

Staffing Decisions™

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How 360 Videos Can Cut Recruiting Costs

The costs of recruiting, interviewing and onboarding are significant for companies in any industry. When candidates must be recruited from afar, those costs rise fast.

Fortunately, increasingly sophisticated technology can help keep those costs in line. For instance, 360 video offers viewers a virtual-reality type experience, giving them the sense that they are actually engaging in settings and activities that are actually miles away. That lets HR professionals and hiring managers simulate on-the-job experiences as an aid in recruiting during both the application and interview processes.

BetterCloud is a New York technology-oriented company already using 360 video to give potential employees a feel for working in technical support at the company. Tech firms are an obvious first adopter for this technology in recruiting – they can convey an innovative image well aligned with technology expertise.

360 video is different

from a traditional video tour some employers use to give candidates a sense of the organization. “It puts people directly into the action, experiencing that space or event in real time,” says Doug Divert, owner of Crossing River Studios in Columbus, Ohio. It can, he says, be a very useful and powerful technology when you want to transport your audience into a particular event or space.

The 360 video experience provides a virtual reality experience, says Patrick Meci Clark, an editor with Scholastic Inc. But it’s not a do-it-yourself project. “VR workflow at its most basic involves a physical array that organizes the 4-to-15

cameras so that an appropriate filming area is captured,” says Clark, “followed by sophisticated editing to make the footage work as a 360 video.”

One big benefit of 360 video is providing candidates a more-realistic job preview. They can virtually tour the company, including the department or area they’ll be working in, along with the break room, parking lot, and other areas. All in a simulated and convincing real-world experience that would be very expensive to duplicate in person.

While the best candidates will surely be brought into the company at some point, 360 video means that this in-person visit can take place much further along the recruitment process, and that there will be fewer such visits.

Mike Perlow, president of Perlow Productions, in Marlton, NJ, has produced 360 videos for universities wanting to provide immersive experiences to potential students. He says that their use for potential hires would be a similar, and equally valuable, application. “That immersive experience will make them feel like they’re there.” ▲



For More Information:

CEO Magazine: The Future of Virtual Reality in HR

<http://www.theceomagazine.com/business/future-virtual-reality-hr/>

Information Age: How Immersive Technologies are Transforming Business

<http://www.information-age.com/immersive-technologies-transforming-business-123466671/>

TechRepublic: BetterCloud’s 360 Video Gives Applicants and New Employees an Inside View

<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/better-cloud-360-onboarding/>

Hot on the Inside

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Don't Be 'Too slow' in a Candidates' Market

Recruiters today are finding themselves in a candidates' market, particularly for tough-to-recruit positions such as STEM-related jobs. If you're in that fix, you may need to adopt different strategies and tactics to effectively bring new talent on board.

A 2017 recruiting trends report from Top Echelon, based on input from more than 5000 recruiters, pointed to two key sources of stress for recruiters:

- Sourcing qualified candidates (35%);
- Clients who are too slow to make offers (30.8%).

Being too slow to make offers is particularly troubling when the most common complaint you hear is that "there aren't enough candidates to pick from." Clearly, moving quickly to make a decision and extend an offer is critical.

Use Social Media

It's also critical for employers and their HR advisors to have a firm grasp of what appeals to today's most sought-after candidates, the millennials, who are projected to make up over half of the workforce by 2020. Ashira Prossack, CEO of Millennial Mastermind, a consulting firm that helps bridge the gap between employers and millennials, says that "Companies and recruiters must reevaluate their hiring strategies to attract this younger generation of workers."

That means moving beyond traditional recruitment methods to connect with candidates on the platforms they use the most. You need job postings on multiple social me-

dia sites rather than relying exclusively on job boards. Because this generation lives on their mobile devices, they expect to be able to apply quickly and easily through their smartphones. Therefore, creating a mobile-optimized app to optimize recruiting is a top priority.

