

MONSTER **HIRING AND** **RECRUITING IN A CRISIS** **THE LESSONS OF COVID-19**



PART 3: ONLINE RECRUITMENT AND POST-CRISIS PLANNING



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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented upheaval across the board. Everything from the simplest task (grabbing a cup at your favorite coffee shop), to complex decisions (how and when should your company adapt new hiring strategies), has become a challenge. And many of those challenges can't easily be overcome.

The scope of the coronavirus crisis has caught us all by surprise, and the impact has been felt by companies of all sizes, across all industries. Some tough decisions have been (and continue to be) made regarding layoffs, policy changes, hiring, and unfortunately, in some cases, whether or not to shut the doors permanently.

We understand you may be struggling with this new way of doing business and could probably use a resource to turn to for answers. Monster, with our long history of supporting companies, is here for you with curated crisis management content for businesses.

We've created a three-part eBook series that takes a look at lessons learned and strategies developed during the pandemic, and how these can help companies be better prepared for, and able to move forward, during challenging times in the future.

Online recruitment and post-crisis planning

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In the last of our series, we cover the range of online recruitment strategies, like virtual open houses, job fairs and video recruiting, that are available today. Additionally, we walk you through some of the more difficult decisions (like layoffs and furloughs) you may have to make during a crisis. We also talk about what HR and recruiting will look like post-pandemic, and what you should do to prepare for recruiting that may never look the same.

The Monster Team

VIRTUAL AND ONLINE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Thanks to technology, it's not as hard as you would think to make the shift to virtual recruitment strategies. Just apply your recruitment philosophy in the virtual world.



Over the last decade, companies have been shifting to virtual and online recruitment strategies, but the COVID-19 crisis pushed many to step it up. Even after a crisis, there are good reasons to have a solid virtual recruitment strategy in place.

The key: You have to stick to your basics, says Celia Harper-Guerra, global VP of talent acquisition for Sprinklr, an enterprise software company. “What is your foundation for your recruitment philosophy?” she asks. “Start with that foundation and

apply that in the virtual world.”

If you want to keep your talent pipeline flowing and continue hiring during social distancing mandates, here's how to do it step by step:

Make sure everything you do is mobile optimized

According to Pew data, 54% of candidates applied to jobs from a mobile device. And that number will grow.

From text recruiting to mobile-designed career sites and applications, connecting with candidates on mobile isn't something you can afford to neglect.

If your career site is not already mobile-friendly, this can be a good downtime project for your team to work on. Any changes to your site or application should always be tested on a mobile device to make sure it's a user-friendly experience and has as few clicks as



possible. A clunky application or hard to see site will result in job seekers going elsewhere.

Audit your employer brand across platforms and channels

Candidates are going to do their due diligence and research potential employers before they get in touch. That means your employer value proposition (EVP) and overall message need to be consistent and spot on. Not just on your website, but on social media platforms, in job descriptions, and in outside media, too. Here's a

quick checklist to make sure your employer brand is shining through in all of your communications:

- Does your website clearly define what your company stands for?
- Can candidates easily find your company's story, and the impact that each team member can have?
- Do your social media posts and other off-site content reflect the company's core values, and the company culture?

VIRTUAL AND ONLINE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES



- Are your employees featured front and center to advocate for why your company is a great place to work?
- Is your brand authentic? For instance, if you claim work/life balance is a core value, do your benefits and policies align with that?

Build up a strong social presence

- Over half of Gen Z (58%) and millennials (59%) say they check out social platforms when looking for work. And Gen Z actually prefers

YouTube, Instagram and Facebook to LinkedIn.

- That's why your social media content strategy cannot be brushed off when it comes to online recruiting strategies.
- Social media is an extension of your employer brand. Candidates want to see what you're saying on Twitter, the photos of your workplace on Instagram, and the video testimonials about what it's really like to work at your company.

