The inevitable evolution of recruiting:

Competition has gotten tougher.

Candidate expectations have changed.

So, too, must a recruiter's focus, toolkit and practices.

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Executive summary

Even before the world found itself in the grips of a global pandemic in 2020, changes were emerging that would impact how businesses in Canada recruit talent. Generational change was already reshaping employee preferences. The workforce was becoming more mobile. The remote and hybrid workplace was gathering critical mass. So was a growing sea swell of sentiment concerning matters of diversity, equity and inclusion.[1] Furthermore, a labour shortage, triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic ripple effects, has added an additional degree of difficulty to the recruitment process.[2]

The actual statistics are stunning. Seven out of 10 millennial employees in Canada — a dominant plurality of the working population — say that they prefer to work remotely. From a mobility perspective, millennials unhappy with their jobs simply tend to leave for another opportunity.[3] About a fifth of the Canadian workforce now works remotely.[4] Additionally, social justice issues are influencing the decisions of job candidates. According to an HR research and advisory executive, "70 percent of job seekers said they want to work for a company that demonstrates a commitment to diversity and inclusion."[5]

Moreover, a recent ADP Canada Insights survey revealed that many job candidates value their work-life balance more than their salary.[6] Company recruiters are leading with work-life balance perks over salary and benefits to entice workers away from their current role. Equally important, more candidates are indicating that they want the values held by a potential employer to reflect their own personal values.

All of this has brought a new sense of urgency to how companies acquire talent. Many employers have chosen to augment or curtail their traditional recruiting strategies to compete more successfully for the workers they need. One of the most promising new strategies is a digitally driven approach, based on consumer marketing tactics, that strives to deliver a great candidate experience by placing a key focus on candidate engagement.[7] This puts the spotlight on the power of an employer's brand, how well a company maintains and leverages active and passive talent pools, uses HR analytics, utilizes the most meaningful metrics to measure recruiting activities, and deploys tools — like employee referrals, social media and old-fashioned networking — to outpace other employers in the competition to acquire the most promising candidates.[8]

Employers that adapt to recruitment's new normal will be in the most favourable position to attract excellent candidates and retain them as passionate, motivated, long-term employees. Learning how to get from yesterday to today and become a productive player in this new age of employee recruitment begins with a review of this Guide to Recruitment. A handy new toolkit, special tips and practices are waiting for you.

Introduction

The Canadian workplace is evolving rapidly with the pace of change influenced by many disruptors. Generations are changing. So have the personal desires of Canadian workers regarding benefits and how and where they want to work.

Yet, while so much has gone on and the marketplace never welcomed change so rapidly, employers are facing more hiring and retention challenges as they adapt to the needs of a more mobile — and, in many instances, a younger and more volatile — workforce.[9] Millennials are now the largest segment of workers and the most vocal proponents of workforce mobility. And while some may seem to "have it all" they aren't reluctant to ask for, or even demand, more.

Nonetheless, key areas of importance to Canadian workers appear to be settled issues for many employers in Canada. A recent survey of chief executive officers of Canadian businesses reveals their strong and unanimous support for diversity and inclusion, work-life balance and the overall well-being of their employees.[10]

The sheer *newness* of tech-driven, change-enabling solutions sometimes is a factor that, at times, is simply overlooked. Disruptive trends in recruitment are likely to keep emerging down the road and companies and their leadership teams must be ready to respond with positive solutions that benefit employers and their employees. Achieving that "win-win" will take a commitment to fresh ideas, championing new recruitment practices, embracing beneficial recruitment technology, and engaging current employees as part of the formula to identify and acquire new needed talent.

This Guide to Recruitment highlights some helpful solutions, suggestions and practices to improve an organisation's efforts to successfully recruit great candidates. We hope it can provide some insights to you and your organisation as we all prepare for … what's next!

The path to ultimate recruiting success

Build an attractive employer brand

↓

Establish internal support and processes

↓

Attract great candidates

↓

Nurture applicants

↓

Create long-term employees

What is the recruitment process — reimagined?

While HR's professional recruiters and the company's hiring managers play essential process-driven roles in filling positions, today's reimagined recruiting places current employees, past employees and candidates at the center of an organisation's recruiting universe.

A focus on employer brand

Become known as a great employer. You want the best candidates seeking you out because they respect you, connect with your organisation's values and want to work for your brand.[11]

Employees as recruiters

Involve your employees in the hiring process. Every satisfied current and past employee of an organisation is now a "recruiter" — because they embody living-and-breathing testimony for candidates that your employer brand lives up to its reputation. Essentially, employees authenticate the knowledge of an employer brand that many candidates have already researched even before they filled out a job application.

New practices

Employers that have engaged a new recruitment mindset and practices support the role of employee recruiters through employee referral programs, social media platforms and old-fashioned networking. Also, don't overlook opportunities to consider in-house candidates for promotion. They already know your company, have proven skills and by their past performance have earned the right for a chance to show why you should consider them for a greater or different level of responsibility.

As the focus shifts to recruitment practices based upon talent-driven candidate engagement, so have the metrics businesses are employing to measure recruiting success.

