



SPECIALIST PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT
A GUIDE TO REMOTE HIRING

A guide to remote hiring

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the way all professionals work, businesses around the globe have had to rethink their approach to hiring, with many implementing remote hiring processes to attract talent into their organisation. Remote hiring isn't a completely new concept, but it has evolved, with the majority of the working world forced into a situation which has rapidly become the new norm. So, how do you strike the right balance of attracting, interviewing and building relationships with candidates that you've never met?

Experts at Robert Walters have devised a guide on how to hire remotely whilst also maintaining a positive candidate experience and enhancing your employer brand.

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What are the challenges of remote hiring?

The hiring process should be handled with care under normal circumstances and creating the right connections with candidates, as well as assessing their cultural fit and technical capability, are key to making the right hiring decisions. So, what are the challenges when managing the candidate experience journey with your brand remotely?

Attracting the right talent from afar

Targeting the right talent pool isn't a new dilemma, but it's key to setting the tone for the entire hiring process. In this guide we outline how you can tackle your sourcing strategy from the moment you get the go ahead to hire, to ensure you attract relevant talent, when hiring remotely.

Building a shortlist that you believe in with the support of technology

In this guide we highlight how technology can support you to create a shortlist of candidates that you are confident with.

Hosting an interview from a home-based office

Poor connectivity, background distractions and a wobbly camera are a few factors that can lead to a poor online interview experience. Our experts have provided some tips on how to 'avoid the awkward' in a live online interview.

Making a hiring decision without the physical handshake

Creating the right connection with a candidate, as well as assessing their cultural fit and technical capability, is key to making the right hiring decision. But it is important that you feel confident when making an offer to a candidate that you've never met face to face.

Onboarding

Your new hire is geared up to start, but what will their first week look like? Creating a feeling of an inclusive culture and being part of a team is tricky when doing it remotely, but providing a structure is crucial to ensure a smooth onboarding process.

96%

of candidates said that cultural fit is an important factor when weighing up career opportunities



The remote hiring process



1

VIRTUAL BRIEFING
AND DEVELOPMENT



2

CANDIDATE SOURCING USING
ONLINE ADVERTISING SOLUTION,
CLOUD DATABASE AND REFERRALS



3

VIDEO
INTERVIEWING
AND SELECTION



4

FINAL SELECTION



5

VIRTUAL POST
PLACEMENT SUPPORT
AND ONBOARDING

How to manage the remote hiring process

Create a job advert that sells

Having a quality, well-written job advert is an incredibly important part of sourcing your new hire. You must always consider what will motivate the applicant to click the 'apply here' button. A job description should not only make the role stand out but should also be effective in communicating the function and responsibility of the role.

- Start with an engaging introduction to sell the position
- Follow with a clear outline of the responsibilities of the role, written in a language that speaks directly to your ideal candidate
- Finally, tell your company story along with any employee perks available. Now more than ever, candidates are searching for roles that offer non-monetary benefits and 69% of candidates are more likely to apply for a role at a company that is dedicated to managing their employer brand, so telling your company story has never been more important.

Focus your sourcing strategy

Due to the uncertainty created by COVID-19, sourcing quality candidates may become increasingly difficult. If a person has a full-time contract with their current employer, their willingness to change roles is likely to be significantly lower as most candidates value job security. You should, therefore, take a proactive approach and close the loop on all open communication with your current active candidates. This will help build trust and candidates are more likely to remember you in the future.

Partnering with a recruitment firm can bring a wealth of industry knowledge and market insight to your hiring process. A professional recruitment consultant will have established talent pools, and be able to access high quality, passive candidates who may be more selective or less willing to respond to traditional job adverts.

Finally, don't forget that right now, people are staying at home on their computers. With cleverly targeted ads, you can get their attention. Robert Walters offer an online advertising strategy to promote your recruitment campaign across a variety of job boards. Advertisements can be co-branded as a more powerful attraction tool to leverage off both brands' reach.

Screen and shortlist candidates appropriately

Screening is an essential part of any successful recruitment process and all interested candidates should be thoroughly screened to ascertain their suitability, interest level and alignment to your organisation's core values.

In candidate-short markets and locations where the exact skill set required might not be readily on offer, a more nuanced screening process, based on hiring for potential, should be adopted. However, as more and more professionals potentially find themselves without work there is likely to be a significant increase in the number of applications you receive for each role you are advertising. In this instance, you may wish to use pioneering AI chatbot technology, which can rank applicants on their knowledge, skills and experience helping to identify the best applicants in the shortest time frames.

Utilise video interviewing tools

Even though employers are currently unable to complete interviews face-to-face, it doesn't mean an interview can't take place. Most companies have to access digital tools to help with remote hiring, such as Skype and SparkHire, and can host interviews from the comfort of their own homes. Always provide login details to the candidate in advance and make sure you are familiar with the digital tools you are using to avoid any technical issues. Having a fluid conversation is even more important when an interview is being conducted via video as it will make the candidate feel at ease. Finally, as well as selling your company benefits,

describe your current remote working situation whilst being transparent about expectations from employees that are working remotely.