Add keyword optimization to all job descriptions

You know that job candidates are searching for jobs online, so it's important to make sure that your open roles appear in their search results. The best way to do that is to make sure that you're writing job descriptions that use the most common keywords and phrases that candidates for that job would use to search.

Host virtual open houses and job fairs

If “meet and greets” are part of your recruitment strategy, you can still do them virtually. Host live video meetings where you invite prospective candidates to “meet” your hiring managers, give virtual office tours, and offer Q&As with various team members.

Get comfortable with video

In Monster's State of the Recruiter survey, recruiters reported that the youngest job seekers said they fully expect and look forward to seeing video used in their job search and hiring process. Some examples include:

- Video interviews (36%)
- Video job descriptions (27%)
- Video application submission (25%)
- Video featuring a recruiter describing a job ad (22%)

Now, more than ever, your brand is so important



A strong brand story can show your employees and candidates how you're supporting them in these uncertain times. Our employer branding solutions will help you create a 360° brand experience that shows candidates who you are. From job branding, to company profiles, to career sites, we've got you covered.

Video interviews also have the benefit of recording features so that other team members who aren't in the meeting can review and share their feedback.

Be ready for remote onboarding

Onboarding in a virtual environment can definitely work—just ask companies that hire and manage remote workers. A few basic tips: Make sure new hires have a thorough welcome email, as well as everything they need from HR. Set up virtual meetings with managers and team members, and ensure that all technology and tools are ready to go on day one.

VIDEO INTERVIEW TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS

You've got to be open to new ways of recruiting...
and video interviewing leads the pack.

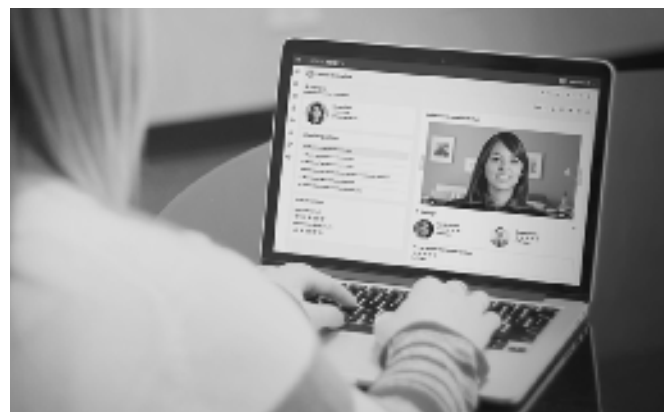
Companies around the world are making adjustments to keep their employees and customers safe and slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). From a hiring standpoint, this means that many recruiters and hiring managers are changing the way they conduct job interviews.

While video interviews surely aren't a new concept, some recruiters and hiring managers may not be as familiar with video conferencing technology and conducting video interviews remotely. Technical difficulties can be all-too-common, not to mention that behavioral cues can be harder to read a la video.

To ensure a seamless hiring process, here are some video interview tips for employers to follow:

Perform a video interview test run

It can reflect poorly on you and your company if you're unable to connect or struggle to use the video conferencing platform. "To conduct



the most successful video interview possible, interviewers should familiarize themselves with the technology in advance," says Peter Baskin, chief product officer of enterprise hiring software Modern Hire. "This way, [you] can troubleshoot and solve any potential difficulties before the conversation takes place."

Additionally, be sure to check that your computer's audio is working, test your computer's webcam, and ensure that your internet connection is stable and that the device you're using to conduct the interview is fully charged. If you'll need to share your screen with the candidate, make sure you understand how to do so before the interview.

Provide instructions for using the video conferencing platform

Whether you use Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts, or any other video conferencing platform like Spark Hire, keep in mind that the candidate may not be familiar with your platform of choice. Will the candidate need to download any software? Create a username and password? Provide step-by-step instructions for accessing the platform, so the candidate can seamlessly connect to the interview.

Ask the interviewee to show up a few minutes early to ensure everything is working properly, suggests Jennifer Walden, director of operations at national lawncare company Wikilawn. “There’s nothing more stressful than spending the first few minutes of an interview fussing with technology.”

