

BOND WILLIAMS

INSIGHTS

2021 ISSUE 10

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BOND WILLIAMS

PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT



Hello and welcome

TO ISSUE 10 OF BOND WILLIAMS INSIGHTS!

Firstly, a Happy New Year to all of you.

COVID-19, Coronavirus, Lockdown, Social-distancing, Furlough – many of these words were all very new to us back in March last year but they all seem to be part of our everyday conversations at the moment and I am sure 2020 is a year that many of us would rather like to forget.

Many people were made to work from home, something that only some were used to doing before this and this raised many questions and concerns around how to manage our teams when all working remotely, were businesses equipped for their employees to work from home and if not, what could they do to ensure business continuity, productivity and engagement?

In this issue, we take a look at remote working and how to manage teams effectively with a guest article from Rosemary Darby-Jenkins, who for over 10 years managed her remote teams around the country with her home base being Bournemouth.

We have an employment law update from Paul Burton of Frettons Solicitors which touches on some of the biggest issues that companies are facing, and an informative article from Stuart Lawrenson and Lauren Piesley of Shoosmiths LLP on 10 key issues employers are going to deal with as they face the next chapter of the virus.

We delve into the importance of HR Budget Planning with a two-part article that has been written for us by Pem Paddick, with over 15 years' experience working within the corporate and commercial environment as a strategic HR & Finance Director.

Another theme is virtual presenting – guest author Dee Clayton gives us advice and tips on virtual presentations and what needs to be considered when hosting. We also bring you a recruitment market update and the benefits of using temporary staff, why you should evaluate your onboarding process in times of change and much more.

If you would like to contribute to our next issue of Bond Williams Insights or if there's something specific you would like covered, please do get in touch.



Claire Bond
Director, Bond Williams Professional Recruitment

Wishing you a healthy 2021!

If you would like to be involved or contribute to the next issue of Bond Williams Insights, we'd love to hear from you.
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RECRUITMENT MARKET UPDATE AND THE BENEFITS OF USING TEMPORARY STAFF

With our governing body the REC (Recruitment and Employment Confederation) reporting a stronger increase in recruitment activity this month due to both the economy re-opening and less Covid restrictions (in certain areas of the country for the moment), having given clients the confidence to recruit staff again. This echoes what we are seeing at Bond Williams (in increased job openings) and hearing from our clients' business activity which is really positive.

Generally, recruitment is one of the first industries to witness a decline in the economy particularly in certain sectors and similarly we are also one of the first to see the recovery. The report also shows temporary recruitment had the sharpest increase in uptake since the later part of 2018, together with a rise in reported job vacancies for the first time since February 2020. This is particularly encouraging for the recruitment industry and the economy in general and despite candidate availability rapidly rising due to increased redundancies which sadly was inevitable with the winding down of the initial furlough scheme and the decline in the retail and catering industry. The IT & Computing industry topped the vacancy rankings and overall demand together with Blue Collar roles having the sharpest increase in temporary vacancies of all ten monitored job categories during September. Construction and Engineering roles also had a steep rise which again we are hearing from our clients in those industries, sadly retail as expected saw the steepest decline in vacancies across the country.

Whilst unease does still remain, it is encouraging to see positivity amidst the doom and gloom and we will be very much part of helping that recovery, supporting job seekers with opportunities and creating opportunities together with finding solutions for clients by thinking outside of the box where skills shortages are evident. For that reason it can be hard to plan for the unknown and we know that as well as anyone, you may not want to commit long term until you have a bit more knowledge, you may be in the early stages of recovery or for whatever reason you may need more hands on deck and that's where temporary staffing solutions can be a fantastic way to offer flexibility and support for businesses through times of uncertainty, boosting productivity, managing heavy workloads, projects and generally getting you back up and running in order to allow you the time to make a more informed decision when confidence returns.

With over 1.45 million temps working according to the ONS, temps themselves have a number of reasons why they temp too, approximately 375,200 were temporary because they could not find a permanent job; 363,300 did not want a permanent job; 112,800 had a contract with a period of training; and 603,990 cited other reasons.

Here, we look at the six main ways in which you and your business could benefit from hiring a temp.

Flexibility

Workload, large projects and tight deadlines can rise and fall throughout the year and sometimes you may find things can get extremely busy with no warning. There is no right or wrong way to manage this and even some of the most successful businesses struggle to get the balance right. When you're unsure of exactly what the future will hold and how to allocate resources effectively, temporary staff can give you some flexibility and if you have a sudden fluctuation or a busy period, with temporary staff, it really is a win-win situation! Temporary staff can also be a great way to create new teams, open new areas or expand your market and if it doesn't work out it is a temporary staffing commitment giving you the opportunity to try before you buy so to speak and see if the candidates are right for the role before committing on a permanent basis.

Saving costs

There will be noticeable reduced costs as a result of hiring temporary staff. These may include saved costs on lengthy training which your company only make available to permanent staff; reduced time in sourcing, recruiting and onboarding new staff; and of course, the added bonus of only paying for an employee when you actually need them or being able to release more specialist people to do what they are best at rather than a role you could bring in a less experienced temp to do. Or alternatively you could bring in a more experienced senior contractor to manage change projects or offer expertise short term where you are lacking the experience and don't want to commit to a permanent employee.

Working with a recruitment agency when employing temporary staff can work out better value for you overall as it means you have access to their pool of temporary/contracting staff, recruitment expertise, industry and interviewing knowledge. This can greatly reduce the time needed by internal hiring managers and if you work exclusively with us, you will be offered a discount on our standard fees.

Efficiency

As temporary workers are usually working on specific projects; they won't be tied down by the everyday duties of their permanent counterparts. This means you can hire someone with a particular skill set you require for a short amount of time or receive the peace of mind you need knowing that the work is being focused on without external interruptions.

Although you may need to spend more time initially explaining certain tasks or procedures, we know from experience that temp workers like to make a positive and lasting impression so are likely to go out of their way to impress you with their hard work. What's more, if it turns out that you really like your temp then you can offer them a permanent position, saving you time

sourcing, responding to applications, scanning through CVs, holding interviews and waiting for notice periods to end.

Quick recruitment process

Temporary workers are often open to flexible working arrangements and available at short notice, so, in urgent situations you can have a temp within your business on the same day you request one. For example, Bond Williams have a thoroughly tested, interviewed and referenced database of temporary staff who can be working virtually or on site at your company within a few hours if needed! Hiring temporary staff is often quicker too and therefore, you won't have to invest hours in getting the additional help you require. We also have a pool of talent that don't want the commitment of a permanent role for whatever reason suits their lifestyle, they are tried and tested and are requested time and time again to go back to companies.