Keep candidates up to date

No candidate wants to feel like they're being ignored by a potential employer or that their application has disappeared into a black hole, so communication is key throughout the hiring process. Although there are plenty of application tracking services available, keeping candidates well-informed doesn't necessarily need to depend on the latest technology. Whilst some larger employers will prefer a branded candidate portal with real-time status data, for other companies, a simple call, email or text message with feedback, next steps and timeframes can work just as well.

Make the right hiring decision

Even though the interview is completed remotely, it should be structured in a way that leaves you feeling confident in which candidate is right for your organisation. Using the right tech in the right capacity before the interview (video profiles) will support this, but don't be afraid to be creative and challenge the candidate so that you can truly understand how they think.

Don't keep candidates waiting

A common mistake made when recruiting new employees is to take too long to decide on the preferred candidate. In the current environment, employers should be reacting quickly to hiring and although it may depend on how many candidates are at the final interview stage, a decision should be made, and the successful candidate informed within two to four days. It's important to move fast to avoid losing out on top talent and ensure your preferred candidate feels valued.

Don't underestimate the importance of remote onboarding

Once you have made the hire, don't forget the importance of your onboarding process. Now more than ever, employers need to ensure a smooth transition for their hires and get them up and running in the job as quickly and effectively as possible. As much as possible, try to ensure your onboarding process is completed digitally (i.e. creating and e-signing of the contract via DocuSign). Share reading lists prior to your new employee start date so that they feel educated and ready to start on day one.

Finally, and most importantly, although this is likely to be a mostly digitised process, there is always an element of hand holding needed. Send a friendly welcome video prior to the start date, from a HR representative and/or their manager. Once the employee has started their role, schedule a welcome meeting (via tools such as Zoom or Skype) with their team members as well as with any mentors they may have. This will create a sense of familiarity and belonging from day one, which is incredibly important when not able to meet in person. Scheduling regular virtual meetings and providing ongoing support will be paramount to maximising the efficiency of your newest hire.

69%
of candidates are more likely to apply for a role at a company that is dedicated to managing their employer brand

Using tech to facilitate the remote hiring process



The remote hiring process provides you with an opportunity to present your employer brand in an engaging way and if managed effectively will create a positive impact on your prospective employees.

Whilst face to face contact is almost always the preference, right now it isn't possible, and tech is the great enabler in supporting a smooth remote hiring process in the absence of the face to face interview. To get the best results tech platforms should be used in conjunction with communication and conversation, not in isolation.

Stage One: Candidate attraction

As well as outlining key roles and responsibilities in a written job advert, video advertising is a great way to elevate your brand and reach a wider audience when attracting talent remotely.

Be sure to showcase the benefits of working at your organisation, job development opportunities and any requirements of the role so that applicants can decide if it is right for them. Use video to engage your audience and cut through the noise on job boards and social platforms. Even if you don't have a dedicated video platform within your tech stack, you can film on a mobile phone or laptop. Make sure it is positioned at eye height, on a level surface and wear something comfortable but professional.

196%

Videos can receive up to 196% more engagement than text-based adverts

Stage Two: Digital CV profiles

Using digital profiles will help you to understand whether a candidate has the right technical skills and cultural fit to join your team and your organisation.

Video interview and profiling tools enable you to arrange a set of questions that are tailored to your organisation, as well as protecting the privacy of candidate and bringing their CV, career history and personality to life. In our experience, employers have been so assured about candidates from video CV profiles, that immediate hiring decisions have been made off the back of viewing them.

If your organisation doesn't already have access to a tool like this, there are a few to choose from in the market. We recommend partnering with a platform that enables you to tailor questions to suit your employer brand, allows candidates to re-record their answers and has robust privacy and security processes. Alternatively, you can partner with a recruitment consultancy that is already equipped with the technology to facilitate this part of the process on your behalf.

Stage Three: Live Interviews

If you do progress candidates to the interview stage, then using tools such as Zoom, Skype or Microsoft Teams is a great way to create a virtual meeting experience without the physical face-to-face contact.

Having a video call with someone you haven't met before, coupled with potential tech issues, means you could run into some awkward silences. The best way to tackle them is to be prepared for them and use them as an opportunity to put your potential employee at ease.

Encourage the person you are interviewing to test their tech a few minutes before you have your meeting to avoid any potential issues.

Be creative. Every candidate will be prepared for commonplace interview questions and whilst these should still be included, by asking questions in a creative way you will be able to truly understand how a person thinks and ensure that you leave the interview feeling confident about whether the candidate is the right person to join your team.

Building your business

During this uncertain time, businesses have had to pivot to face unexpected workload and critical skills requirements. Businesses are pro-actively embracing remote hiring tactics to continue to build their teams, and with great success. If remote hiring is not something that you're familiar with, then don't fear it. By maintaining momentum with appropriate hires and leveraging the right tools, you can ensure that you identify, interview and onboard your new recruits in an effective way to build your teams and strengthen your business for the future.

Contact us

Adapting to an unexpected working climate doesn't come without its challenges, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Robert Walters team for help and advice on implementing remote hiring.

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