Key recruitment metrics have changed

Employer-driven		Talent-driven
Time to hire	→	The candidate experience
Cost of hire	→	Employer brand awareness
Source of hire	→	Career-site conversion
Offer acceptance rate	→	Application drop-off
Quality of hire	→	Return On Investment (ROI)

Fresh processes

Companies are filling pipelines with active and passive candidates from leads generated by employees, online job postings, and responses to more traditional sources such as print ads. Special software to aid recruitment helps track candidates' applications and resumes — and classifies them either as active or passive. Furthermore, HR automation can identify the most cost-effective and productive sources for candidate leads.

A boundless footprint

Hybrid and remote job arrangements have changed the way employers examine candidate pools. Even smaller employers can benefit from tapping into a global pool when competing for the best candidates. The world is now their office.

New ways to measure success

Recruiting metrics have shifted as new recruiting strategies have emerged. Measuring items such as time to hire and cost to hire are now sharing the stage with a new set of metrics that focus on an overall return on investment — that is, the enduring value of successful candidates becoming highly productive employees.

... At the heart of today's approach to recruitment is a new focus — shifting away from the job application process to **candidate engagement**. Job hunting is no longer a transactional world. It thrives on building relationships with candidates that have the capability to become long-term assets to the organisation.

63% of Canadian employees
are already thinking about their next work-life move.

Source: "Tipping Scales: Work-Life Balance Outweighs Salary as Top Perk for Canadian Workers."
ADP Canada Insights Survey, 2021.

10 things you should do **now**

First, understand that job seekers have more options today than ever before. Many have already formed an opinion about your company. They've heard about you from their peers, through social media, on review sites and at virtual conferences.

To attract top talent, your organisation needs to set itself apart from its competitors. According to research performed by LinkedIn, 75 percent of job seekers research an employer's brand and reputation before they even apply.[12] An emerging strategy to meet recruitment expectations involves treating candidates as you would a consumer, through a market-related talent acquisition program. This strategy is based upon the strength of the employer brand, encouraging current employees — mainly through employee referral programs — to help in the recruitment effort, leveraging the power of social media, and utilizing recruitment automation to help acquire and hire needed talent with increased speed and efficiency.[13]

If you already have this type of talent acquisition program in place, strive to improve it. Employers that do not have a recruitment program that is focused on candidate engagement need to do some quick catching up. Here are some handy ways to get things rolling:

1. Build a strong employer brand:

Your company's reputation as an employer is your company's employer brand. It measures how favourably you are viewed by your current and past employees as well as candidates and future employees. More than ever, your reputation counts! In one survey, 50 percent of job seekers said they wouldn't work for a company they thought had a bad reputation — even for a higher salary.[14]

View building your employer brand as the foundation of a new core business strategy that can connect you with qualified candidates that reflect your organisation's vision, goals and values. Always work to improve your brand. Showcase your organisation. Highlight your organisation's benefits that are attractive to today's employees. Leverage social media and employee testimonials. Focus on establishing high scores on employee review sites. Dedicate resources to apply for employer of choice awards in your community and industry.

Special tip:

Start a company blog that can help you share news and initiatives that show your commitment to the well-being of your employees. In a more targeted way, use the blog, email and texts to nurture job candidates. At ADP, employees use the hashtag #ADPLife to share their ADP working stories.

2. Highlight your culture of good benefits and work-life balance:

More than ever before, job candidates are listening. According to a recent study, work-life balance outpolls salary as a top perk for Canadian workers. Specifically, one-third (32 percent) of working Canadians surveyed said work-life balance plays a more important role than any time prior to the (COVID-19) pandemic. The work-life response was followed by "salary" at 25 percent. Survey results also revealed that nine-out-of-ten remote workers hope to continue working remotely on some or all days during the workweek, citing work-life balance as the most important factor in their workplace preference.[15]

⚡ Special tip:

Social media can be your most valuable and cost-effective recruiting tool that highlights your company's work-life culture with job candidates. Capture high-res photos and videos of your employee events that feature work-life balance and the flexibility of your organisation's culture. Then post them on your employer blog or on social media outlets.

3. Improve the quality of job postings using candidate personas:

A persona is a fictitious profile that portrays the ideal candidate for a specific job. By including optimum skills, educational background and other qualifications, you can write better job descriptions, create content that will resonate with your target audience and, as a result, optimize your candidate sourcing. By knowing precisely what skills you are looking for in a candidate, you can tailor your recruiting strategies to attract the best people more efficiently for a given job.

⚡ Special tip:

To create an accurate persona for a specific role, analyze the background, skills and career path of your best employees that are currently performing a similar job. Steer clear of creating candidate personas that may overlook non-traditional career trajectories and lived experiences. This approach may perpetuate bias, resulting in unlawful discrimination in recruitment.

4. Go to where your candidates are:

Market your employer brand in places where your target audience goes, such as social media and networking platforms. Make sure your profiles are active and up to date. Work with industry associations. Use employee referral programs, job boards and online forums to strengthen your social recruiting capabilities. Social media is now a mainstream recruiting tool.

⚡ Special tip:

Commit time, resources and people to your recruiting effort to, at a minimum, match the commitment of your competitors.