Short term cover

Cover holidays, absence due to illness, or sudden departures Hiring temporary or contract staff is an ideal solution to maintain the status quo during short or longer-term periods of permanent staff absence. Temps can be employed quickly to cover a certain time frame or be put in place until more fixed decisions have been made. Either way, temporary cover means you won't be caught short and can carry on with business as usual!

Wellbeing

From a well-being perspective temporary staff can also help boost morale and productivity. With many companies having leaner reduced workforces, temporary staff can improve what could already be a stressful time together with relieving increased workloads by taking some of the daily tasks away and offering temporary solutions.

Try before you buy

With a marketplace flooded with candidates this doesn't mean to say that there is the perfect candidate for your role. So you may need to think outside box and see what skills could be transferable to the role you are recruiting for and the great thing with temping is if you're not sure you can try different candidate skills to see which is right. The candidate will know it's a trial and if they are right for the role then you can keep them on a permanent basis if you are both in agreement and not waste the training that you have put into them.

Whatever you need, be it temporary staffing solutions, permanent, contract or some plain old advice from experts in their field, click below to contact one of our specialist team and take advantage of our 230+ years of recruitment experience, you can be sure we'll work with you to find a solution.

<https://bondwilliams.co.uk/contact-us/>



THE IMPORTANCE OF HR BUDGET PLANNING

IN THIS TWO PART ARTICLE, WE TAKE A LOOK AT HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO HAVE A STRUCTURED HR BUDGET AND THE KEY POINTS THAT WE SHOULD BE TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN PLANNING.

If you are a HR professional you should already be starting to think about next year's budget in collaboration with Finance and other departments. In many organisations budgets are finance led, as a result many of our professions just agree with last year's budget and year on year spend. It's important as professionals that you are involved in this process rather than have the same budget year on year and not really understand what your budget capacity or the impact of your decisions are from the business people perspective but also from a financial aspect.

The HR Budget has two separate sections, one is your own departmental budget to support you and your team to deliver a great service to your stakeholders, the other is the larger part of a HR budget which is the key factor that supports your stakeholders and the business as a whole.

As HR leaders and professionals it is important that we understand our numbers and the impact our decisions make to the business and we partner proactively with the business to help support, grow and develop. I strongly believe that in order to have a successful business the communication, pro-activeness and commercial understanding of the business is key for any HR Professional.

Budget planning is not just about your internal departments CPD but about the Business as a whole, therefore it is important to work collaboratively with other business functions and leaders. (Finance, IT, key operational

managers, business development team and other key stakeholders or clients).

As HR we look after one of the company's biggest assets which is its people therefore it is key that we understand the current challenges the business faces. How COVID has impacted business operations is at the forefront of all business leaders' agendas, ensuring you are focusing on the right priorities and supporting the business resilience plan is going to be key as a result.

I would always suggest starting with your functions (HR) business plan, this should help with ensuring you are covering the key business needs and priorities. The objective of the business plan is to ensure you are covering the following areas:

SWAT analysis of business, HR Function Business Effectiveness, Corporate goals short and long term, Organisation Charts, 2021 Objectives, current business challenges, upcoming changes in legislation, key metrics and costs. In addition to the normal budget considerations the following questions should be included as a direct impact of COVID:

- 1. Future of work** - What does a successful return to work plan look like and how are you going to support the business in that plan? (Return to onsite, remote working, and partial remote working)
- 2. Organisation design and change management** - What is the new norm going to look like - what infrastructure

needs to be put in place to support it and is the current infrastructure cost effective? Do you need to support a business recovery plan and what does that look like in the short and long term?

- 3. Employee experience** - What do we need to do to improve the employee experience from the way we recruit and onboard to how our employees are engaged, supported and performance managed by their line managers?
- 4. Current and future leadership** - How resilient are our leaders and what support and training do we need to equip them to lead through the current business uncertainty? Does that include internal and external coaches and mentors?
- 5. Skills and competency to provide better business resilience.** What additional tools and support does the business, leaders, managers, employees and the HR team need to be more effective and resilient? What has the business resilience plan identified as key improvement areas?
- 6. Remote monitoring and performance management tools** - Do we have effective tools and are they in line with your policies and legislation?

For an insight into key factors that should be considered when planning the HR budget, go to [page 16](#) for part two of 'The Importance of HR Budget Planning'.

To say a lot has changed since the last edition of this magazine, and my last update, would be something of an understatement.

At that time no one had heard of COVID, let alone furlough or the R rate, and only a small minority of us regularly 'zoomed' or worked from home.

The pace of change in both employment legislation and workplace culture has been 'unprecedented' (another term that has seen its use shoot up over the past year).

Employers and HR professionals have had to interpret and implement regularly changing guidance amidst a backdrop of economic uncertainty, and I have been fortunate enough to advise and work with some tremendous professionals and businesses who have done so fantastically well.

I will try to provide a short update as to 'what has happened', as well as touching on some of the biggest issues facing us in coming months, though this could reasonably be out of date by the time of publishing, such has been the pace of change this past year.

One thing we can be certain of is that many agile businesses have prospered.

Lockdown and a move to working from home

In March last year, we were all told to stay at home, save lives, and protect the NHS. We did so in incredible numbers. Shares in Zoom went through the roof and everywhere sold out of cheap home desks.

Countless clients have told me that the move to working from home has been beneficial in terms of productivity and work-life balance, and many businesses have reduced their overheads by downsizing or shedding office space.

While working from home is not for everyone or every business, all businesses should have a [working from home policy](#), something my colleague Chris Dobbs has written about at length. It should cover the circumstances and expectations of working from home, as well as health and safety, security and supervision, which leads nicely on to my next point.

Monitoring employees working from home

Most businesses I have worked with, including Frettons, have found that trusting employees to be productive when working from home has paid off. Our productivity has gone up since the mass move to working from home, and employees report feeling empowered when trusted.

Some businesses will require a need to monitor employee activity when working at home. It is a complex subject, something we have [written about at length on our website](#) and in our regular employment email law updates. The key is to be open and discuss it with employees if it is needed, and covert surveillance should only be used in extreme circumstances and after having sought advice.

Furlough

A word that is part of our everyday language was known by next-to-nobody at the start of the year. The furlough scheme started in April 2020 and has gone through various transitions since.

At the time of writing, the furlough scheme has been extended to at least January, and it looks likely to continue through to March in its current format, which, oddly enough, is almost identical to its first format.

You can check the latest information on our [website](#).

Returning to work from furlough - Health and Safety

We have had a lot of conversations around health and safety of employees. When workplaces began to reopen, significant changes were made to implement safe social distancing, cleanliness standards and appropriate PPE.