Schedule separate meetings and budget time accordingly

Consider scheduling more time on your calendar for a video interview than you typically would for an in-person interview. Between technical difficulties that may arise and candidates who provide long-winded answers to your questions, the video interview can go longer than anticipated.

If conducting back-to-back interviews, Biron Clark, an executive recruiter

Video interviews with Monster

SPARK HIRE 

Monster has partnered with Spark Hire, to offer our customers [access to video interviews](#) on the Spark Hire platform. Video interviews help you gain more insight on candidates earlier in the hiring process, improve collaboration with recruiters and hiring managers, and make better decisions about candidates.

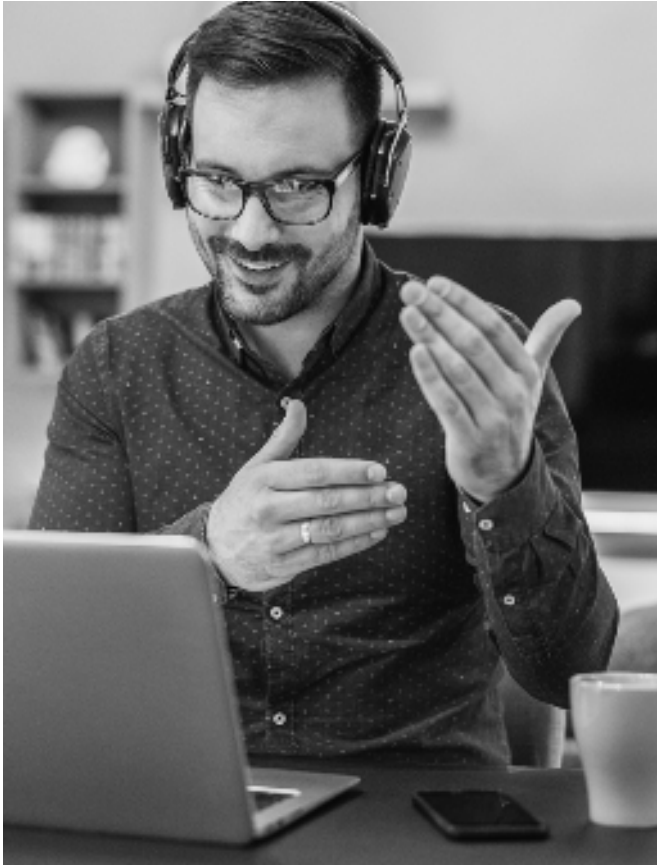
for multiple Fortune 500 firms, recommends setting up separate meeting rooms for each candidate. “I’ve heard multiple horror stories of employers using the same meeting room and access code for multiple job seekers,” he says.

Set up a professional, well-lit space to conduct the video interview

Even though you might not be in a traditional office setting, it’s important to set a business-appropriate scene. This means that your space should be well-lit, clean, and free from background distractions.

“Take a picture of what the other person would see when they are looking behind you through the

VIDEO INTERVIEW TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS



computer,” says Ronald Magas, founder of Magas Media Consultants, a public relations agency based in New York City. “Make sure you have appropriate pictures, awards, etc., behind you. If you would not put it in a corporate office, move it outside of the camera view.”

Magas also stresses the importance of good lighting. “Since most people don’t have professional lighting in their house, most of the time if you are facing an outside window, you will cast enough light on your face that you can be seen clearly,” he says. “Do not put the window to your back because you

will probably show up very dark on the screen.”

Prepare your video interview questions ahead of time

As with any interview, don’t try to wing it. It’s important to have the interview questions you’d like to ask planned ahead of time.

Patel also recommends having an intro script help you start the interview off on the right note. “Write down a few lines so that you can speak almost verbatim when the video interview starts,” he says.”

Consider starting with some icebreaker questions to help put the candidate at ease. Keep in mind that video interviews can be just as unusual for the job seeker as they are for you.