5. Get proactive — build a candidate pool before you need it:

Take a proactive approach to building and maintaining a talent pipeline. Use a candidate relationship management system to gather and store data. With their express consent, include qualified candidates for open and soon-to-be-open available positions. This approach may allow you to fill roles, quickly and efficiently.

Build a solid talent pipeline by assessing your needs early; looking "inside" before looking "outside" to fill positions; considering previous job applicants that could become future hires; participating in recruiting events before you need candidates; leveraging online and offline networking to connect with future talent; keeping track of the most promising candidates; and finding ways to keep in touch with potential job candidates, such as through email and texting.

Special tip:

The candidate pipeline is your organisation's lifeline. In today's highly competitive market, a business must yap into every possible resource to recruit effectively. The best approach is to maintain internal *and* external talent pools *and* include both active and passive candidates.[16]

6. First and foremost — hire the best available talent:

While the best job candidates should have the best specific skill set for a specific role, they also should bring "added-value" to the table. With existing and potential long-term remote and hybrid work arrangements throughout the marketplace, consider candidates that bring the "X Factor" of being able to work well with people.

Special tip:

Recruit the smartest person you can find for the talent they can bring to your organisation right away. Build on their strengths as they grow over time into areas of greater responsibility.

7. Involve your employees in the recruitment process:

Generally, there are several ways for your current employees to become involved in helping to recruiting new talent. You can ask them to recommend candidates, write articles and entries in your company blog to promote your organisation, and even sit in on interviews with the most promising candidates to help you gauge how well they would fit within your company's cultureprograms, job boards and online forums to strengthen your social recruiting capabilities. Social media is now a mainstream recruiting tool.

Special tip:

Provide incentives for employees who regularly participate in the recruitment process, such as designating them *company ambassadors*, a special title of recognition that could be placed on their business card and in their personnel record.

8. Always factor-in hybrid/remote work and recruiting:

Hybrid and remote work — and virtual recruiting — are here to stay. Even before the global health pandemic arrived, recruitment was already taking place online. Recent surveys continue to indicate that remote employees will not be going away. A *Software Advice* poll of HR leaders conducted in August 2020 revealed that 49 percent of respondents currently plan to hire even more fully remote workers when the COVID-19 pandemic will end.[17]

The September 2021 Insights Survey from ADP Canada also found that "nine-out-of-ten remote workers hope to continue working remotely some or all days during the week …".[18]

🔅 **Special tip:**

In candidate interviews, pose some questions relating to remote work to determine the resiliency of the candidate if he or she may be called upon in the future to perform in a remote/hybrid work environment.

9. Apply automation and new metrics to measure recruiting success:

Traditional talent metrics for recruiting provide an excellent look into productivity and past performance, but they lack a forward-looking capability. New recruiting metrics can measure what happens before and after a candidate makes a job application. Automation can help give you the answers you need to recruit in a more cost-effective manner, such as determining which sources feed your recruitment efforts most productively.

🔅 **Special tip:**

Consider data-driven recruitment software to view every step of a job candidate's journey, track your company's recruitment costs and implement a process for candidate selection, based on measurable data analysis and interpretation.

10. Employ a strong DEI element in your recruitment strategy:

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are no longer feel-good initiatives. A strong and effective DEI strategy is a business-critical imperative. Not only are your current employees paying attention, so are job applicants who prefer to work for an organisation that strongly supports principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. There are measurable benefits to having a diverse workforce. For one thing, organisations with diverse management have 19 percent higher revenues than the average company.[19]

Building a diverse workforce strategy may include steps such as: reviewing postings to ensure that you are not inadvertently expressing bias for a certain type of candidate unrelated to the job's requirements; recruiting from diverse talent pools; advertising jobs through diverse magazines, websites and forums; offering targeted internships and scholarships;
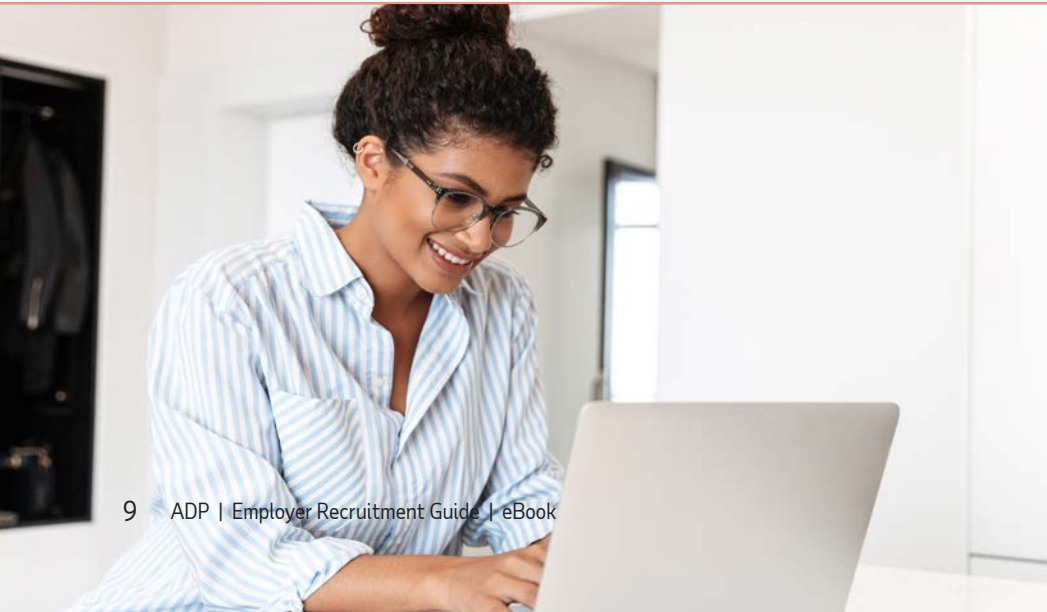
highlighting diversity on your career site and through your brand; asking for diverse referrals; introducing a diverse interview panel; teaching recruiters and hiring managers how to avoid making decisions based on unintended and/or unconscious biases; and engaging in philanthropic activities that support DEI efforts.