For HR professionals, a good starting point for determining the type of adjustments needed is to conduct an internal audit or analysis to determine:

- Average time-to-hire, by position or job category;
- Number/percentage of opt-outs or incompletes during online application process;
- Ratio of accepted-versus-rejected offers and reasons for rejection.

In each of these areas, it can be helpful to analyze results based on various types of segmentation, such as by department, by manager, by position, for hard-to-recruit positions, by type of application (email vs. desktop vs. mobile), etc.

Recognizing that time-to-hire is critical in a candidates' market, anything that HR can do to help streamline the applicant review, interview and offer process can go a long way toward boosting the odds that your most desired candidates are likely to accept your offer. ▲

When Balancing Your Workforce...

... between contingent (temporary) and core employees, here are some tips:

- Define what's core and what's contingent.
- Involve temporary workers as much as possible.
- Explain your moves to your core employees.
- Don't give temporary workers all the worst work.
- Recognize the importance of training for temps.
- Set up a seasonal calendar so you can plan your hiring ahead of time.

If there's one huge lesson from a challenging economy, it's that we all need at least some flexibility in our workforce. Our European HR counterparts seem to get this better than we do. So give a shout when the time is right for you to balance your workforce between contingent and core employees.

We're real people here, and we're here to help.



For More Information:

Monster.com: Recruiting Trends that Hiring Managers Anticipate in 2017

<https://hiring.monster.com/hr/hr-best-practices/recruiting-hiring-advice/strategic-workforce-planning/hiring-trends-2017.aspx>

Recruiting Trends: Automation Won't Overtake Recruiters' Jobs—It'll Help Them

<http://www.recruitingtrends.com/REC/view/story.jhtml?id=534362885>

SHRM: 2017 Recruiting Trends Point to Technology Driving Change

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/recruiting-trends-2017-technology-change.aspx>

Office Layout vs. Productivity and Engagement

Noise, distractions and lack of personal space can have adverse effects on productivity. And these are often the unintended consequences of office layout choices.

Although open office environments are popular, and intended to help employees work together more effectively, a recent Gallup report suggests that most employees prefer to have a place to call their own. As the report states, "...there are potential downsides to open office environments. They have been criticized for being distracting, noisy and intrusive. Some employees complain about constant interruptions and a lack of privacy and report getting less work done."

Flexibility and privacy are both coveted goals by today's workers. In fact, Gallup's research indicates that 42% of respondents would change jobs to have more privacy when they need it, 41% for a personal workspace, 38% for their own office and 33% for a door they can shut. Offering various work setting options for employees can be a way to address their needs for both collaboration and personal focus.

Starting With Design

Maura Thomas, founder of Regain-YourTime.com, and author of *Personal Productivity Secrets* (Wiley, 2012) says, "Maintaining employees' productivity in the workspace starts with the design." Workspace design in the 21st century, she says, involves many components.

"Certain floor plan components will help you maximize productivity in the office. Knowledge work requires quiet thinking space for flow. However, if you have the space, you can build in opportunities for collaboration with some open work space."

She points to "coffee house" settings as a good option – an area where employees can go to do low-focus work.

"Game areas also do well as collaborative spaces, because physical activity fosters creativity," she says. "You can make collaboration and teamwork a prominent feature of your office space." Ultimately, she says, "employees still need quiet, non-distracting environments that support the flow, creativity, and brainpower that is required for the work you hired your knowledge workers to do."

Workspace modifications don't need to be expensive to add value. Small changes can help provide employees secure some control over their environment:

- Private storage space for personal articles and supplies;
- Office décor, including personal décor such as family photographs and knickknacks;
- Noise, including music or other background sounds;
- Lighting;
- Personal privacy for themselves, their belongings, their information, their activities;
- Flexibility (for example, consider desks on wheels).