Some employees have felt unsafe returning to work, and we have spoken with both employers and employees alike about not wishing to return to work from furlough.

Chris wrote about this in a [lengthy article in June](#), and under normal circumstances the answer to this is: no. You cannot generally refuse to work without being in breach of your employment contract. Refusing to work is a

pretty fundamental breach of contract and in many cases will justify disciplinary action and probably dismissal.

The current climate may create situations where a refusal to return to work could be justified. This would be especially true where there is a general risk to health in the workplace or, for specific individuals, where they might be at a particularly increased risk to their health.

It is worth noting that none of this has been tested in court yet, so it would be best to speak to professionals before embarking on any disciplinary proceedings.

Redundancy

Sadly, there have been [lots of redundancies made](#) as a result of the pandemic, and we fear that there are more to come.

Unemployment figures have been rising, and while the furlough scheme will help to protect many into the new year, what happens when it ends is anyone's guess.

The redundancy process has not changed as a result of the introduction of the furlough scheme.

The guidance is that any decision must be fair and that no one has been put at a disadvantage as a result of being on furlough leave.

Furlough Fraud

The potential [scale of furlough fraud](#) was highlighted in a recent report from the National Audit Office. 1 in 10 workers were asked to work while on furlough.

Penalties are tough and HMRC has been unambiguous about asking employees to break furlough rules.

Our advice is simple, do not do it and, if you believe you have made a mistake in your applications for payments, do contact HMRC as soon as possible. Immediate action will lessen the possibility of, or at least perhaps reduce, any sanction imposed by HMRC.

Want to stay up to date?

We will post any announcements, along with advice for employers and HR professionals as soon as we are able. These will be shared on our website and on social media.

Our Employment and HR newsletter will continue to be sent out monthly, though as important information is announced by the government, we may send this to you more frequently.

Our quarterly employment training sessions are being held online until further notice. [Sign up to our newsletter to receive invitations.](#)



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Pem has over 15 years' experience of working within the corporate and commercial environment as a strategic HR & Finance Director, Business Partner to Board of Directors and Senior Leadership team. Combining working expertise and knowledge gained, she and her associates assist client businesses to gain the maximum from their HR function whether in terms of the quality, development and retention of staff, strategic business growth or managing a range of HR projects.



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Remote Working: The Challenge for People Managers

In my last corporate role, I had teams in 4 locations across the UK – Bournemouth (where I was based), Bristol, Croydon and Huddersfield – so managing people remotely was part of my role and something both I and my teams became used to. I was never with them all of the time and for the majority, I was only physically present once or twice a month, if that.

This was 10 years ago when there was no Zoom, no MS Teams, no Facetime – I was either physically present or on the end of the phone. Technology was not our friend. However, I'm pretty sure that, if you were to ask whether they felt they had the support they needed from me, they would say they did. We found ways around the distance and it became our 'normal'.

Faced with the challenges that COVID continues to present, this would not have phased either me or them but, for many people managers, managing remotely is something they have never done before and the challenges are significant. Even the most natural and intuitive people managers who enjoy this part of their roles and have always made time for their people are finding they are really struggling the longer they work from home. Undoubtedly, many of the people in their teams will be really struggling as well.

I have a feeling this global crisis will change the way we work forever and working from home will become the new 'normal', so we need to try and do things differently.

What are the typical challenges?

- **Lack of face-to-face supervision:** Managers worry that employees will not work as hard or as efficiently when they are separated - although research would indicate otherwise and many employees struggle with reduced access to managerial support and lack of regular communication.
- **Lack of access to information:** When they aren't all sitting together in the office, remote workers can become frustrated by the added time and effort needed to locate information from their colleagues. Even getting answers to what seem like simple questions can feel like a large obstacle when you're working from home.
- **Social isolation:** Loneliness is one of the most common complaints about remote work, with employees missing the informal social interaction of an office setting. Extraverts probably struggle with isolation more in the short term, particularly if they don't have opportunities to connect with

This can also translate into a lower willingness to giving others the benefit of the doubt in difficult situations – e.g. if you know your colleague is having a rough day, you will view a brusque email from them as a natural product of their stress but, if you receive this email from someone who's working from home with no understanding of their current circumstances, you're more likely to take offence.....

others in their remote work environment. However, over a longer period of time, isolation can cause any employee to feel less connected with their organization and can even result in feeling they want to work elsewhere.

- **Distractions at home:** How many photos have we seen recently of a parent holding a child and typing on a laptop, often sitting on a sofa or living-room floor. Typically, we encourage employers to ensure that their remote workers have both dedicated workspace and adequate childcare before allowing them to work remotely. Yet, in our current circumstances where many employees have had to transition to remote working without warning, there is a much greater chance that they will also be juggling childcare/home schooling and other parenting responsibilities alongside their work.

What can managers do differently?

- **Establish structured check-ins:** A daily call with each member of your team can work wonders or perhaps a daily team call, if they work collaboratively. The important thing is that the calls are regular and that they provide a forum in which employees know they can consult with you and that their concerns and questions will be heard. Your regular (monthly) 121's are still as important as ever – in fact, probably even more important now
- **Provide several different communication options:** Technology is now our friend and there are so many options – Zoom, MS Teams, Google Meet, Facetime - so there are no excuses!! Email alone is woefully inadequate and fraught with potential misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Telephone is better but you still can't see who you're talking to. Video calling has so many advantages, especially for smaller groups and can also help reduce the sense of isolation and it's much more personal.
- **Provide opportunities for remote social interaction:** One of the most significant changes a manager can make is to build in ways for employees to interact socially while working remotely.

The easiest way to establish some basic social interaction is to leave some time at the beginning of team calls just for non-work items - even if it's only "How was your weekend?" or "Did anyone watch XX programme last night?". You could also have a virtual pizza party or afternoon tea or wine tasting, where the pizza/afternoon tea/wine is delivered to all team members at the time of the video call or some other form of 'care packages' can be sent in advance to be opened and enjoyed simultaneously. Of course, there's always a quiz!!! While these types of events may sound artificial or forced, those who have tried this report that virtual events help reduce feelings of isolation and help to promote a sense of team belonging.

- **Talk to your people! Offer encouragement and emotional support:** Especially in the context of an abrupt shift to remote working, it is so important for managers to acknowledge stress, listen to employees' anxieties and concerns and empathize with their struggles. Ask how they're doing – not just once, but regularly – and then listen carefully to the answer. Let their concerns (rather than your own) be the focus of this conversation.