Most importantly, make sure that your recruitment strategies are complemented by a sound DEI program for existing employees. It can damage an employer brand to make representations during recruitment that do not reflect workplace realities.

Special tip:

Consider employing the practice of "blind" resumes that masks details such as a candidate's name, college and graduation year, and instead lets recruiters and hiring managers focus on a candidate's skills and work experience.

The power of social media in recruitment

91%

of employers are using social media to hire talent.[i]

80%

of companies say social media helps them find passive candidates.[ii]

79%

of job applicants use social media to search for jobs.[iii]

i. https://careerarc.com/blog/future-of-recruiting-study

ii. https://www.betterteam.com/social-recruiting-tips

iii. https://www.glassdoor.com

Improving the quality of recruitment begins with asking the right questions

What are the strengths and weaknesses in your hiring process?

Not only recruiting but also the hiring process must have the capability to support the growing emphasis on candidate — and employee — recruitment. Determine your organisation's strengths and where improvements can be made. Evaluate the steps of the hiring process and identify areas where your organisation can benefit from new practices, processes and tools:

1. **Determine staffing needs** — What is the opening you need to fill and what type of employee would best fit those needs — full-time, part-time, temporary.

2. **Analyze and evaluate the position** — Create a job description that clearly differentiates the job role. Consider leveraging a service platform with a job description repository.

3. **Recruit candidates** — Create an ad for print and/or social media to announce the opening. Seek candidates externally and/or internally to fill the job. Make sure to make it clear that you will provide human rights accommodations for candidates, including around accessibility needs.

4. **Prescreen candidates** — Use resumes, employment applications and prescreening questions to evaluate qualifications.

5. **Conduct interviews** — Ask basic, thought-provoking and culture-based questions to determine a candidate's skills and qualifications for the job. Concentrate on assessing candidate's competencies for the essential duties of the job; one way to do that is to ask all candidates the same set of questions and ensure that you are only asking questions directly related to "bona fide" job requirements.

6. **Respect candidates' time, privacy, and human rights.**

7. **Select a candidate** — Determine which candidate is the best fit for the position.

8. **Exercise due diligence** — With candidate consent, complete any job-appropriate background checks, pre-employment testing and conduct reference checks and any other data verification.

9. **Extend an offer** — Make a conditional offer, subject to successful completion of a background check, if reasonably necessary for the position.

Special tip:

Triage each step to determine where your most urgent needs are. Then commit resources to create rapid improvement.

How can your organisation best identify qualified candidates?

Put in place a pre-screening protocol. This would generally include pre-screening questions, reviewing resumes and application forms and pre-employment testing.

As you create the pre-screening protocol, involve legal counsel as a key contributor. They will help determine if your pre-screening questions and interview questions are lawfulegal, specifically, if your protocol observes complies with human rights and privacy considerations, and information you ask of job candidates is legal. Pre-employment tests are another potential way to help identify qualified candidates. Ensure that the testing is job-related, reliable and legally permissible under Canadian law.

Special tip:

To identify the truly best candidates, ask yourself three questions about each: Do you think they can do the job? Are they motivated? Are they coachable?

Traits that employers look for in a remote job candidate

| Reliability | — | Communication | — | Independence |
| Organization | — | Collaboration | | |

What are appropriate places to hold candidate interviews?

There are several suitable venues where you could interview job candidates. Each has its "pros" and "cons." Select the one that works best for each specific interview:

1. **Virtually by phone or video call**
   - **Pros** — Enables you to connect with a candidate wherever they might be
   - **Cons** — Absence of an actual face-to-face, in-person connection

2. **Enclosed meeting room**
   - **Pros** — A private and formal space exudes a work-centric ambiance and provides privacy
   - **Cons** — The rigid setting may make the candidate nervous and stifle responses

3. **Glass meeting room or board room**
   - **Pros** — A transparent room may feel more inviting and serve as a metaphor for your company's culture
   - **Cons** — The candidate may feel exposed in a "fish-bowl" setting which could affect their confidence during the interview and unintentionally disclose that they are applying for a position

4. **Staff room**

- **Pros** — Less formal than an official meeting room, it may put the candidate at ease and help you to draw out their professional and personal qualities more easily

- **Cons** — It may be less easy to control interruptions and movements of others through the room and confidential information may be disclosed to the candidate

5. **An alternate space — such as a coffee shop or a park?**

- **Pros** — Can be viewed as mutual ground and serve as a relaxing and informal setting that puts the candidate at ease, perhaps a coffee shop

- **Cons** — If the coffee shop is too busy, it might be too distracting and indiscreet as anfor an interview environment

Businesses with excellent employer brands

Receive

50%

more qualified candidates than lesser brands

Source: 4cornersresources.com

What should you ask candidates in an interview?