Try to control background noise

When conducting video interviews from home, it’s a good idea to give everyone in your household a heads-up to prevent children and spouses from interrupting. You’ll also want to mute any notifications on your computer and phone and close out of any apps to help ensure a quiet setting.

Since you’re the one conducting the

interview, it's up to you to keep a level head. "As an interviewer, if you're going to have background noise, acknowledge it from the start so that it looks like you're in control," Patel says. "By establishing that there might be noise, you're controlling the dialogue and ensuring the interviewee doesn't need to feel awkward."

Appear as professional and personable as you would in person

From what you wear to what you say to how you act, there shouldn't be much difference in how you would conduct a video interview versus one that's face-to-face. Even if it's just your top half, dress appropriately like you would if you were meeting the candidate in person. When listening, smile, nod, and sit up straight to show the candidate that you are engaged in the conversation.

Eye contact is key here, too. When making eye contact during a video interview, you should look directly into the webcam, not at the candidate on your screen.

Baskin also recommends, "Pausing to ensure the candidate has finished his or her response before moving on to the next question is also crucial when remote since the same cues that a candidate uses to show he or she

has answered a question aren't often available during a video interview."

Follow up with next steps

Whether your interview is in person or over video, it's best practice to follow up with candidates afterward. Especially amid the coronavirus pandemic, job seekers are more stressed than ever before, and not hearing back from an interview can amplify that stress.

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Do not put the window to your back...you will probably show up very dark on the screen.

Ronald Magas
Magas Media Consultants

"Even if you don't have a decision yet, a quick email letting people know where you are in the process can alleviate this anxiety," says Jill Panté, director of the Lerner Career Services Center at the University of Delaware. "Even if you are emailing that they aren't being hired, at least they know. You don't want to brand yourself or the company as someone who ghosts candidates."

SHOULD YOU FURLOUGH, REDUCE HOURS, OR INITIATE LAYOFFS?

The pandemic caused many businesses to make some tough decisions.



As company shutdowns and mandatory business closures surge, there's been a historic rise in people applying for unemployment benefits. According to the latest release of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) monthly jobs report, a record high of 20.5 million jobs were eliminated in April, while the unemployment rate increased to 14.7%— the highest reading on record.

Not sure how to navigate all of the options? We've got answers to some of your top questions.

Reduced hours, furlough, or layoffs?

During this time of economic uncertainty, employers need to maintain a solid grasp on their financial situation as the coronavirus outbreak develops. In doing so, you'll need to review payroll and understand how to best keep your business operating. For those who find themselves struggling to maintain employees' wages, there are a handful of options to consider:

- Reduction in hours or pay
- Furlough
- Layoff

Reduction in hours or pay

A reduction in an employee's hours or pay can be a good option for non-exempt employees. If you're thinking about a reduction in pay, you may want to consider a top-down approach by reducing the incomes of company leadership and managers first, then working your way down the corporate ladder as needed.



Additionally, you could opt to reduce hours or alternate work schedules among employees. Keep in mind that if hours are significantly reduced, employees may no longer be eligible to receive the employer's health insurance benefits.

Furlough

A furlough puts employees on a temporary unpaid leave. Furloughed employees are still eligible to receive health benefits provided through your company and are permitted to file for unemployment.

There are several reasons why an employer might consider choosing furlough over layoffs. "An effective furlough can provide companies with flexibility to manage business uncertainties and financial setbacks

without having to deal with the potential costs and legal risks of layoffs," says Jie "Jasmine" Feng, an assistant professor in the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations in Piscataway, New Jersey.

"Unlike layoffs, terminations, and other less desirable alternatives, an employee furlough reduces labor costs and does not incur additional costs, such as severance packages and outplacement services. Since the furlough is a temporary practice, companies suffer fewer disruptions when jobs resume because the returning employees retain their original levels of knowledge, skill, and ability. Companies do not need to hire new employees, enabling them to avoid the costs of recruitment, selection, socialization, and training."