Research tells us that employees look to their managers to show them how to react to sudden changes or crisis situations and, if a manager communicates stress and helplessness, this will trickle down to their teams. Great people managers acknowledge the stress and anxiety their employees may be feeling in difficult circumstances, but also provide affirmation of their confidence and their ability to get through the challenges. Of course, managers may also be struggling and also need this same support from their managers – all the way up the line.....



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Rosemary has over 30 years' experience in HR for the private and public sectors and has run her own Dorset-based consultancy for the last 10 years. She and her team specialise in providing personalised, pragmatic advice on the full spectrum of HR issues as well as management skills training for people managers.

Virtual Presenting

When was your first time?

Perhaps it was a while ago now? Did you worry if you would be embarrassed? Or maybe you thought you wouldn't do it right? When it came to virtual presenting or hosting a virtual meeting many people had not done it before. Now as working from home is commonplace, have you or your teams had time to figure out why virtual presentations are not the same as in person presentations and how to improve them?

What makes virtual presenting feel different?

Intuitively you know that presenting virtually feels different, right? By understanding specifically what is missing from virtual presentations when compared to face-to-face meetings we can make the experience more comfortable, engaging and thus effective for all.

Here are some key differences and tips to get around them:

Less body language - because we do not see the full body on video, we are missing some pieces of the body language puzzle. This is true of the presenter and the rest



of the audience. We are also likely to be missing some hand gestures as they can be out of shot. In addition, even though we can see the face, we may be missing some of the important micro expressions.

As the presenter or host, instead of relying on being able to 'pick it up' if someone has a concern, make it as easy as possible for people to ask questions and give feedback. Be clear early on about the 'ways of working' for the presentation.

Let participants know how they can raise concerns or questions

- Do you want them to be on mute and only unmute to speak?
- If so, how do they ask a question – do you want them to put a virtual hand up or give a physical wave?
- Do you want them to put their questions in chat and you have a co-host who manages chat accordingly?

Time delay - no matter how good your Wi-Fi, virtual meetings suffer from some form of time delay. You will have experienced people accidentally speaking over one another or hearing awkward silences. Once you know this you can learn how to make it less of a challenge.

Let participants know when they can speak

The time delay can make it hard during discussions for people to know how to 'interrupt' or get their views heard. In addition to the earlier tips consider:

- As the presenter, how can you make an extra effort to ensure you 'hear' from everyone? Can you go around one by one to check everyone has been involved? A co-host can be very handy for this task.
- You don't have to hear everyone speak, as this is very time consuming in large groups. You could use the chat function and make it clear you want to hear from everyone.



- If your audience are new to this type of interaction ask easier questions initially e.g., ask for a score from 1-10 on how they feel about something relevant.

Group dynamics - In a meeting room style presentation the audience will have unconsciously created some group dynamics between themselves and others around them which builds another layer of engagement. Plan how to recreate this consciously:

- Can you use breakout rooms to give people (especially with an introverted preference) a more comfortable environment in which to build group dynamics (and get their voice heard)?
- Can you plan for a few extra minutes at the beginning or end of each section, or in breaks to allow people to interact with one another?
- Where can you open the microphone and invite comments, encouraging others to build on that comment or idea?

With thought and planning it is possible to make virtual presentations and meetings engaging, persuasive and inspiring. As the dust begins to settle and we get used to this new way of working has there ever been a more sensible time to invest in getting yourself and your teams presenting online to the best of their abilities?

We run open and in-house virtual presentation skills training courses and hold free taster sessions. Check our [virtual presentation webpage](#) for more information.



For many businesses, inclusion and diversity is one of the leading issues on the agenda as we move into 2021.

Although simply saying that you welcome, recognise and champion difference in your workplace seems to be the norm at the moment, actually striving to back up this statement with data can be a little more challenging. The reality is that many employers can struggle to quantify how their talent acquisition strategy does, or in some cases does not, drive diversity and inclusion.

If you're keen to understand and improve inclusion and diversity throughout your talent acquisition process, the following tasks and considerations will help you to recognise, evaluate and better your approach when engaging with new talent, whatever the role you may be looking to fill.

Take a closer look at your current data

The first stage to evaluating and improving your talent and acquisition strategy in terms of inclusion and diversity is to call on the data you already have readily available within your organisation.

Are you failing to attract applications from a certain demographic? Are certain people more prone to applying for a role with you? If so, who are they?

By studying existing data, you can pinpoint any areas where diversity and inclusion may be failing within your application process. Flagging this up for further investigation is a powerful first step towards driving truly inclusive and diverse practices across your recruitment activity.

Is your application process inherently D&I friendly?

Delving deeper into every element of your application process can involve asking the tough questions. Could you be unconsciously putting off some people from applying for your vacancies for example?

Driving diversity and inclusion in your talent acquisition process

Does the recruitment area of your website depict plenty of white, able-bodied personnel and leave out images of people from different ethnicities say or disabilities?

How (and by whom) are your applications being pre-screened? Is unconscious bias being allowed to creep in even before you get to see the short listed applicants?

Could it be that the forms used as part of the recruitment process, or even the job specs themselves, fail to explicitly state that you welcome applications from people with different backgrounds? Is it possible that your job advert may be off-putting to those with mobility issues thanks to the unconscious use of terminology such as 'climb the ladder' or 'step up to the challenge'?

Although these aspects may be subtle, they are barriers to diversity and inclusion in the modern workplace.

Reconsider your selection panel

Finally, you'll need to remove any unconscious bias at the final part of the recruitment process.

Take a closer look at your selection panel. Are the people seated on that panel representative of inclusion and diversity in your workplace or are they all from similar backgrounds? Have they been given any training on D&I recently?

These are all questions that need to be asked to ensure a 'recruit like me' mentality is removed from every stage of the recruitment process. It is only by reassessing your talent acquisition process and asking the difficult, probing questions that turn a spotlight on existing practises that you can truly identify and overcome any barriers towards being a workforce that celebrates, nurtures and champions difference.



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Dee founded Simply Amazing Training in 2007. Her goal was to help professionals like herself to achieve success. But it wasn't just about teaching them the practical skills they needed to increase their self-confidence, but crucially (and unlike most other trainers), working on their mindset too. (You may have heard about her Public Speaking Monkeys!?) Dee wanted to draw out delegates' inner confidence, so they felt worthy of speaking up and being heard. Her aim was to bring out the very best in people. Over a decade on, 22 awards and two books later and Dee and the team are even more passionate about helping people navigate this 'new normal'.



