**What could recruitment look like after Covid 19?**

Recruitment has always been a fast-changing environment. As an industry, we have always needed to adapt and change. To react to fluctuating markets, differing trends, and new legislation. But none have required us to adapt as much, and as quickly, as the situation we are currently faced with.

We have all needed to adjust. Furloughed employees, some sectors bursting with activity, others entrenched, while some, sadly, downsize.

But as we start to move towards a returning of economic activity now is a good time to ask a question.

What will Recruitment look like after Covid-19 ?

Here are our thoughts on 3 areas.

Changing nature of the talent pool

For employers who have a need for on-site working, they will face specific challenges. The talent pool available to them may become more restricted. Reduced public transport capacity may limit the accessibility of potential staff. Car sharing may become less appealing to colleagues. New recruits may become harder to attract as their view of travel time and distance changes.

Other employers may have seen their business adapt during the lockdown. Embracing remote working and adopting more flexible working. Having gained experience and confidence employers may seek to maintain this way of working. Removing the need for staff to attend the office daily will open access to a much wider talent pool.

As an example, a business may decide that customer service or finance staff can work away from the office. The geographic restriction of finding the right calibre of staff is now removed. The ability to recruit quality personal from other areas of the country becomes a possibility. This may bring some unforeseen benefits. A wider pool of talent may result in an uplifting of skills or experience? It may result in a reduction of costs if recruited staff are from less salary sensitive areas of the country.

But do employers have the time to find and access this wider talent pool? Are they going to be able to grasp these benefits? As employers see the potential in casting their recruitment net wider may need support to do so. They will look to recruitment agencies to search for this new talent pool on their behalf. Finding this talent will only be part of the answer. Employers will want recruitment agencies to spend more time screening those potential recruits. Could we see an increase in online assessments by recruiters on behalf of employers?

And what of the employee? Will the recent experience of working remotely lead employees to want more of the same going forward? Will the recent reduction in travelling time have opened a new work life balance that will be sort going forward? Will employees want to protect their recent unexpected reduction in travel costs? Will employers be challenged as to how they satisfy career aspirations for remote workers?

The talent pool is going to change and so are the demands of both employers and employees.

Interviews have changed

The pleasure of a face to face meeting at the office as part of the recruitment process has passed. For the medium term, at least. The recruitment process built around the prospective candidate attending an office for an interview, or interviews, will be fondly remembered by us all.

Employers are already embracing innovative digital based solutions to support their recruitment processes. The use of Zoom, Teams or Blue Jeans video conferencing for interviews has been quickly adopted. The advantages are being loudly proclaimed.

* Greater flexibility for interviewers and interviewee.
* Speeding up of the process for all.
* Reducing costs and travel expenditure.
* Ease of use.

But this new way of interviewing is not without its challenges. As we move from what was recognised by all parties as a ‘needs must’ approach to a more permanent way of operating some questions arise:

* Do we record those interviews so we can refer to them?
* Have all candidates the same access to the online tools?
* Do online interviews allow us to share company values?
* Do they allow candidates to communicate their personality?
* How does multiple interviewers feel to the candidate when conducted online?
* If used, should we ask our recruitment company to facilitate the call?

This new way of working will not just impact interviews. It will bring other changes.

* Employers will find assessment days a thing of the past.
* What will graduate fairs look like going forward?
* We will see more use of online assessments by employers and agencies?
* Will candidates be asked to upload a video as part of their application?
* Will we see a move towards more online, interactive CV’s?

The method and evaluation of interviews has changed and will continue to do so.

New onboarding

The impact on the available pool of talent for employers may be debated. The changing nature of the interview process less so. But certainly, the onboarding process for employers is going to look quite different.

The onboarding process had already started to migrate online. The impact of Covid-19 has been to push this forward. To speed up the journey. Increasingly we will see.

* Offer letters will be digital. So will acceptances.
* Candidate ID verification will be online.
* Passports and Driving Licences verified through online tools.
* Welcome packs sent and watched.
* Health and safety documentation presented digitally.

Remote employees will need additional thought. How are employers going to manage the experience of newly recruited remote workers onboarding?

* How do you keep them engaged?
* How do you manage the distribution of PC’s, phones, or other material?
* Do you ask them to carry out a safety assessment of their workplace?
* Do you need to set aside specific time so you can regularly engage with them through the process?
* Can you move some of these actions to our Recruitment Agency?

This is not an exhaustive list. Onboarding is going to continue to move online and present new challenges for all those involved in the recruitment process.