Ordinary questions are good for getting basic information. Probing further with thought-provoking and cultural questions can provide you with a broad range of useful information for better hiring decisions.
Here are some examples:

Basic questions

These questions are the perfect way to ease candidates into an interview and gather the background information you need before moving into high gear.

1. **What's the first job you had that's not on your resume — and what did you learn from that experience?**

   Key Benefit: It relaxes the candidate and can provide better insight into their values and perspectives on work itself.

2. **How did you hear about this role?**

   Key Benefit: Your organisation is probably spending significant funds on employer branding, advertising and candidate attraction. This will help you understand which sources are working best.

3. **How did you prepare for this interview?**

   Key Benefit: Reveals a candidate's proactiveness, resourcefulness and passion for the job.

4. **What most excited you about this job posting?**

   Key Benefit: Response will help show if "paying the bills" is the sole motivation for seeking the job.

5. **Do you have any questions for us?**

   Key Benefit: Every candidate should have some questions. If not, that's a red flag.
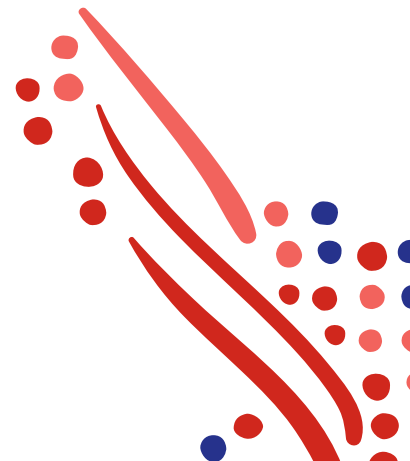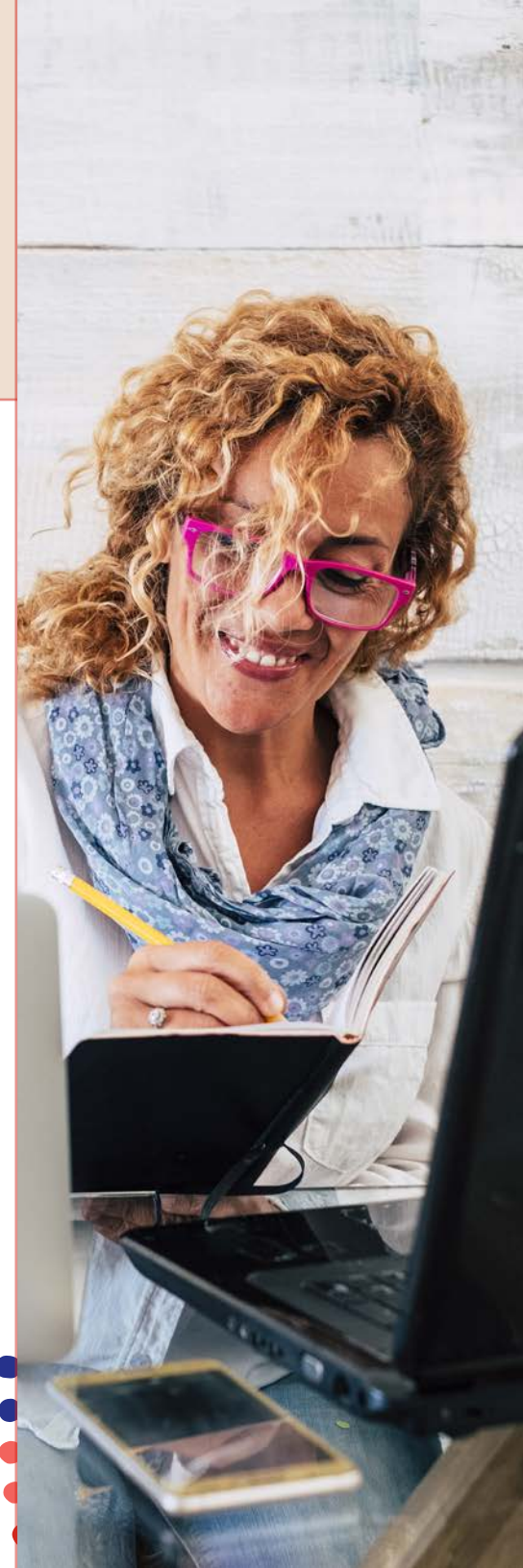
Thought-provoking questions

This set of questions is meant to challenge candidates and make them think.