COVID-19

CORONA VIRUS



COVID-19 Vaccinations - 10 Key Issues for Employers

IS CORONAVIRUS VACCINATION A CURE THAT WILL SOLVE MANY CHALLENGES FACED BY EMPLOYERS OR DOES IT JUST INJECT FURTHER ISSUES FOR EMPLOYERS TO DEAL WITH?

To be vaccinated or not to be vaccinated? That is the question being discussed in homes and in workplaces up and down the country. With the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine from the start of December, some sense of normality returning to the workplace in the near future is more of an attainable vision.

There are numerous employment law issues facing employers. We set out below 10 key issues employers are going to have to deal with as they face this next chapter of the virus.

1. Can you require your employees to be vaccinated?

Employers found to be forcibly vaccinating their workforce are likely to be committing the offences of assault and battery and on this basis, it is unlikely that any mandatory vaccination programme put in place by employers will be appropriate. However, what if the employer considers the vaccination of its workforce to be a reasonable management instruction? In some sectors where COVID-19 presents an increased risk of outbreaks, morbidity and mortality it is conceivable that employers may be able to argue that asking employees to take the vaccine is a reasonable management request; therefore, giving rise to disciplinary action on refusal.

However, with this comes the risk to the employer's reputation and relationship with its workforce. It is doubtful that any employer would want to be labelled as one of the first employers to dismiss on the grounds of an employee refusing to be vaccinated. Any such behaviour is also likely to lead to a breakdown in the employer/employee relationship and could ultimately lead to claims of a breach of trust and confidence/constructive dismissal.

2. Could an employer's mandatory vaccination programme risk discrimination claims?

In a word, yes. Whilst much of the early debate has centred around individual choice it must not be forgotten that requiring employees to be vaccinated could give rise to potential discrimination claims. Employees may have medical conditions that prevent them being vaccinated or the employee falls into those individuals advised against having the vaccine including pregnant employees, anyone trying to conceive or anyone with significant allergies.

For others, a refusal might be based on the employee's own religion and/or beliefs. Any such considerations are likely to push to the heart of whether a refusal is ultimately reasonable or not both from an unfair dismissal and a discrimination perspective.

3. It's not just employees an employer needs to be worried about

It is not of course just employees who can spread coronavirus. If an employer allows contractors, visitors and other third parties on site this is likely to weaken an employer's argument that all employees have to be vaccinated. As part of the communication strategy outlined below, employers should seek to understand the reasoning behind any refusal to be vaccinated and explore alternatives where possible.

4. How best to encourage a high percentage of employees to agree to being vaccinated?

It is expected that most employers will not look to impose a mandatory vaccination requirement on their employees,

particularly in the light of messaging from the Government which has made clear that there are no plans for the vaccinations to be made mandatory.

As an alternative to imposing a mandatory vaccination programme, employers are advised to adopt a clear communication strategy so that employees are well informed of the impact of COVID-19 on the business and are given all the necessary information to make their decision. Where employers are under time pressure to confirm the number of vaccinations required, fast track discussions should be had with all employees with the aim of securing a high percentage of consent while the opportunity to obtain vaccinations is still open to their business. This is particularly relevant at this early stage of the vaccination rollout as it may be that employers only receive one opportunity to access the vaccine.

5. Can those workers who will not, or are unable to, be vaccinated be prevented from attending the workplace?

Understandably, employers will be concerned about the risk of COVID-19 returning to the workplace and continuing to spread amongst those who have not received the vaccination. Careful consideration will need to be given as to whether it is appropriate to stop those who have not been vaccinated from entering the workplace. Where taking the vaccine is seen to be a reasonable management instruction, it is possible that restricting access would be considered a reasonable precaution.

6. Can an employer make an offer of employment conditional upon an employee proving that they have been vaccinated?

Potentially, yes. Whilst the risks of discrimination claims (as referred to above) will remain, an employer will not face the possibility of claims of unfair dismissal from prospective employees.

New starters may not have received a vaccine unless they fall into one of the groups that are to receive early vaccinations. Employers will also need to be aware that setting such a condition will almost inevitably lead to delays in the recruitment process.

7. Vaccinations and GDPR considerations

In order to contain and control COVID-19 within the workplace, many employers will be keen to record who has and has not received the vaccination. From a GDPR and privacy perspective, this creates its own challenges as the mere fact that someone has or has not received a vaccine will constitute special category data concerning health.

Employers will therefore need to ensure that any records are kept in accordance with GDPR and privacy laws. Employee Privacy Policies should also be reviewed and updated accordingly.

8. The importance of maintaining current practices

Whilst it is hoped that there is now light at the end of the tunnel following the commencement of the vaccination programme, given how long it is going to take before everyone has been vaccinated employers should ensure that they maintain all of the practices which have become commonplace like social distancing, the use of PPE and hand sanitiser. Employers will need to continue to implement these practices for the foreseeable future, particularly where 100% take-up of the vaccine has not been achieved or where new starters have yet to receive the vaccine or employers do not require contractors or visitors to be vaccinated.

9. Need to review risk assessments

Any risk assessments carried out in response to COVID-19 may require updating to refer to the prospect of being vaccinated to protect against the risks of the virus. As part of this internal review of risk assessments, employers are minded to consider alternative measures to receiving the vaccine. This will be of particular importance to those who are unable to receive the vaccine including those who are pregnant, trying to conceive or prone to allergic reactions.

10. The ongoing need to be flexible

If we have learnt only one lesson over the last nine months, it is the need to be flexible. As we transition optimistically to this new chapter, vaccine development will no doubt continue and availability will fluctuate. There are still many outstanding questions and as ever employers will need to be flexible and ensure that they are fully aware of the various issues that arise from this latest development.



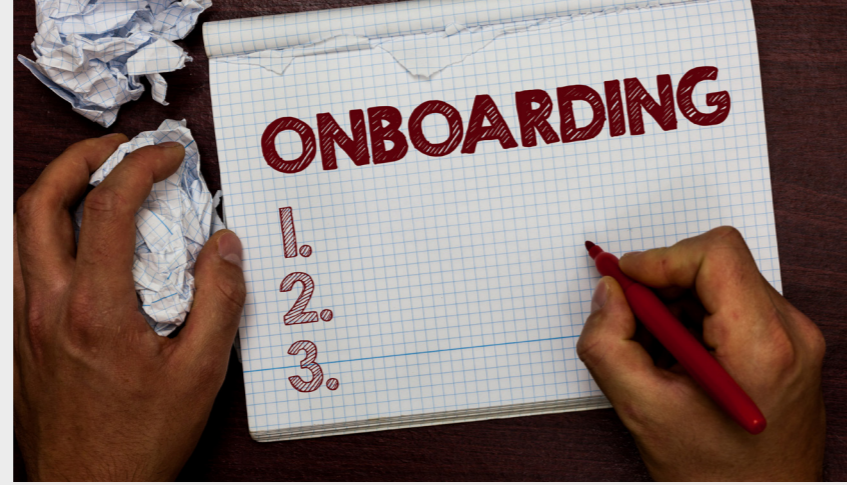
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Why you should evaluate your onboarding process post COVID



