

Adaptability deemed key as AI sweeps workplace

OPINION

Basic etiquette in hiring external candidates

We are a small food manufacturer. I was tasked by our human resources (HR) manager to research the best practices for hiring candidates for executive posts, including how to handle unsuccessful candidates. Could you walk me through the basics? — Little Sunshine.

The Golden Rule broadly applies here — treat others as you expect to be treated. You have to respect all applicants, regardless of their qualifications, age, gender, race or the nature of the job they're applying for.

Don't discriminate or give special attention to certain individuals. Don't be markedly nicer to executive applicants. Of course, I understand there are limits when dealing with hundreds of applicants. If that's the case, you would do well to insert a disclaimer in your job ads.

It can read something like this: "Due to the numerous applications we receive every day, we regret we can't reply individually beyond the automated e-mail reply acknowledging your application. Likewise, we are unable to handle all e-mail and telephone inquiries due to the same reason."

To bypass the problem, it's always a good idea to rely on internal candidates to fill vacant positions. If preferring to hire internally is something you can get behind, you must create formal policies outlining your succession procedures, which should include career development.

This approach is usually cheaper in terms of starting pay. Vacancies are easily filled and might be motivational for workers, especially those who have no intention of leaving the organization. That will save you much of the trouble of dealing with external candidates, where you run the risk of clashes with the company's culture.

BASIC ETIQUETTE

Going back to your question, aside from the dis-

claimer that I mentioned above, here are some basic tips on how you should manage handling all job applicants, regardless of the nature of the jobs they're applying for:

Step One: Do a paper screening of all job applicants. Review the applicants' curriculum vitae. At this point, there's no need to ask for additional documents like transcript of records, diploma, birth certificate or other documents that are required only from shortlisted candidates.

If you're convinced of the potential of some applicants, arrange an online interview with them. Schedule it via e-mail for record purposes.

Allow the applicants to choose the best date and time from among two to three suggested schedules. This saves you the trouble of a back-and-forth e-mail exchange where you offer only one firm schedule to the applicants.

Step Two: Invite selected applicants to an in-person interview. Choose the best applicants based on the results of the online interview. Arrange for a second round of interviews with the next-ranking officer in HR or the requesting department. Send the e-mail invitation with flexible interview schedules as in Step One.

This time, include the names and job titles of officers who are scheduled to do the interview, plus the approximate time to be spent during the process. Also, indicate if it's a one-on-one or panel interview. It's also important to note that all interviewers must be punctual in the schedule.

Step Three: Arrange for at least three job interviews. Much depends on the nature of the vacancy. If it's for a supervisory or managerial post, it's important to include the HR department head and the requesting department head. This time, the interviews must include only challenging questions pertinent to the job.

There's no need to repeat the interview questions raised during the first and second stages

of the screening process. If a stress interview is needed, do it but without antagonizing or ruining the emotional state of job applicants.

Step Four: Shortlist three candidates. This time, request all three applicants to submit additional documents. This includes the soft copy of their transcript of records, diploma, employment certificate, trade certificate, proof of foreign training, result of government licensure exam and other pertinent certifications.

No need for birth certificates, marriage contracts, even the birth certificates of the applicant's children at this stage. At this point, ask all three candidates to sign an authorization to conduct a background check.

Step Five: Arrange for a fast-track background investigation. There are companies doing this for a reasonable fee with results given to you in less than three days. Do this for the top two shortlisted candidates. Courtesy dictates that the candidates should be informed on the company's intentions.

If you're not shy, cold call the former employer, identify yourself and state your objective. Make it short and simple. Ask the former boss one question: "Would you rehire this applicant?" You'll be surprised how the answer can make or unmake job candidates. Just the same, give the candidate with questions about his record a chance to clear himself.

Step Six: Confirm a job offer and other terms in writing. This step should help you avoid misunderstandings. If the candidate accepts, well and good. But understand that the candidate must render 30 days' notice to his current employer. If the candidate turns you down, don't take it personally. Explore other details. If not, decide if your number two on the shortlist can take the job.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) has heightened the importance of worker adaptability, according to employment-focused social media platform LinkedIn Corp.

A new report from LinkedIn said that 76% of professionals in the Philippines anticipate a 'significant' change to their jobs next year from AI.

The platform noted that 57% report that they are overwhelmed by the magnitude of change AI brings to their job, and 41% have expressed worries they will fall behind.

However, 69% have expressed an intent to learn more about the technology but not knowing where to start.

"This is undoubtedly an era of change with generative AI gaining more prominence in the workplace," Atul Harkisanka, head of growth markets and country lead for the Philippines at LinkedIn, said in a statement.

LinkedIn noted that 55% of Philippine professionals have admitted to using generative AI in their jobs, with 47% trying out tools such as ChatGPT, an AI chatbot.

"Our study shows that over 8 in 10 (85%) professionals in the Philippines believe it is likely that AI will be an 'invisible teammate' in the next five years," he added.

"With their time freed up, many are looking to invest in themselves by learning new skills, focusing on more creative and strategic work, and growing their professional networks, all of which are strong career boosters. — Miguel Hanz L. Antivola

Unions push 'transition fund' for tech-displaced workers

By John Victor D. Ordoñez Reporter

THE GOVERNMENT needs to harness new technology and offer more digital jobs to improve productivity and enhance job quality, but it also needs to ensure that the transition is fair to workers facing potential displacement, a labor group said.

"The government must allocate a Just Transition Fund to ensure human-centered and worker-friendly solutions... via massive reskilling and upskilling, to seize new employment opportunities for green jobs and digital jobs," Carlos Miguel S. Oñate, legislative officer of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, told *BusinessWorld* in an e-mail.

FULL STORY



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