1. **What's the most important thing you've learned from a peer and how have you used that lesson in your everyday life?**

   Key Benefit: You learn a lot about a person by asking them how they apply learnings in their everyday routine.

2. **Tell me about a time when you really messed something up. How did you handle it and address the mistake?**

   Key Benefit: Shows how a candidate breaks down a complex idea and can articulate it to someone who doesn't understand it.

3. **If you woke up and had 2,000 unread emails and could answer only 300 of them, how would you choose which ones to answer?**

   Key Benefit: Their response helps to demonstrate their reasoning and thought process.

4. **What's the biggest decision you've made over the past year? Why was it such a big deal?**

   Key Benefit: Shows the candidate's style of decision-making. Are they impulsive or did they develop a plan? How did they implement what needed to be done?

5. **Tell me about a time when you had to learn a new skill. What was the process? What did you learn about yourself? What was the end result?**

   Key Benefit: Allows the candidate to tell you how they view the connection between personal learning and role-based achievement.
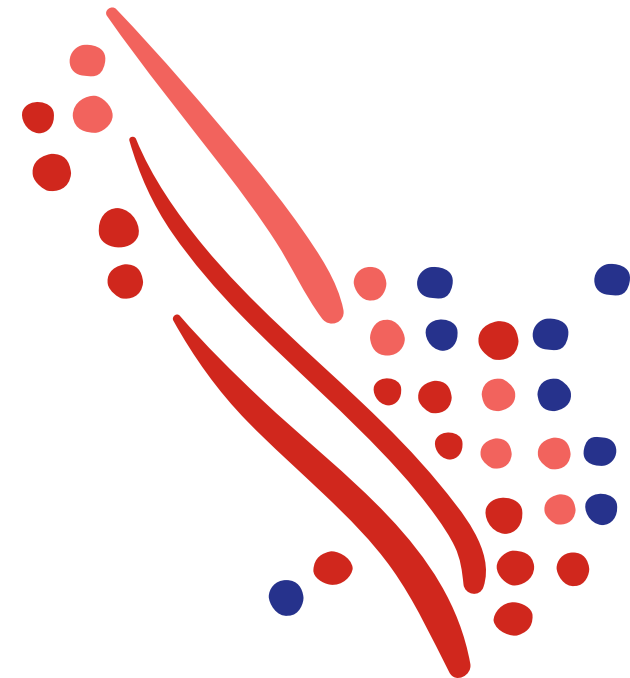
Workplace culture questions

These questions may help assess how candidates may contribute to your need to know if a candidate is a good cultural fit for your organisation. Do they share your company's vision and culture mission? These questions can and may help you make an informed determination.

1. **What's one misconception that your co-workers have about you?**

    Key Benefit: The response may uncover a more important and revealing truth around how the applicant relates to his or her co-workers.

2. **What made you excited to get up and come to work at your last job?**

    Key Benefit: Applicants can relate to you what motivated them — from making tough decisions to managing stimulating projects. This may indicate how well they might do the same at your company.

3. **What is your management style?**

    Key Benefit: Good traits to look for include a willingness to take feedback and make time to speak with peers as well as direct reports.

4. **Is there anything about this interview process that you would change?**

    Key Benefit: Urges candidates to think on their feet and illustrate their thinking process. It's also a good opportunity for candidates to provide constructive criticism.

5. **Talk me through a bad professional relationship you've had. Why didn't it work?**

    Key Benefit: Helps you understand if the applicant did anything to repair or recover the relationship — or place the blame on others.

