Enhancing the candidate experience when recruiting

By Rebekah Hinds

Recruitment is the positive process of actively seeking out and hiring candidates for a specific position or job. This includes the entire hiring process, from inception to the individual recruit's integration into the company. Companies that want to grow steadily understand that they can only do so if they have the right mix of talent, which is why recruitment is vital.

Even though the recruitment process is vital, it is often described as a tedious and nerve-racking experience for both the recruiter and the candidate. This article highlights some challenges and provides solutions for some of the major concerns of both parties. It will dive into practices that have become "new norms" but are negatively affecting both recruiters and candidates.

Challenge: Job requirements

It is the recruiter's objective to source the best candidates for their organisation. However, some recruiters have unrealistic expectations for potential employees.

Overly complicated and convoluted job requirements discourage many candidates during the hiring process and hinder the selection of the right people.

Solution: Focus on the core and relevant needs

A job advertisement is the first window to your company's culture, a platform where you can demonstrate your organisation's most positive credentials that will appeal to a wide range of potential recruits.

Focus on the core and relevant needs required for the job and avoid highlighting tasks that are not essential functions. An effective job posting should be clear and concise to appear attractive. This will boost your response quality, and help you get that much closer to finding the ideal candidate.

Challenge: Setting expectations

It is important for recruiters to communicate effectively during the job interview process. (Internet image)

During the interview process, it is important to indicate the timeline of events. Failure to explain the next steps to potential candidates can cause frustration and a negative perception of the organisation. It can also force them to choose your competitors who were more effective in their communication during the hiring process.

Solution: Communicating effectively

Providing clear communication and indicating the timelines of the hiring process can greatly aid in improving the recruitment experience for both parties. When a candidate applies, indicate when they should expect to hear from you. Inform them of how many interviews they may go through, what each round entails, and how long it will take for the hiring team to decide. Candidates applying to your company are potentially new employees and should be treated as such until that is no longer true. Most importantly, be clear and transparent when discussing your planned start date for the position.

Employers, improving how you communicate with candidates throughout the hiring process can greatly impact the candidate experience – which, in turn, will help you attract even better candidates to your company.

Challenge: Ghosting candidates

The ghosting of candidates by hiring managers and recruiters has become all too familiar in today's virtual world of talent acquisition and recruiting. Gone are the days of formal rejection letters, emails, and phone calls.

Ghosting occurs when a recruiter, or hiring manager, stops responding to email messages, fails to appear for an interview, or disappears during any stage of the hiring process.

The practice of ignoring a candidate seeking employment is not only discourteous to the applicant but can be detrimental to your organisation. Nobody wants to be ghosted and it can also leave a negative impression on the candidate. Ghosting a candidate during the recruitment process can potentially damage your brand and significantly impact your talent pool as the organisation's tendency for lack of communication will spread.

Solution: Invest in recruiting tools

Investing in recruiting tools can effectuate many advantages. One such advantage, is that they allow the targeting of specific groups of professionals. In addition, they also provide quick information about the job and the company. Some of the popular types of recruiting tools include online job boards, social media platforms, email marketing tools, applicant tracking systems, candidate relationship management, mobile apps, and interviewing software.

Technology that offers email templates, bulk messaging and automation can be incredibly helpful to ensure no candidate is ghosted. A personal email with feedback is best (can be created within most candidate management systems) but an automated email is better than none.

So employers, have you experienced low application rates? Have you considered the impact your recruitment process has had on your access to the talent pool? The best form of advertisement is often through word of mouth. Candidates who experience a negative hiring process share that experience with their family/ friends, with some actively dissuading others from applying to the organisation.

You may think, "one declined job offer isn't the end of the world", but one negative candidate experience on social media can deter candidates from applying to your open positions.

As organisations expect the best from potential candidates, candidates in turn expect employers to put their best foot forward and win them over. The recruitment process is an essential part of building a strong workforce and the foundation for communication with a new employee. So as 'new norms' emerge, it is important that best practices during the recruitment process are not forgotten. Remember, you were once a candidate and barriers should not be created to prevent you from accessing the talent pool.

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