SHOULD YOU FURLOUGH, REDUCE HOURS, OR INITIATE LAYOFFS?



Layoff

Layoffs are defined as a full separation with an employee and should be avoided if possible. For some, however, it may be inevitable. If this is the case, you'll want to draft a termination letter detailing the layoff to the affected employees. You'll also want to encourage your employees to apply for unemployment benefits as quickly as possible.

For employers preparing for a mass layoff, you should also consider how you will best handle the influx of unemployment claims to ensure a smooth process to help your employees receive unemployment benefits.

"Employers need to understand that this is an incredibly difficult situation for everyone," says Eric Mochnacz, an HR Consultant at Red Clover, a human resources consulting firm in Fairfield, New Jersey.

"Employers need to be even-handed while managing unemployment claims. If there is a mass layoff, an employer does not want to find themselves in a situation where their decision on whether to contest one employee's claim while not contesting others is perceived as discriminatory."

While the unemployment application procedure varies by state, the overall process and eligibility requirements are generally the same. When a former

employee files for unemployment, as their most recent employer, you will receive a “Notice of Unemployment Insurance Claim Filed” in the mail. The notice provides general information about the claim, including the reasons the former employee states they are no longer working.

It’s crucial for employers to respond in writing—either accepting or contesting the claim—within 10 days of the mail date at the top of the claim notice. Not responding to an unemployment insurance claim may affect an employer’s tax rate.

State and local laws

In addition to states’ mini-WARN laws, it’s crucial for employers to be aware of state and local legislation as it pertains to your business. While businesses that operate in one location may be more familiar with their state and local laws, the task of compliance becomes much more strenuous for businesses with dispersed locations.

Employers will also want to be aware of emergency declarations, such as “stay at home” and “shelter-in-place” orders that require “nonessential” businesses to close for at least 30 days. What is considered essential versus nonessential is determined by state and local authorities.

COVID-19 government assistance

The CARES Act: Includes assistance to households and businesses, funds to assist small businesses through the Small Business Administration (SBA), expanding unemployment insurance benefits, allocating money to the Treasury Fund, creating a Paycheck Protection Program for small businesses, and granting money to healthcare providers.

Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act: Requires employers with 100 or more employees to provide at least 60 days’ advance written notice of a plant closing or mass layoff affecting 50 or more employees at a single site.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA): Expands paid leave for eligible workers. The paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave provisions of the FFCRA, apply to private employers with fewer than 500 employees and certain public employers.

Refundable payroll tax credits: Employers affected by the FFCRA will be eligible for two new refundable payroll tax credits that will “immediately and fully reimburse them” for complying with the paid leave mandate. Health insurance costs are included, and employers face no tax liability.

RECRUITMENT PLANNING AFTER A CRISIS

We will get past this crisis, but hiring as we know it may not exist. It's time to prepare for the future of recruitment.

In the midst of a pandemic, it's hard to remember that at some point, the economy will come online again and companies will have to resume hiring—and in many cases, hire for spots that were vacated during the crisis. It's going to be a big swing, from an economy with talent scarcity to one with potentially high unemployment and a remote work attitude. But how will recruitment planning look after COVID-19?

"I think HR will change drastically in the coming months, particularly in hiring and training," says Emily Goodson, CEO of CultureSmart, an HR consulting firm.

As you're prepping for hiring in the future, keep the following strategies in mind:

IN THE SHORT TERM

Have a succession plan

Now, more than ever, companies should be thinking about what happens

if their CEO gets sick. Large companies tend to have these succession plans, but smaller operations often don't document everything, which can leave them unprepared for emergencies.

"They need to talk about who's going to be making those decisions," Goodson says. "Outline, in every department, who makes the key decisions and, if that person is sick, who's going to make them in their absence. I think that's vital to companies moving forward."

Get your remote technology online

Being able to offer video interviews will be important. It's quicker and more efficient, and after months of remote work or video conferencing, recruits will expect that to be an option. But managing a remote workforce requires more than just installing Zoom.

