Improving Experience for Distributed Employees and Candidates

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Chris Murdock is a veteran of the recruiting and talent acquisition industry with over twenty years of experience spanning across multiple industries. Murdock founded IQTalent in 2009 and now leads search execution and client relationships for his 300+ person firm. Prior to establishing IQTalent as a talent acquisition leader, Murdock worked with Yahoo!'s internal executive recruiting team, gaining in-depth experience across the technology recruiting sphere. He began his career working in recruiting and sourcing roles for Heidrick & Struggles and with TMP Worldwide. Murdock earned his bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University and resides in Nashville, TN.

The Distributed Workforce: From Candidate to Employee

What does "Distributed" Mean?

- Workforce is spread out geographically- across the country or across the globe
- Employees may work in multiple offices across various cities, states, and/or work from home
- In-office employees may have flexible work options: work in the office, work from home, work from anywhere

What are the Challenges?

- Candidate and employee engagement
- Creating a cohesive culture
- Employee burn out and/or employee accountability
- Collaboration and teamwork

The Remote Candidate Journey

- Engagement is most important with a remote or virtual interview process.
- Start by finding the right candidates with the Diamond Recruiting process:
  - Collaborate
  - Calibrate
  - Candidates
  - Culture
- Connections are hard to make remotely. Without a well-defined culture, it is almost impossible.

Remote Candidate Engagement & Evaluation

- Traditional methods just won't cut it.
- Set expectations with the candidate and stick to these timelines.
- Frequent touchpoints.
- Hiring Manager must be committed to acting quickly.
- Lean into the needs of a remote employee – What is their home office like? What will they need to be successful working remotely?
- Use best practices for a virtual/video interview:
  - Create a warm, inviting background
  - Use good lighting (looking at someone in a dark room is creepy)
  - Look at the camera, not the screen (it's not your mirror!)
  - Test your tech – all of it! Don't wait until 5 minutes before the interview to discover your internet is out!
  - Prepare your interview questions well in advance. Come prepared!

Training & Orientation with Distributed Employees
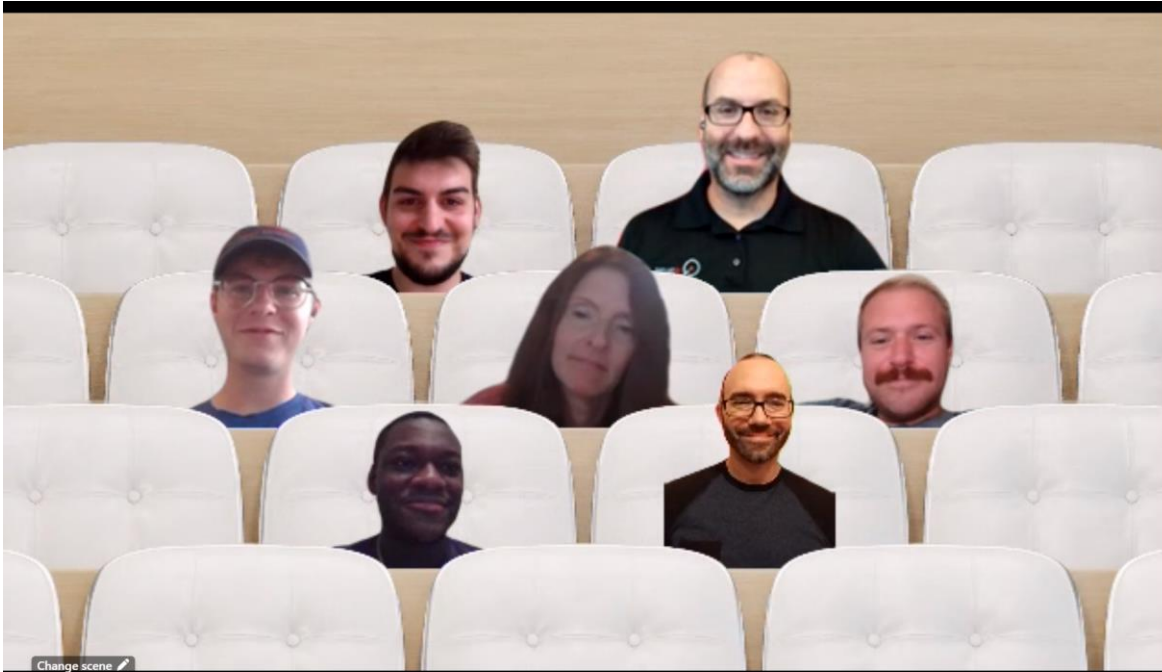
- Onboarding must include IT. Be sure each new employee's remote needs are acknowledged and met: home office, home internet, computer, printer, supplies. Do they have what they need to be successful, and is it all working?

- Training & Orientation are the cornerstones to integrating the employee into the culture.

- Consider unique ways to welcome the distributed employees: send a welcome gift, include them in all the activities through virtual means, have other employees call, zoom or facetime new hires personally.

Successfully Managing a Distributed Workforce

- Trust is a must! Hire employees you can trust – ones that you don't need to micromanage

- Balance your check-ins

- Use well-defined performance metrics for evaluation

- Maintain an open-door/open-Zoom policy – colleagues and leadership must be as available (if not more so) to remote and distributed employees as they are to those in the office

- Semi-annual, or more frequent, performance reviews

- Reviews must be bi-directional. They cannot just be one-way and top down.

- Make the most of technology and stay cutting edge

Successfully Managing a Distributed Workforce: Culture

- Culture is KEY!
- The distributed employees must be engaged and feel a part of the group.
- Create opportunities for bonding and engagement remotely:
  - Safespace calls where employees can call and check in with each other
  - Small group opportunities
  - Competitions – Holiday Decorations, Cutest Pets, Sports Fantasy Leagues, Tournament Brackets – anything that everyone can participate in without being in person
  - Remote quiz and trivia nights
  - Remote coffee chats and happy hours
- If you have the budget, fly distributed workers to the home office or central location for an in-person visit once or twice annually.

Key Takeaways for Improved Distributed Employee Experience

1. You must define your culture, commit to it, and adapt as needed.

2. Consider the remote experience from the very beginning of the candidate search and candidate experience. It cannot be an afterthought or figured out on the fly.

3. Stay on-top of the latest technology. Be sure your IT team is knowledgeable and available. When it's time to upgrade, be first, not last!

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Thank you. Questions?

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