

Attraction & Retention

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Market Recap

3 Pandemic-influenced Recruiting Trends to Watch in 2022

With the new year come new opportunities to attract and retain top performers. This is when employers can strategize about the most effective ways to tap into talent pipelines. In 2022, that means adapting recruiting strategies based on efforts that worked well during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the pandemic disrupted recruitment significantly and influenced employee expectations, employers would be wise to now meet those expectations. In that spirit, this article outlines three pandemic-influenced recruiting trends to watch out for in the new year.

1. Remote Interviewing and Scheduling

Virtual interviewing exploded during the COVID-19 pandemic primarily because people couldn't meet in person. Even as in-person operations have resumed, that remote expectation is now becoming more commonplace.

A recent Indeed survey reported that 82% of workplace respondents said they started conducting virtual interviews due to the

pandemic, and nearly all of them (93%) said they expect to continue the practice. Separately, a Mercer study reported that 70% of employers planned on implementing a hybrid work model—where employees work in person some days and remotely other days.

Together, these surveys illustrate how widespread the remote work movement has come over the past few years. As such, employers should consider how to align their own efforts to this growing trend.

2. Passive Candidate Recruiting

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a tight labor market, with many job openings left unfilled. One trend for getting around this has been shifting focus away from unemployed workers and toward passive candidates. Passive candidates are those who are currently employed but may be ready to change jobs if the right offer comes along. In a constricted labor market, this is a very valuable demographic.

Recruiting passive candidates isn't much different from typical recruiting tactics, but it does require a concerted effort. In essence, the strategy involves building out

an organization's brand so its values are easily identifiable and congruent with the ideals of prospective hires. Next, organizations will need to engage candidates directly—through online marketing, social media campaigns or other methods. Ultimately, the idea is to foster a relationship with candidates over time as they learn more about why they should consider changing jobs.

3. Holistic Benefits Offerings

More and more employers are adding holistic offerings to round out employee benefits packages. These offerings focus on improving employees' overall well-being in direct and indirect ways. According to a recent PwC survey, employers added or expanded the following offerings in response to the pandemic: flexible scheduling (91%), mental health programs (53%), increased time off (44%) and wellness programs (44%), among others. Going into 2022, employers can expect workers to still want these types of benefits, and they should adjust their offerings accordingly.

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TALENT

WORKPLACE
OUTLOOK



Securing Talent

The Case for Considering “Boomerang” Employees

Employers are having a hard time finding talent right now. Talent pools that have proven successful for years have suddenly dried up, forcing employers to get creative. One recent approach has been to seek out or re-recruit “boomerang” employees—workers who used to work at an organization, left voluntarily and now wish to return.

Boomerang employees might not immediately seem like viable candidates; after all, they’ve left the company before. But, these workers can offer a number of benefits that make them worth considering, including those below.

Easier Vetting

One of the biggest challenges when recruiting is getting the full picture about a candidate—their work ethic, past performance, temperament, soft skills and various other factors. Essentially, employers only have the candidate’s resume and interview to help glean this information. With boomerang employees, it’s very like-

ly some of the individual’s co-workers are still present with the company. Or, at the very least, their past performance reviews should still be on file. Having access to this information can provide a much more accurate picture of a candidate, making them a safer hire.

Faster Onboarding

Since boomerang employees have worked at the company before, they are already familiar with the company culture. And, if they’re reapplying to the same position they held previously, training will take much less time than with a brand-new hire. Having this familiarity means a boomerang employee already has a significant head start during onboarding and can begin making meaningful contributions sooner.

Greater Skillsets

Boomerang employees will have different

reasons for previously leaving an organization. Some may have left in search of greater compensation; others may have quit to try and grow their careers. In any case, these workers are returning with the skills they learned from other companies. Now, these boomerang employees have additional experiences and expertise on top of the skills they demonstrated when they were initially hired. In other words, boomerang employees are basically guaranteed to have the skills needed for a given position (if it’s one they’ve held before), in addition to everything else they’ve learned while they’ve been gone.

Ultimately, it’s impossible to say why a boomerang employee left unless they’re asked. But, by reapplying to their former organization, they’re saying, “I’ve tried other workplaces, and I didn’t realize how good I had it here.” Employers would be wise to hear these candidates out, especially when brand-new hires are scarce.



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TALENT

WORKPLACE
OUTLOOK



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3 Tips for Strengthening the Virtual Recruiting Experience

Perhaps one of the most enduring legacies of the COVID-19 pandemic is remote work. In early 2020, seemingly overnight, thousands of workers were sent home to work to protect operations and employee health. Even as the pandemic subsides and businesses reopen their doors, remote work isn't going anywhere.

That's because there are various benefits that come with allowing employees to work from home—not least of which is expanded talent pools. In fact, remote work has proven so successful that the majority of employers have said they intend to keep it around. According to a recent Indeed report, 94% of surveyed employers said they're open to hiring outside their current markets, and 77% said their workplaces are open to remote employees.

With remote work becoming a new standard, employers may benefit from strengthening their virtual recruiting efforts. After all, without candidates coming into the workplace, this process will serve

as a critical first impression and influence how potential hires view the organization. Below are three tips to help polish the virtual recruiting experience:

1. Make Screening Straightforward

Many applicants don't want to spend time on long application processes, especially if they're applying to multiple businesses. Employers can help speed up initial screening by focusing solely on skill sets, not other resume aspects. Afterward, employers can go over other criteria with the screened employees without wasting time on candidates without the right skills.

2. Showcase the Organization

A virtual interview is a chance for an employer to show off their organization. Without remote employees coming into the workplace, this is an opportunity to show them around virtually. As such, employers

can consider prerecording videos that include tours and staff testimonials. This will help give the candidate a better sense of the company and its culture.

3. Keep Candidates Informed

Transparency is key throughout the virtual recruitment experience. Candidates should know exactly what is expected of them and when they'll be informed about the next steps in the process. Employers can do this by sending proactive and regular updates to the candidate. Doing so can also help keep the person engaged and mitigate the chances of them dropping out of the interview process.

Of course, countless other strategies can also help strengthen virtual recruiting for an organization. Reach out to learn more.



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Workplace Outlook

Each month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) surveys around 149,000 businesses and government agencies and publishes the data the following month. This information offers a snapshot of the country's employment health and growth. Below is the data for November 2021, the most recent month available. Note that the BLS is now contextualizing its data with February 2020's pre-COVID-19 figures.

Unemployment rate*:



Total nonfarm payroll employment:**

+210,000

(-3.9 million below Feb. 2020 level)

Primary job gains:

Professional and business services, transportation and warehousing, construction, and manufacturing

Professional and business services:

+90,000

(-69,000 below Feb. 2020 level)

Transportation and warehousing:

+50,000

(+210,000 above Feb. 2020 level)

Construction:

+31,000

(-115,000 below Feb. 2020 level)

Manufacturing:

+31,000

(-253,000 below Feb. 2020 level)

*The BLS does not count furloughed individuals as "unemployed," figuring they will return to work eventually. However, this may not be a reality for many, which may affect this statistic.

**Nonfarm: Goods, construction and manufacturing companies in the United States. The data excludes farm workers, private employees and nonprofit organizations.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



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