"Yes, virtual interview technology [is important], but aside from that, companies need to make sure their learning can be done virtually, and that performance management can be done



virtually,” Goodson says. “If you don’t have it, you need to get it.”

Start your hiring pattern now

If you wait until your company comes back online to start trying to fill empty roles, you’ll lose valuable time (and talent). You should be actively working to fill the roles you’ll need in the future, even if you can’t hire yet.

“Companies have to keep a steady ‘hum’ on in the public domain,” says Joe Mullings, CEO of the Mullings Group, a search firm in the medical device industry, and CVO of executive recruiting firm MRI. “They need to be on social media platforms, ‘We’re still here, here’s why you want to work with us when we come back online.’” There’s a significant amount of work that can be done on this before society gets the all-clear. You can be

completing initial interviews virtually, doing due diligence and reference checks on candidates and lining up the best talent to come on board. Let candidates know, “When we start coming back online, the interviews we do with you are going to be finals,” Mullings says. “I planned for my first three weeks back as making offers based upon on-site interviews, so I can get my workforce back to work.”

IN THE LONG TERM

Consider upping your benefits game

This crisis led a lot of people to be more cognizant of the benefits their company has (or doesn’t have), and many workers now have very structured ideas about the kind of benefits they want and need. Companies may need to be prepared to offer more. That might mean better sick leave policies,

RECRUITMENT PLANNING AFTER A CRISIS



more comprehensive health coverage, or other benefits related to people's well-being.

“Some of the trends in benefits recently have been better education around workplace mental health, anxiety and financial wellness,” Goodson says. “I think the pandemic has highlighted why those benefits are important, so I think, in the long term, you may see plans addressing those areas more.”

Allow remote work

With three out of four Americans on some type of lockdown, there were millions of employees working remotely, and many realized that they're just as productive at home. Some roles will go permanently remote, and companies run the risk of missing out on talent if they can't adapt.

“The companies that will be best-equipped for hiring are the companies

that master the art of remote work,” says Adrienne Cooper, chief people officer of Fit Small Business.

“Organizations can be proactive by developing training methods to translate their in-person skills to the online world.”

Consider interim hires

You may have a lot of spots to fill when the crisis subsides, and that’s a daunting to-do at a time when you’re trying to get back up to speed as quickly as possible. You may need to fill some positions on a temp or interim basis.

“I may make a bunch of bad hires if I try to grab all full-time employees,” Mullings says. “Maybe I bring in people who come in for a four- to eight-week period, just to keep the oar in the water. That way, I’m keeping the ship moving forward, and perhaps some of those convert to full time.”

Continue communication

Many companies were very intentional about internal communications during this crisis. That’s been a big win—and is a practice you should carry forward.

“I think CEOs are being asked to be more intentional and to engage, and I’m hopeful that will be a permanent change that we see

with HR departments and executive leadership partnering moving forward,” Goodson says.

Adjust your HR policies

If they aren’t already, codify your work-from-home policies. What’s expected of staff members? How will they stay connected and engaged? What platforms will they use to communicate? When is work time versus private time? How will pay and benefits be handled?

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Companies...best-equipped for hiring are the companies that master the art of remote work.

Adrienne Cooper
Fit Small Business

“During Desert Storm, we all had to pull together our military leave policies,” says Lisa Chenofsky Singer, an executive coach with Chenofsky Singer & Associates. “There’s always something that goes on, and you’re chasing the tail end of it, but hopefully you bring yourself around pretty quickly.”

RESOURCES

We're here to help you during these unusual times. Call us at 1-800-MONSTER with any questions, or visit us [here](#).

For details about the **Monster Employer Branding** solutions please go [here](#).

For details about our **video interviewing solutions** please go [here](#).

For details about our **career site solution**—Foundry by Monster—please go [here](#).

For a list of **job description templates** you can use, go [here](#).

To read the other two books in our **COVID-19 series**, click [here](#).