OFFER & BENEFITS

Organisations spend significant amounts of time and money designing aspirational work environments and benefits packages that signal they are “great places” to work. The business with an “innovation zone” of bean bags and a ping pong table must be a fun place to work, right?

In reality, many perks and benefits that are attractive during the recruitment process cease to have retaining power. And the ping pong table, breakfast buffet or free coffee bar lose their allure entirely in a world incentivised to stay at home.

If you enable people to work in a way that suits them you are well on your way to eradicating gimmicks and are far more likely to improve employee satisfaction and retention.

If you enable people to work in a way that suits them you are well on your way to eradicating gimmicks.

The irony of COVID-19 is that it has accelerated the move towards giving people the opportunity to work in the way that suits them as remote working brings greater flexibility. Flexible working patterns have been the no. 1 request of our candidates for as long as we can remember.

A completely different set of benefits become attractive such as discounted rates with furniture retailers; online learning and grocery vouchers.



Download
our annual
Salary Guide
for role specific
pay ranges.

When your job offer is accepted, it's the trigger to begin the onboarding and integration process. Count back from the intended start date and clearly communicate when hardware, team tools and stationery will arrive, and when passwords and access to the intranet, company handbook and training will be enabled.

ONBOARD & INTEGRATE

Onboarding is the process of welcoming, integrating and training a new worker. It's vital because it contributes significantly to productivity, retention and happiness.

As you start your planning, think about:

- What makes your business a great place to work and how are you going to ensure it isn't lost when your team is scattered remotely?
- When does onboarding start?
- How long will it last?
- Who should be involved?
- What information must be disseminated and how?
- What goals should be set?
- How are you going to gather feedback?

Policies & Procedures

Not the most exciting thing in the world but it is critical to provide documented guidance to remote workers. As a minimum provide a glossary of terms for your company specific language; key point of contact information; how to access technical help desks and a workflow that clearly identifies each stage of the onboarding process. To help this new person succeed you have to provide them with the tools and support.

Expectation Setting & Schedule

Day 1 is all about reinforcing the duties and responsibilities that were outlined during the recruitment process and discussing how performance is measured. Discuss expectations for the first weeks and months.

Set longer-term objectives and short-term goals. By setting "quick wins" for 3 months and 6 months you enable the employee to make an impact, know their purpose and build confidence in their new environment.

Simple kindnesses will be so appreciated at this time – you probably cannot ask often enough:

"Are you OK?"

"Do you have what you need?"

"Do you know what you are doing?"

Performance updates and development discussions should happen regularly, every 3 months or so, throughout the first 12 months.

Meeting The Team

If it is possible, have a safe, socially distanced 1:1 meeting in person. But if not, video meetings facilitate individual introductions and larger team gatherings. Mix up the introductions with a combination of more formal sessions and informal group chat.

The initial days and weeks can be when a new start feels most anxious. In our blog on making a [new start feel welcome](#) we shared the experience of Andrew Buchan. Making someone feel welcome doesn't just happen by accident, it takes planning and co-ordination to ensure all the right people are included and that people play to their strengths. For example, choose someone who is a great storyteller to share the culture; ensure the person who can explain the social side of the business is an active participant themselves.

Within the team, everyone should understand the role of the new start, what they are accountable for and their decision-making authority.

Increase engagement through regular touchpoints. The first few days will involve concentrated time with the hiring manager, line manager and immediate team, but over the coming weeks identify people the new employee can support or be supported by. For example, a mentor, a tech buddy, or a peer – by connecting on a 1:1 basis it's another opportunity to learn or ask for guidance.

We love the idea from [memory.ai](#) that every member of staff creates a personal video introduction which is stored in a video library and is accessible to everyone, anytime.

Intentional Communication & Behaviour

The biggest issues remote workers struggle with are [loneliness](#), [collaboration](#) and [communication](#).

When people work in the same place, a lot of meaningful communication happens "on the hoof" or incidentally. Building relationships remotely takes conscious, continual effort.

A really effective way to do this is through psychometric analysis, which you probably used during the recruitment process. Dig out these reports and discover what motivates your new start, the behaviours to watch out for if things aren't going so well and the type of communication that they need to thrive.

Training

Training will be an ongoing process but Week 1 is a concentrated learning period. Ultimately, training will depend on the role and the tools that are used to perform the job, nevertheless, even familiar tools and tech will require some explanation of how they are deployed in your business and knowing how to use all the relevant communication channels will be invaluable.

Feedback

Ask for feedback. It's really important to know if your new employee has everything they need to do their job (believe it or not they may not like to tell you if you don't ask). Their feedback will help you improve the remote onboarding process for others and deal quickly with niggles that could lead to bigger problems. And if you do decide to perform a more formal survey, focus on job satisfaction and align that with the remote worker's performance.

Surprises

We all appreciate being appreciated. Highlighting work well done and success in the early weeks and months shows that you value this person and their contributions. This is particularly important for remote workers where peer recognition and support may be harder to attain.

Measurement

Like most things in business, if you want to manage it you have to measure it. While you'll recognise operational improvements day to day, it is important to harness the ongoing feedback from remote workers on the effectiveness of home working, remote people management and communication, as well as, in the months to come, your attrition rate.

Recruitment
Executive Selection
Market Mapping
Psychometric Assessment
Salary Benchmarking

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