6. **What have I not asked you that I should have?**

    Key Benefit: Lets applicants leave you with a sense of how they think.
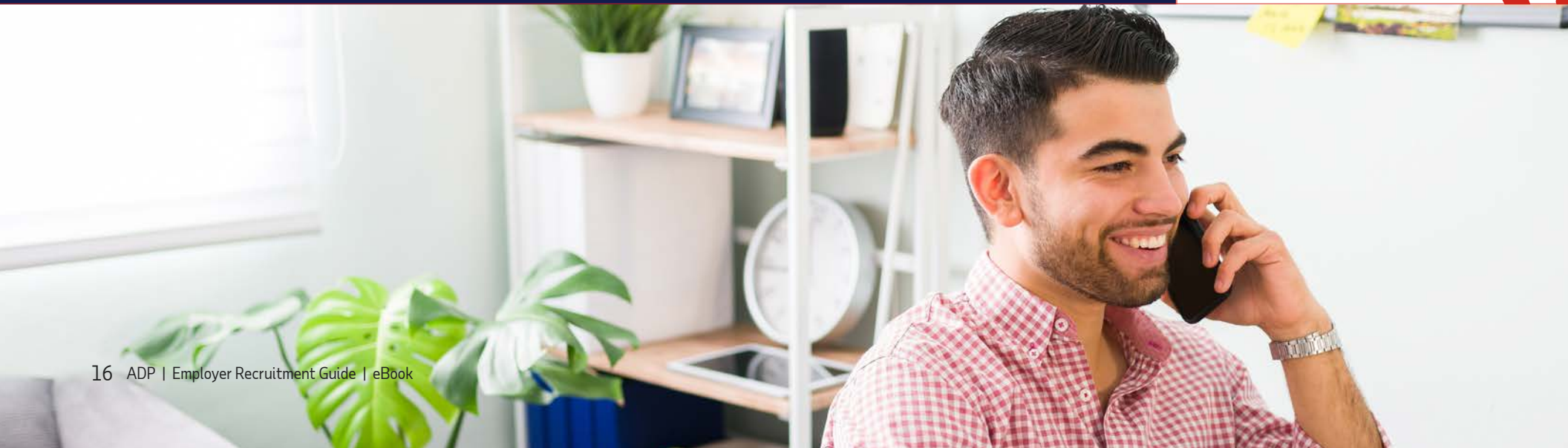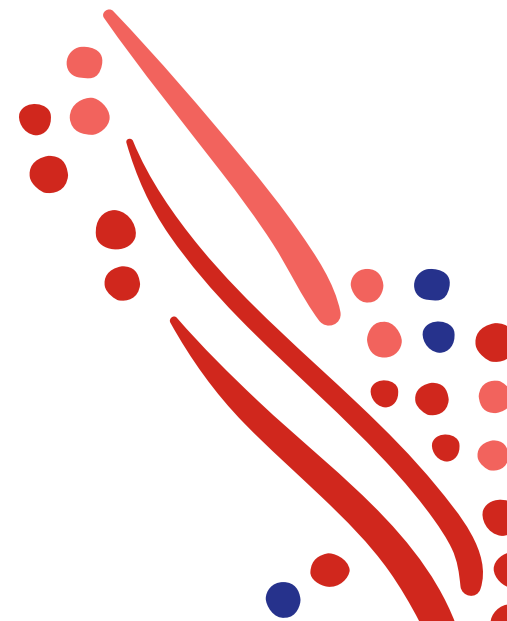
Questions for remote/hybrid position candidates

Working from home comes with its luxuries (like being able to work dressed more casually or in your pajamas). It also comes with unique challenges like setting up facetime with your boss. These questions are designed to find out if remote job candidates have what it takes to work successfully from home:

1. **Have you worked remotely in the past?**

   Key Benefit: It gauges the applicant's interest in a fully remote role.

2. **Have you worked remotely in the past? What types of remote/distributed team tools and software have you used?**

   Key Benefit: This lets you understand the applicant's level of comfort with remote tools that remote teams rely on for collaboration.

3. **What is your approach to maintaining effective communication and collaboration with a distributed team?**

   Key Benefit: Lets you determine if the applicant understands the scheduling and planning aspects of working remotely — that working remotely takes careful scheduling and planning?

4. **How do you manage your time and stay organized?**

   Key Benefit: Learn if the applicant has a good understanding of how to stay organised and meet deadlines in an otherwise very flexible work environment.

5. **How do you keep motivated and engaged when working from home?**

   Key Benefit: The applicant's response will indicate if he or she has a grasp on how to push through the inherent distractions and distance of remote work.

6. **What is the key to making sure a project is successful when working remotely?**

   Key Benefit: The response will relate how a prospective new hire would approach a project when in-person collaboration is not an option.

7. **Tell me about a time when you weren't sure how to do something. How did you go about seeking information or help?**

   Key Benefit: The applicant will indicate whether or not he or she can navigate areas of uncertainty and find the people who can offer help.

COVID-related interview questions

COVID has had a major impact on recruiting. Here are some COVID-related questions that recruiters, hiring managers and other interviewers might ask to gauge an applicant's thoughts regarding the pandemic, work and how they feel about getting back to the pre-pandemic workplace.

1. **How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect your career goals?**

   Key Benefit: Listen intently for applicants to show their exuberance in focusing on their career goals and the pride they have in transferable skills.

2. **How did you adapt to working remotely?**

   Key Benefit: The response will tell you if the applicant is resilient and learning to figure things out as they go.

3. **What have you learned during the pandemic?**

   Key Benefit: See if applicants tried to make the best out of a bad situation. Perhaps they decided to upskill by taking online classes.

4. **How do you feel about returning to work in person?**

   Key Benefit: The applicant's response will indicate if they are open and amenable to working in either job environment.

5. **How do you feel about working remotely indefinitely?**

   Key Benefit: If your organisation is moving toward remote work for at least some of its roles, an applicant's response will indicate if that matches their future goals.

💡 **Special note:**

Before wrapping up any interview — in-person or remote — ask an applicant for their feedback. This adds one more valuable opportunity for an applicant to respond in the moment.

How can you best assess applicants' skills?

Using your company's skills-based, purpose-driven culture as a foundational framework, consider evaluating candidates not only based on interviews and their past experience, but also on how they demonstrate skills that are related to the job they are seeking.

1. **Test their technical and "soft" skills** — A technical skill would apply to their specific job expertise – like software programming. A soft skill, like the ability to collaborate, helps a person relate to others.

2. **Focus on their job-specific skills**— You can evaluate some skills by written examination, while others involve time at a work location so you can see how a candidate responds to on-the-ground scenarios. Be mindful that you never ask candidates to perform unpaid work and that you always protect your company's confidential information during the interview process.

