

Recruitment in the era of 'Working from home'

COVID-19 has created challenging times for the job market. Companies, and their staff, are having to adapt to new ways of working. Working from Home (WFH) is becoming the new normal and internal structures within companies are shifting.

We spoke to **Ryan Kumar**, Managing Director of Direct Search Global, about the changes we can expect in recruitment in this post COVID world.



Q How have recruitment processes changed?

Most noticeable has been the introduction of video interviews. They fall into two categories, One-way or Two-way interviews.

Using products such as Spark Hire, Skeeled or TALVIEW, One-way interviews, also known as on-demand interviews, allow the Human Resources (HR) manager to ask a series of prepared questions but then observe the candidate as he or she answers them. This method gives the HR manager an opportunity to see exactly how the candidate approaches tasks and how effectively they focus when no one is watching. Although the candidate will have

been informed, the tendency is to forget that the recording is taking place.

The Two-way video interview is much more like a traditional interview with interviewer and interviewee able to see each other. Again, there are products to facilitate these such as myInterview, VidCruiter and AllyO. Both these and the One-way video interviewing products

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will help in the assessment process as they can be linked to other programs to pull out key information and make comparisons between candidates.

However, there are also FREE options that can be used during the Coronavirus crisis. The top five video interviewing software programmes are Skype, Zoom, Google Meet/Hangouts, Microsoft Teams and myinterview.

Q How do you feel the mood is among employers today?

I think the mood among employers today is cautious optimism, especially in Singapore where the government has put schemes in place to assist companies where possible. Companies are putting strategies and procedures in place to deal with the present situation and also to reduce further impact in the future should there be a second wave.

Hiring is not at the Top of the list for employers at the moment, but companies are still recruiting. Some companies are using this time to their advantage to find

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candidates that would not normally be on the market. Unfortunately, we do hear from candidates every day who have been retrenched or laid off and we advise them as much as we can and offer support. Candidates today, more than ever, need to be proactive, take training courses to increase their skillset, and make sure they stand out from the crowd. The watchwords are Adopt, Adapt & Advance!

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Q How should a candidate present in the new norm of COVID-19?

One significant new factor in the hiring process is the use of video interviewing as explained before. But in practical terms, companies are looking for something different from candidates today. Although presenting themselves professionally for interview is still vital, just as important are personal attributes.

Interviewers want to see high levels of energy which can be demonstrated through posture, preparation and focus – they need to show the same respect to the video as they would to an interviewer. And the interviewer needs to know that the candidate will be able to work without close supervision. Interviewers are particularly keen to understand a candidate’s attitude and how they might behave when no one is watching. A hunger for the job is also crucial in a market where there is more supply than demand, they need to think about how they will add value to the company and give specific reasons that they want this particular job, they need to show that they have researched the company, given thought to where they want to be in the next five years and have career goals they have set for themselves. Someone who is self-driven and doesn’t need motivating is very desirable, particularly if they have experience of working under minimal supervision. I would say that the key attributes to demonstrate are: focus; good time management; independence; personal goal setting and, of course, they should be IT savvy!

Q How can Human Resource managers make sure that they are giving candidates the opportunity to shine at interview?

In the past you would sit face to face with someone and get a vibe from them. Today, with video interviewing, the questions themselves and their structure take on more importance. Ask candidates how they will deal with certain situations. Ask them how they begin each day and look for evidence that they can plan and prioritise. Ask them how they would handle the morning if their supervisor is working in a different time zone for example. Ask them about time management and meeting deadlines, and give specific scenarios. Look for someone who has a life/work balance. Ask similar questions from different angles – consistency of response will make clear if they have been honest.

Companies are looking for candidates who have a range of skill sets that can be adapted. This gives them the potential of moving the candidate through the organisation as their knowledge and skills advance. It provides a career path for the candidate with the company and allows the company to adjust and move with the changes of the industry. A candidate with an energetic attitude who is flexible and eager for more knowledge has to rate very highly and HR managers should be gearing their questions to find these people.