

HOLMES NOBLE INSIGHTS

6 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN RECRUITING IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

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Recruitment in the current climate has proven extremely challenging for many businesses, with social distancing measures resulting in less interaction between employer and prospective employee. But whilst some businesses have put a pause on recruitment entirely, others have seen an increase in activity. In fact, according to Alex Fleming, Country Head and President of Staffing and Solutions at the Adecco Group, “nearly half (49 percent) of UK employers are planning to recruit over the next three months, which could be an indication that businesses are reshaping for the future.” Because of this, there will be a need for businesses to adapt their current recruitment practices in order to account for social distancing guidelines, along with many other factors. However, with all these changes, businesses need to ensure not to compromise on the quality of the recruitment process to guarantee that the right people, with the right skills and capabilities, are being placed in the right roles, regardless of the uncertainty that currently permeates the workplace.

To that end, for those restructuring or growing their workforce this year, how has COVID-19 affected hiring practices? COVID-19 has been a driver for change for the recruitment industry, uprooting current strategies and necessitating a fundamental shift in focus from merely ‘filling-the-gaps’ to a more future-oriented and holistic view on recruitment whereby businesses are creating space for new strategic hires in order to build on pre-existing capabilities and to strengthen resilience. So, with this in mind, here are 6 factors to be aware of when going out to market for senior talent.

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HERE ARE 6 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN GOING OUT TO MARKET FOR SENIOR TALENT:

Risk-aversiveness: Due to the current unpredictable job market, there is a reluctance from candidates to make changes to their careers. When recruiting, particularly for senior level positions, it is important to take this uncertainty into account. If you decide to partner with a third-party recruiter, their services can go a long way towards ameliorating this hesitancy. Headhunters dedicate themselves to their candidates and clients and use their strong market knowledge and interpersonal skills to truly connect a candidate to a business. This personalised care helps prospective candidates feel much more supported in the hiring process and, as a result, more comfortable exploring new opportunities.

Pressure on internal teams: With all the uncertainty caused by COVID, extremely difficult decisions have been taken to reduce the size of teams in some businesses. Because of this, it can be incredibly challenging- both from a personal and company perspective- for internal teams, who have been on the forefront of redundancies, to work so closely with the recruitment process. By bringing in a third-party, internal teams can guide the process whilst maintaining their focus on company culture.

Seek clarity over complexity: Always champion strong communication with applicants throughout the recruitment process that is candid, transparent and constructive. A candidate's experience should always be professional and positive- especially during times of uncertainty. By building trust with your prospective candidates and focussing on quality-centric processes, a positive candidate experience will naturally ensue. What's more, for those applying and interviewing for roles virtually, be aware that there may be a level of disconnect between them and your business because of the lack of real human interaction. Ensure to fully introduce your new employees to your business, your culture and your processes to effectively integrate them into your workforce.

Onboarding and Consultancy Services: There is a suite of online and face-to-face psychometric, personality, competency and leadership profiling tools to help employers make the right decision when hiring at senior level. By integrating these types of assessments into recruitment strategies, businesses can ensure that new members of the workforce are able to respond properly to volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) situations. This is of the utmost importance in times of uncertainty for both client and candidate and is definitely worth considering for senior level recruits.

The value in Interims: Interims offer a wealth of experience to your business which can be a great anchor in times of uncertainty, not to mention the flexible cost for your company as opposed to a fixed overhead. What's more, interims have diverse, cross-sector backgrounds which allow for creative and out-of-the-box thinking. They also provide unbiased insights into your business to help transform processes and bring innovation to the workforce. And, although a transient member of the workforce, an interim's impact will most likely be long-lasting.

What can your business offer? In times of uncertainty, candidates need to feel confident in your business and see it as a logical step for their careers. Consider what it is that your business can offer before going out to market for senior talent to give your business a competitive edge. This could include offering strong packages to attract talent from competitors, including;

- longer notice periods
- shorter probationary periods
- increase in sick pay and critical illness cover
- favourable bonuses
- share options at levels which historically have not condoned that incentive

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