3. **Personalize each skills assessment** — Test skills that are tied to a candidate's work performance. Don't waste time on irrelevant skills. For example, a person who sells a service does not need to know how to repair computer hardware.

4. **Assess aptitude** — An aptitude is the natural ability to do something. Evaluate this through generally accepted standardised tests and task-based testing. However, be aware that tests may result in biased outcomes, depending on how they are designed.

Conclusion: Assessments are most useful, valid and reliable when they are mapped to specific job roles and mimic an actual skills-based work environment.

What is an effective way to compare candidates?

Use a Hiring Matrix to objectively and accurately assess each applicant's qualifications based on job-related criteria. This will help assure hiring decisions are fair and equitable. The matrix eliminates emotional bias.

> 💡 **Special tip:**
>
> Keep the process simple and easy to audit. Typically you would assign a score from 1 – 5 with 5 being the highest score.

What about background checks?

Consistent and compliant background screening is important because it protects the organisation's property, assets, reputation, brand — and people. According to CareerBuilder, 33 percent of all application forms contain outright lies about an applicant's experience.[20]

The most common background checks that it may be reasonable for an employer to use (depending on the essential duties of the job) are: Criminal Record Checks, Employment Credit Checks, Reference Checks, Resume Verifications, and Social Media Checks.

Special tip:

Consider using a third-party provider that can offer compliant background screening as well as the latest guidance on screening issues. Be mindful of candidates' privacy and human rights in the recruitment process. You should only be verifying information related to bona fide job requirements. Make sure to get legal advice on sensitive personal information that you may be considering collecting.

How should you verify data on an applicant's resume?

Verification of data is a necessary step in the screening process. According to a 2018 HireRight report 85 percent of employers uncovered a lie or misrepresentation on a candidate's resume or job application — up from 66 percent five years earlier.[21]

Here are three tips on how to proceed with Information Verification:

1. **Before you contact a candidate's references, find out from your team what questions to ask.** The biggest overall question: Does a reference have any concerns about the applicant?

2. **Contact each reference via phone or email.** Tell the reference why you are contacting them. Ask how the reference knows the candidate. Then verify the information the candidate gave you. (Note: If the reference didn't know you would be reaching out, that is an obvious red flag.) Use the "80/20" conversation rule if you are speaking by phone. Let the referral speak 80 percent of the time as you assume the role of active listener.

3. **Communicate with the final candidate.** You should have a hiring schedule in place. If references confirm your hunch that the candidate is the right person for the job, be ready to make a prompt offer, conditional on the completion of any more extensive job-related checks, if reasonably necessary for the position.
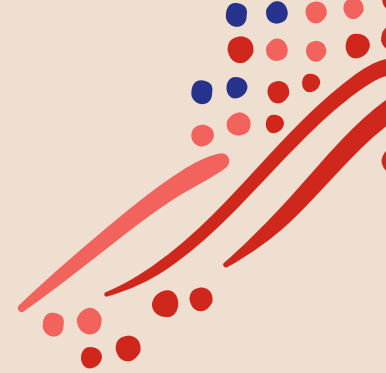
Highly engaged employees experience

17% higher productivity

21% higher profitability

41% less absenteeism

Source: Gallup

Conclusion

Recruiting has fast become a core essential business process for organisations that want to attract the best job candidates.

Even before the global pandemic of the past few years that negatively impacted world economies, societal changes were emerging that would change processes like recruitment, forever. Workers wanted to increase their mobility, work remotely and become part of an organisation that strongly stands for social justice, including diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace.

As employers' recruiting practices were tested by new realities, change began to shape the new norm. The first step involved making course corrections to set up the right recruitment strategies and internal processes. Although employers might still be using traditional recruitment methods, such as publishing print ads to fill open positions, many were also open to a digitally driven, consumer-oriented method to recruit new employees — one that is based upon building a great employee experience fed by the success and magnetism of an employer's brand. In turn, this approach has generated interest in a whole new set of metrics to measure recruitment success.

The good news is, employers who find themselves at a crossroads with their recruitment strategy and practices can gain ground quickly to become a more competitive place of employment for the best job candidates. A new approach to recruitment might include: leveraging the attractiveness of the employer brand (an organisation's reputation among candidates in the marketplace); highlighting the company's work-life balance; recruiting in all places where candidates can be found — especially on social media; building candidate pools and pipelines; using market-related metrics to measure recruiting success; and employing a strong DEI recruitment strategy.

Obviously, there is a bottom-line element to recruitment. Successful recruiting must have a Return on Investment (ROI) that provides rapid and sustainable value to the employer. The top line is about winning over the best recruits through strong engagement before and after the application process. Selecting the best candidates and helping them to become productive more rapidly can mean the difference between winning and losing in the marketplace.

The evolution of recruiting was inevitable. Competition for the best talent in a tight labour market has gotten tougher. The rules governing how to recruit have changed — and so must the strategic focus, toolkit and recruitment practices of organisations that want to remain competitive. The most successful company recruitment efforts will continue to be driven by fresh approaches, launched and supported by employers who have adapted to, are invested in and are ready for ... change.

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