Unusually this year for many companies that may have already had a robust onboarding strategy in place, this could be the first time that the majority of new employees are being remotely onboarded, many of which may never have been into your offices or indeed may now be working from home on a permanent basis. So now more than ever is the time to assess what you are doing and look at ways in which you can streamline and improve the onboarding process. Recruiting the best candidates is just the beginning, welcoming new hirers into the team is now a whole different ball game, it's not uncommon still for candidates to go through a lengthy recruitment process only to not start a role due to lack of communication or leave a role a few weeks later due to a poor onboarding experience. We are now also dealing with remote work life balance, virtual team building, remote training and the element of trust that employees are doing what they should be doing. There is a lot to consider.

So where do you start?

Assess the Data

Where you are now, what is your turnover within a certain period of new hires joining you? Where do you want to be? Set some objectives of what you want to achieve, be it improve retention, engagement, productivity, time to competency. Why not start with a survey to the new hirers that you have onboarded since COVID, this will highlight what has gone right and now with the changed landscape what you may need to rethink or improve. It will highlight trends and themes, strengths and weaknesses of the process, helping to formulate a new best practice. Why not survey the managers paying particular attention to those that have excellent retention rates within their team for onboarding and engagement, gaining insights into what they are doing well and equally those managers who have higher levels of attrition to see what they are doing or not doing that could be increasing those levels and analyse the themes and trends from that data. There could be some quick wins.

Preparation

Successful onboarding starts well in advance of a new hire joining you, you want them to

have already bought into your company's culture and values so think about how you can reinforce those whilst waiting for the new hire to join you. Communication now is key, let them know that there is a plan in place and what it entails. Think about administrative matters in advance, setting up virtual workspace, logins and access to equipment to encourage new starters to integrate into their virtual surroundings as early as possible thus freeing up the first few days of their role enabling them to integrate quicker and start to build relationships with their new colleagues.

Engagement

Onboarding is a chance to really channel the enthusiasm of a new hire, engage with the team and connect with the company's culture and values. Quicker engagement leads to more embedded employee commitment and could ultimately be the deciding factor in whether they decide to stay or leave. This commitment will ensure they have bought in to what your company's values and ethos are about that they are committed to. That's why it's vital to hold on to your talent in order to unlock people's full potential.

Integration

Help them settle in as quickly as possible, give them a buddy, announce their arrival, make it personal; introduce them to their new team and colleagues, (maybe an online team meeting or welcome meeting). Make sure that they are familiar with their virtual workspace, virtual dress codes, lunch arrangements and social media policies. At this stage any guesswork and extra stress should be minimised particularly as there is so much that is potentially different to being in the office. Set expectations and explain what they need to know before they need to know it, assuring new and existing employees that they are valued and have all the necessary tools to succeed. This clearly shows that you care about your employees and makes it less likely they will look elsewhere and eliminates the stress of starting a new role.

Development

A new employee needs to get to grips with their role and understand how it relates to your company's overall structure and the

bigger picture. Have regular catch-ups, daily, weekly, monthly etc during the initial probation period to ensure they are on track and becoming competent in the role. These can then become less frequent as time progresses and expectations are met. Whilst it is important to let your new employee know you are accessible, in reality due to business needs you may not be available as much as they would like, in which case, many companies offer a buddy/mentor within the business that can help entrench new employees and ensure a good onboarding experience.

Retention

According to the CareerBuilder study, seven out of ten workers admit that they search for jobs as part of their "regular routine" and 35% are searching for a job within weeks of starting a new position. In essence, retention of staff for many companies is a key focus and by getting the onboarding process right you will help increase your retention rate and reduce your cost per hire. Turnover is expensive so it's important to protect your recruitment investment with consistency, engagement and information, without being overwhelming. A report carried out by Oxford Economics revealed that replacing members of staff incurs costs of up to £30,614 per person for employers: and that's without taking into account the risk to productivity and morale of your existing staff.

Expectations

Set expectations, now more than ever with you unable to see what is happening within the workplace, it is vital that expectations and deliverables are agreed. Create goals that cultivate retention and from these create the metrics to help measure the success of your new hire, and your adjusted onboarding process. Start with measuring your six month and twelve-month retention rates of new hires and compare the results to when you had a Pre COVID onboarding process. The most important metrics to measuring success are usually employee engagement surveys, retention, and time to productivity. However you decide to do it, proper onboarding gets employees up to productive levels quicker and embedded within your company in a much more effective way.



Don't delay if you want the best candidates

With unemployment having increased to 4.5% as reported by ONS it is not surprising that some companies are being inundated with applications. Indeed have recently reported 1.2 million job vacancies across the UK, the market is busy. That said, there is being busy responding to applications and then there is actually filling your job, often the two don't go hand in hand and that's where being overwhelmed and the candidate experience can often fall down or you risk losing those exceptional candidates by getting bogged down with the admin. With many companies reporting hundreds, possibly even thousands of applications that's a lot to manage especially if it is just one part of your day job.

Hiring can be a challenge, from initially deciding that you actually want to hire to the actual time taken to hire. No one wants to make a mistake, hiring the wrong person can be costly so it pays to get it right but taking too long can cost a lot more in the long run!

Too longer advert window can result in too many applications and a long lead time from that first application. Taking too long to interview can put off candidates and make them think that it is not a business they want to work for, taking too long to make an offer can make candidates doubt that it is a brand they want to work for and during all this poor recruitment process, the overall effect is how very damaging it can be to a brand in terms of candidates future applications or not even wanting to be a customer, not to mention telling their friends and family of their negative experience.

Benchmarks from Glassdoor 2020 shows the average length of the job interview process in the UK is 27.5 days. If your recruitment process is longer than this, here are three reminders why an efficient recruitment process and candidate experience is important.

1. You risk losing the perfect candidate

If you are trying to attract top talent there is likely to be competition and you risk the applicant dropping out if you don't offer an interview or the job quickly enough and your competitors do. If you recognise a really good fit for your vacancy, don't delay in issuing an interview

date or job offer, or you may find yourself pipped to the post or part of a bidding war.

2. Delays damage your brand

It's a fact that poorly managed recruitment processes damage brands and create negative impressions. Glassdoor reported recently that when making a decision on where to apply for a job, 84% of employees/job seekers say the reputation of a company as an employer of choice is important. Lack of communication and process gives the impression that the company could lack interest in its people not to mention common courtesy.

