

Preparing for the Post-Pandemic Hiring Rush

By Roy Maurer

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Intense competition for hourly workers is expected this summer as the COVID-19 crisis loosens its grip in the U.S., the economy rebounds and businesses aim to get fully staffed after having to lay off workers during the pandemic.

Quincy Valencia, vice president of product innovation at workforce solutions firm AMS, headquartered in London, helps lead Hourly by AMS, a platform designed specifically for high-volume, hourly hiring. Valencia spoke with *SHRM Online* about the anticipated hiring crush and what employers can do about it.

SHRM Online: What can recruiters expect from the labor market this summer?

Valencia: Many businesses, especially in the hospitality industry, are targeting September as a date for full reopening. This correlates with the first busy season for the logistics/shipping industry, which always has a big influx of hiring in August and September.

We are facing a convergence of all these industries—retail, shipping, hospitality and more—all trying to hire at the same time. Recruiters are going to face increased competition for hourly workers as all these industries look to hire. With increased job availability, people have the opportunity to be picky.

SHRM Online: How can recruiters best prepare for the hiring rush?

Valencia: The pandemic taught us hourly workers are essential and they should be treated as such. The applicant experience reflects the employment experience. If you have a poor hiring process, candidates aren't going to want to work for you, and they can and will go elsewhere.

You can lead with empathy and create a mobile-friendly, easy and intuitive application process. Hiring managers of hourly workers are wearing many hats and often lack time, tools and proper training for recruiting. As you prepare for the hiring rush, equip your hiring managers with a process that makes sense for them. Start now by stripping away the inefficiencies of your hiring process, such as requiring a resume for a low-barrier-to-entry job, asking for duplicative data entry or holding too many interviews. By removing these hurdles, you can better set up hiring managers for success.

SHRM Online: How can technology be used to scale hiring?

Valencia: Technology designed to meet the needs of hiring managers, recruiters and candidates is key in scaling hiring. The pandemic increased the number of businesses turning to technology for automation. But it's important to remember automation should free recruiters up to actually recruit, not remove humans from your hiring process. For example, automation can help narrow down the number of applications to identify the most qualified candidates. Additionally, tools like chatbots can remove inefficiencies by working in the background to automate the more administrative portions of the hiring process.

SHRM Online: What metrics are most important for high-volume, hourly recruiting?



Quincy Valencia

Feedback

Valencia: If you only measure three things in high-volume, hourly recruiting, they should be these:

Time to offer. This should be measured from the time a requisition is posted to the time a candidate accepts an offer. And because speed is one of the most important factors in high-volume recruiting, this is best measured in hours instead of days. If it's taking longer, companies should re-evaluate their sources, their application and the process overall.

Number of candidates interviewed to hire. For high-volume roles, it's important not to overcomplicate the hiring decision. If it's taking meeting more than two or three candidates to make a hiring decision, either your posting is not actually reflective of what a qualified applicant looks like, or your interviewer/hiring manager may need additional training.

Hires by source. I often see organizations too focused on top-of-funnel [the beginning of the recruiting process], without really knowing the efficacy of the source or publisher that they've invested so much money in. At the end of the day, what matters is that a source produces candidates that actually show up to an interview, accept an offer and start the job. Sourcing candidates is expensive. The goal should be to pay to attract the fewest number of applicants required to fill a job. Having 1,000 applicants overnight is not only expensive, [but] the odds that each of those candidates will even get a response, much less an interview, are slim, and then you've created a negative brand experience. Hires trump top-of-funnel volume, every time.

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