

How has recruitment evolved?

Over the last few decades, the recruitment sector has evolved. This has shaped the industry that we know today. From the platforms that recruiters use to promote jobs, the methods that they adopt to communicate with candidates and the tactics that they use to meet and satisfy client demands, the approach of recruiters has largely changed over the years and will continually evolve as they strive to provide a slicker and more premium service.



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The amelioration of technology is largely responsible for this evolution, and as digital becomes more prevalent and sophisticated going forwards, greater evolution is likely to be observed. Yet, technology isn't the sole catalyst for this evolution. The latest generation of workers has started to filter into the workforce, bringing a wealth of demands and expectations with them, both in terms of what they want

from the hiring process and employment in general. But, in the eyes of recruiters, what are some of the biggest changes that consultants have observed in the industry over the years? *Recruitment Grapevine* spoke to some of the industry's leading professionals to find out...

Tech tools

“Traditional recruitment methods, such as a reliance on CVs to determine a long list of interviewees, are coming under greater scrutiny as candidates demand increased transparency, flexibility and more objective assessments from potential employers,” explained Shani Newbold, Managing Partner at Executive Search firm Cadence Partners. With technology creating more inventive and empowering options for jobseekers to present their portfolio and career histories, employers are increasingly being held to a higher standard, according to Newbold, to ensure that they genuinely recruit diversely and give all candidates an equal opportunity. “Progressive organisations are increasingly turning these challenges into an opportunity by embracing innovative technologies and developing new models of working,” she added. While recruiters are conscious of diversity when placing candidates, it seems that employers are changing up their approaches to be inclusive of all candidates, once they enter the business, too.

Last month, *Recruitment Grapevine* reported on several employers who shook up their approach to hiring, to give candidates a better opportunity to showcase their talents. One example was Hoxby, a global community of freelancers, who empowers its candidates to answer two interview questions in any form. This could be presented via an Instagram page, a song, a painting, a short film or even a short story. But this doesn't mean that the more traditional applications are rejected: the firm recognises that each applicant will have a preference when responding to interview questions and they are given the freedom to do so. While this approach may not be traditional, it really helps candidates play to their strengths and reveal their inner character traits, which is always useful for recruiters when trying to place people into suitable new jobs.

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The human touch

While technology is a welcome advance to the recruitment industry, it isn't the cure of all ills. It may have its advantages in that it can shorten the lead time between the application and interview stage and enable interviews to be conducted from opposite sides of the world, though 2019 research found that today's jobseekers still value human recruiters. The study, which was researched and authored by James Wright from Executive Search firm Carmichael Fisher, found that nine in ten jobseekers don't trust robot recruiters and would opt for a human to conduct a job interview. “Why do people yearn for that human connection?” probed Lucy Challenger, CEO and Founder of luxury domestic service recruitment firm, Polo

and Tweed, “well we spend a huge amount of time on our phones, or in front of laptops and tablets. The modern lifestyle means we connect less with humans,” she added. Particularly when doing something as important as finding someone a job, candidates want to build a rapport and know that they can trust a recruiter to find them suitable opportunities. And to an extent, robot recruiters aren’t able to replicate this human experience in the same way.

“The recruitment industry is, in essence, a problem-solving industry; we are tasked with the right match-making, but also recruiting and placing the right person for the right role. If we get our job wrong, it has an impact on our clients and candidates. And when it does go wrong (which it will in a small percentage of placements), the human connection you’ve had with the client will ensure that their stress levels are managed – and your reputation upheld,” Challenger explained. So, it seems that the recruitment industry will stick to its human roots going forward. When creating a good candidate and client experience, the importance of human interaction shouldn’t be overlooked.

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Data dashboard

One of the biggest changes observed within the recruitment industry is the reliance on data. While data can be used to positively inform decisions, as Challenger previously explained, humans are at the centre of recruitment. “As technological advances have made new kinds of data-driven recruitment possible, we’re seeing the industry start to evaluate the success of these new techniques and focus in on what really works,” explained Lucy Griffiths, CEO and Founder of Sortyourfuture.com. “In the rush to use data in new ways, we need to always come back to what is at the centre of all recruitment human beings in all their uniqueness – and this is where the industry is beginning to make progress, recognising human individuality and deploying technologies where appropriate, to enable employers and jobseekers to find their perfect fit,” she explained. So, data may be a useful tool for scouting out the best talent, but it shouldn’t be the sole determiner within the hiring process. Human recruiters can identify traits and key skills that data charts may not highlight.

New changes on the cards this year, such as Britain’s departure from the European Union, will likely influence the way that recruiters will go about their day-to-day jobs going forwards. Recruiters will have to develop new talent pipelines to plug talent shortages to start with and this may result in new methods and tactics, helping the industry to evolve even further. Technological advancements will continue to be a catalyst for change too.

What are the biggest changes that you have observed in the recruitment industry? Let us know in the comments below...

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