Not Everyone Agrees

Not everyone is against open office space plans, however. Deborah Sweeney, CEO of MyCorporation, in Calabasas, CA, leads an open-office concept company. "We are a great case study of the difference between open office and official cubicles and traditional offices," she says. "We moved to a small, but open environment when we first spun out from Intuit and learned that our communication was increased and we were more effective at quickly responding to customers."

Previously, she says, with a more traditional office layout, the need to resolve issues was hampered by lack of proximity. "At that time, communicating

throughout the office was very difficult, so we could not solve problems instantly, but rather would have to communicate and figure out what to do and then return the call to the client. Now, we can see that the people who can help with the responses are available and we can get to those answers right away." The open concept, she adds, also helps with camaraderie. "Everyone engages and communicates regularly. This was not the case with the more closed office environment."

Clearly there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to office design. HR professionals, though, can aid organizational leaders in finding options that fit their particular work and workforce. ▲



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For More Information:

Entrepreneur: Designing a Better Office Space

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/235375>

The Guardian: Tips for Boosting Productivity With Good Office Design

<https://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/2014/jan/23/productivity-office-design>

Harvard Business Review: Balancing "We" and "Me"—The Best Collaborative Spaces Also Support Solitude

<https://hbr.org/2014/10/balancing-we-and-me-the-best-collaborative-spaces-also-support-solitude>

Opioid Addiction and Your Employees

This August, President Trump formally declared the opioid crisis a national emergency, the 29th active national emergency since the National Emergencies Act of 1974. The attention is well warranted. According to a report from the Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis, an estimated 142 people die every day from an overdose.

If you don't think opioid addiction has had an impact on your workforce, think again. The growing crisis is afflicting the majority of workplaces in America, according to the National Safety Council, which says that 70% of employers have been affected.

Susan Meisinger, former president of



SHRM, brought attention to the issue recently in a column for HRE, "A Cry for Help."

How much might the opioid crisis be costing your organization? Meisinger shares a link to an online tool (see **For More Information**, below) where employers can enter their industry, location and number of employees to gain insights to the likely cost of substance abuse for their organization.

Who Are the Addicts?

The face of addiction in this century has changed from the traditional image of drug addicts roaming the streets. While those addicts are still out there, today's opioid addicts are as likely to be soccer moms as high school dropouts. As likely to be out in farm country as densely populated cities. Due to widespread prescribing of highly addictive opioid pain medications, anyone suffering from an injury, accident or surgery requiring treatment for pain is at risk.

The epidemic is taking a toll on the workplace and, particularly, the ability of employers to find qualified and drug-free talent. Some companies report that

between 25% and 50% of qualified applicants can't pass a routine drug test.

Before attempting to tackle the issue, says Charles Krugel, a labor and employment lawyer in Chicago, employers first need to ask whether or not opioid addiction is a problem in *their* workplace. If the answer is "yes," he says, "consider a policy that either prohibits or limits the use of all mind-altering substances." If not, he suggests, the company's resources could be better used elsewhere. However, he adds: "Because the EEOC and judges advise that employers adopt an interactive process for determining what to limit or exclude, it's best for a company to indicate that exceptions will be permitted on a case-by-case basis."

In addressing how to deal with employees whose opioid use is creating problems in your workplace, Krugel advises discipline "only after engaging the employee in an interactive discussion, in order to minimize the impact of any sort of disability discrimination claim." His bottom line advice: "Have written, easy-to-understand policies and procedures, don't be too judgmental and gather information before taking action." ▲

For More Information:

Bloomberg BNA: Opioid Addiction at Work Major Challenge for Employers

<https://www.bna.com/opioid-addiction-work-n57982085155/>

The Business Journals: America's Opioid Epidemic and the Workplace—3 Lessons for Employers

<https://www.bizjournals.com/bizjournals/how-to/growth-strategies/2017/07/america-s-opioid-epidemic-and-the-workplace-3.html>

Susan Meisinger's link for substance abuse calculation (see article above)

<https://www.nsc.org/forms/substance-use-employer-calculator/index.aspx>