3. The impact on productivity

On top of all this a lengthy recruitment process could leave a role unfilled and that work not getting done or creating further pressure on others which can create even more issues longer term including increased turnover in the department, stress, reduced productivity etc...

How do you overcome a slow recruitment process?

Review the current system you have in place, nail down the process, set timeframes and dates for each stage of the process and the people involved. Once you have identified the time you need you can plan your resources accordingly and hopefully quicken the process or alternatively now you know what's involved why not consider using a specialist recruitment agency? At Bond Williams we can kick start your recruitment process, we recruit all day every day that's our job and we draw on our 230 years of accumulative experience to do it! We will expose your job advert to relevant candidates who are actively looking, match your criteria and in turn drastically streamline the job of short-listing thus giving you the time back to do your day job. With a detailed understanding of a company's unique recruitment needs and tailor making our service we can accurately match and reduce the time it takes to fill a vacancy.



HR BUDGET PLANNING: IMPORTANT POINTS TO CONSIDER.

A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE HR BUDGET IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOLS FOR ANY BUSINESS. IN PART TWO OF HR BUDGET PLANNING, WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE IMPORTANT POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING YOUR HR BUDGET TO ENSURE ALL THE KEY FACTORS ARE COVERED.

Corporate goals and business objectives

This is a key area of the budget process. It is important that you understand what the business goals and objectives are for the next 5 years. The goals are normally set in to short and long term and in order to support the business fully, your budget should align with the business strategic and commercial goals and objectives, taking in to account your business stakeholders, geographical and economical changes and challenges faced by the business and the need to make a profit. These points should also be identified in your business plan, especially under your SWAT analysis. Hopefully the corporate goals and objectives have been clearly communicated and discussed so that you are creating a strategic budget to support the delivery of these goals and objectives. The next 18 months being critical as many businesses will need to adapt and change in order to survive and thrive and you will be key in supporting those decisions.

Time with your Stakeholders and other Business Functions

Business leaders and stakeholders often feel that HR is detached from the business and are not always sure of the effectiveness or the need for HR presence unless something goes wrong. To me this is a very poor perception of a HR function. But the key to the effectiveness of HR during the budget process is engagement, communication and understanding of how they can help that area of business improve, elevate, develop and grow and save costs. So it is critical that you spend time understanding what your stakeholders have as goals and objectives and how you can help them deliver this. This could be delivering a specific service, increasing headcount, increasing or

maintaining gross margin %, having a gap within a framework, taking on new business. It is also important that you understand their KPI's and SLA's that the function or operation has to deliver and you work in partnership to provide a solution as part of the budget plan. This could be as simple as budgeting for better HR analytical software that allows more proactive decisions.

Benefits review and business needs (Including Health and Insurance)

Company benefits are key in supporting Employee Value Proposition (EVP) and key to the attraction and recruitment as well as retaining employees. Start by reviewing your current benefits against the job market and businesses in your surrounding area followed by costs and effectiveness of the benefit/ service and ask the question does it meet the current organisational requirements or do you need to look at other alternatives and options. This should also be in line with organisation objectives and HR business resilience plan.

Based on the current pandemic and a large % of office workers now working remotely from home, employee wellbeing and wellness should be key considerations for the 2021 budget. What that means will differ for each company depending on the tools and benefits you currently have in place and how accessible it is to your employees. Benefits could include EAP services, Occupational Health, Mental Health First Aiders, online benefits packages, access to wellness and well-being courses, and mind set sessions.

Systems integration opportunities

Take time to sit with other business functions

to see how you can create efficiencies and find improvements within your own processes. The implementation of ISO9001 and the goal to achieve IIP accreditation certainly drive HR to a better way of working (they are not everyone's priorities). But HR teams do collect and store a huge amount of data and interpreting, accessing and standardisation across the business can often create barriers. Looking at a robust cloud based HRIS to improve efficiency, communication and support with GDPR compliance is highly beneficial. Improving the candidate journey via an ATS system that also integrates into HRIS could support the recruitment process and on boarding.

Integration

Improving the HRIS system with additional functionality, performance management, time & absence management, training & development, pulse surveys and notifications; Payroll can create support accuracy, efficiency and standardisation across many functions including Finance and operational teams.

Compliance and Audit

Upcoming employment legislation and changes via the professional regulatory bodies that the business is accountable too often critically impact the HR function and should be considered and planned for. Including the right resources and tools to support the needed change, allowing a smooth and harmonious transition.

Connecting with an external partner to support with an annual HR audit and compliance is also key to support the development of the HR function but also to improve best practices within the organisation.

Investments

This is one area that I always feel should be done in collaboration with your IT support/ function as your wish list of investments are invariably supported and managed by IT, therefore they are also the budget holders and may already have a plan in place.

Review the current equipment you have to work with as a HR function, training and recruitment. Does your current software need changing or upgrading? Do you need an APP developed to provide a better HRIS self-service experience to your employees? Would a new e-learning platform support the training team and the delivery of remote training? Would a project management tool help with communication between the leadership team? Are we zoomed out!! What other solution would support the business going forward?

Headcount and Future requirements

It is key that you have access to and are happy with the accuracy of the year end headcount per operational function and service. Understand the business needs and trends that impact on the monthly operational delivery, including seasonal demand, absence %, attrition %, hours required to fulfil a delivery service (KPI & SLA's), employee holidays and internal progression, all of which impact on your recruitment planning and forecasting ensuring that you are proactive rather than reactive. The key to all, being constant communication and business partnering. We all appreciate a good headcount plan that is aligned with service delivery.

The operational and business headcount also support with understating and budgeting the largest business cost which is **Employees' salaries & wages both under direct costs and overheads.**

It is important that you spend a considerable amount of time reviewing and agreeing the various costs that need to be considered under this area of the budget and ensuring that changes are reflected correctly.

This could be increased costs due to increase in headcount or a change plan as a result of business reorganisation and redeployment. Salary increases, bonus or incentive payments, internal promotions, changes to NMW and cost implications, recruitment costs, temporary staff costs and other PAYE related costs. Understand the core number of staff needed to deliver a function or service and plan correctly around peak times and on-boarding time lines. Ensure you understand what the cost implications are to the business and the skills you will be looking for.



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Pem has over 15 years' experience of working within the corporate and commercial environment as a strategic HR & Finance Director, Business Partner to Board of Directors and Senior Leadership team. Combining working expertise and knowledge gained, she and her associates assist client businesses to gain the maximum from their HR function whether in terms of the quality, development and retention of staff, strategic business growth or managing a range of HR projects.

