

STAR UPDATE

MONTHLY INSIGHTS FROM THE MRINETWORK TEAM OF STAFFING PROFESSIONALS, TALENT ADVISORS & RECRUITMENT EXPERTS

Three tips on effective remote interviewing to make that critical hiring decision

Because the health and safety of the U.S. workforces and their families are at the forefront of everyone's mind during the current Coronavirus outbreak, many companies have implemented strict no travel policies. One of the outcomes of this is an increase in virtual job interviews via phone and video conferencing.

Some hiring managers and recruiters are actually seeing an upside to the restrictions. "They are able to get in touch with clients and candidates more easily because they're at home and may welcome the chance to speak with you," observes Suzanne Rice, Sr. Director, Business Services. "They're not traveling, which is often a big challenge for recruiters trying to meet potential candidates."

Although the practice of remote interviewing is not uncommon, now's a good time to review how to effectively identify the best candidates without a face-to-face meeting.

Keep the technology simple

You'll require a web camera with high resolution; Zoom or Skype (or any other video chat software) already installed; a neat and clean background; and a well-lit space. Your candidates might need some time to get these requirements together so tell them the specifics as soon as you can.

"Do a trial run a day or two before you conduct the interview," advises Rice. "Set up and test the camera and sound you will use for the actual interview. You want to eliminate technical difficulties as much as possible since they can be a distraction."

Put the candidate at ease

Focus on eye contact with the candidate. Look at the camera, using lean-forward body language to engage with them. "Maintain a friendly demeanor throughout the interview," says Rice. "This will help the candidate relax and encourage them to talk more naturally."

Rice also recommends that you spend more time listening attentively. You can provide insight about the business, the job and the team, but limit your own time for talking. "Be sure to give the candidate the opportunity to ask you questions at the end of the interview," she says. "If you're new to remote interviewing, you might even ask for suggestions on what might have been helpful to them."

Remember that it's a lot like a face-face-interview

Just as you would if you were meeting with the candidate in your office, have a clearly defined profile of the responsibilities and duties of the job the candidate is applying for, as well as the abilities, skills and knowledge needed to perform them. Prepare objective, behavior-based questions that assess their suitability for the work and their potential to succeed in your culture.

If the position will report to a manager under you, you may want to include that person in the interview. "This gives them a chance to ask more job-specific questions and determine if the candidate will fit into their team," says Rice.

Although some companies are delaying the hiring process because of the virus, businesses that elect to use video conferencing to stay on track with hiring will be better positioned following the upheaval, especially in today's candidate-tight environment. Amidst health concerns and disruptions, they are demonstrating their ability to keep their businesses on a steady course.