The Headcount plan and HR analytics should also support identifying key areas of improvement and the effectiveness of the HR Function through the employee life cycle. The ratio of employees to HR support should always be reviewed.

Training and Development

Training and development is key to business flexibility, growth and resilience. It is also the one budget that often gets removed or reduced through the Budgeting process. This can be an area that calls for creativity if there is no internal function or support for the delivery of training aligned with business needs and objectives. Expenditure on learning and development is often challenged if there is no measurable benefit to the organisation. The right training and the delivery can support personal career development, retention and engagement and support with overall business strategy.

Using data from previous years as a guideline can support with estimating the cost of employee training and development, this can be as basic as calculating the cost of joining webinars, attending seminars, attending conferences, education reimbursement plan, certifications, CPD, apprentices and available training grants to specific or specialist training to improve skills competencies and business resilience.

It is important that you spend time with your stakeholders to understand the training needs for their section, function or department and create a plan on how it could be delivered. Creating a learning development strategy can help you outline how your organisation develops its employee's capabilities, skills and competencies to remain successful and it is a key part of the delivery of the overall business strategy. Make sure that you are also looking at internal data and addressing skills gaps identified as a result of staff retention issues, performance issues, ER cases or recent pulse surveys. The last 9 months will also have an impact in next year's budget, developing your people remotely and how you are supporting them while on furlough will also be key. As part of your budget process you also need to identify key training and development to support your leadership team to become more adaptable and resilient. In some cases this can only be done via external coaches and mentors.

Understand the impact and ROI of your investments

Budget suggestions and improvements can often be seen as a massive outlay of costs without any immediate return. Therefore it is important you understand the ROI on

investment that you are asking the business to support, and are able to track the benefits, show opportunities and improvements as a result.

Revisit and revise

The first draft is neither the final draft and many are adjusting long past the budget submission date. This is normally as a result discussions with clients and stakeholders who are also completing their budgets and forecasting for the following financial year or requested by the leadership team as a result of amalgamating all the budgets. This is the time best not to interrupt the finance team! They will already be on V5 of the first budget and no doubt coming back to have conversations with you as to how we can cut costs and show clear ROI on your proposed budget.

Please don't assume that once you have done a budget that is the end of the process. It is important that you revise and revisit your budgets and plan your annual calendar of when you want to schedule the expenditure and if it is still needed or superseded by another priority. You should also have control of your budget going forward and understand the key factors that create a variance from your budget and monthly forecast and are able to be proactive with your finding to support the business and leadership team. If you don't already partner with finance, arrange some time, learn what you can do with the data provided, learn how to use your HR analytics with that information, understand your numbers, review and monitor your budgets and make sure there are no surprises and finally make better decisions.

Final points

You are not an accountant, the budgeting process does not need to be a nightmare!! Don't worry if you need to ask for help. Don't do the budget just a few minutes before the deadline. Take time to plan and review your budget, have meaningful conversations with your stakeholders and make sure you are aligned with the business needs.

If you would like further advice or support on HR Budget Planning or any other HR related issues, contact Pem: info@treenhill.co.uk





EMPLOYER INTERVIEW ADVICE

With the current climate as it is, the old-fashioned face to face interview may never be the same again, be it virtual interviews, social distancing face to face interviews or assessment centres. With more people now working from home and less likely to return back to permanent office-based working, now more than ever is a great time to think about evaluating your processes including tightening up your recruitment criteria.

Asking the same questions of every candidate

The interview process may feel monotonous but it's crucial to have a list of set questions you ask all candidates so you have a baseline assessment to work from. It's good to ask the set questions at the beginning of the interview as this gives the start of the process a formal structure and ensures the most vital information is extracted before anyone loses focus. You can use the answers given to the set questions to shape what comes next. It may be quickly evident that the candidate is unsuitable for the role or perhaps their answers need further exploration.

Asking non-work questions

There's a fine line between asking personal questions to build a wider picture of an interviewee's character and that of professional discrimination. Off limit questions include anything about marital status, sexual persuasion, age, parental responsibilities and desires, religious beliefs and trade union/political affiliations. If you feel knowing a bit more about a candidates' life outside of work would build a more rounded picture, refer to the CV. Ask people about any hobbies or interests that they have listed, or enquire whether there are any social activities or clubs at their current company that they are involved with.

Asking unexpected questions

There are hundreds of online articles advising candidates how to give the perfect interview and listing the most commonly asked questions but coaching can lead to scripted answers that reveal very little about the person sat in front of you. Asking unexpected but relevant questions will give you an indication of how the person handles pressure and whether they'd be a good fit for your company. Some more unconventional lines of questioning include asking how their current co-workers would describe them; what would be the first three things they'd like to learn on their first day at the company and what training or development they would most like to embark on.

The questions don't have to be work-related either. Employers have disclosed some very leftfield enquiries designed to see how creative a candidate is, whether they think on their feet and how seriously they take themselves. Some of the most original questions include: "If you were a kitchen utensil, what would you be?", "How would you describe the colour yellow to a blind person?" and "How weird are you on a scale of 1 to 10?".

Testing candidates

If you are interviewing for an audio typist, no one would bat an eyelid if you asked the interviewee to conduct a 'words per minute' typing test but where does recruitment sit with asking candidates outside of clerical positions to undertake tests?

Aptitude, concentration, skills-based and psychometric tests provide a counterbalance to a CV, and give a better insight into a person's openness to criticism, potential, ability, flexibility, aspirations and work ethics. What tests you employ will be shaped by your sector and the role you are advertising but

there are, however, more unconventional tests that may help you make informed decisions.

Tests with no right answer

Some companies use problem-solving tasks to evaluate a candidate's approach, preferring to watch their reaction and approach rather than caring whether they solve the task. Giving someone a Rubik's Cube to sort is a good example.

Social tests

If the submitted CVs have allowed you to whittle down candidates with the right qualifications and skills, your interview may be to discover who could be the best social fit within your company. At one end of the scale is exposing the candidates to the team they would be working with directly after the interview to see how they interact but there are more leftfield tests, with some companies inviting interviewees to join them in a game of table tennis to measure their character and attitude to winning.

Interviews are a really great way to promote your brand, having well-trained interviewers promoting your company and conducting interviews gives the best experience to potential candidates whether they get the job or not and they will continue to promote your name in the marketplace as having had a great experience and being a great place to work. Equally a bad interview or bad experience as we all know can spread and have a detrimental effect both on your brand, future recruitment and bottom line.

If you would like advice or help with assessing your interview questions, please [contact us](#).

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