OPTIMIZING YOUR CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE IN 2019

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WHY IS CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE IMPORTANT?

Focusing on the candidate experience benefits everyone. Companies that promote a positive experience with potential candidates are better capable of competing for high-quality hires.

What makes candidate experience so important?

Speeds up time to hire:

Hiring new talent is a time-consuming and costly process. According to a study conducted by SHRM, companies reported spending nearly $4,500 per hire – not including the cost of lost time and productivity while the position sits open. A poor candidate experience runs the risk of extending the "time-to-fill." Efficiency can make or break the candidate experience.

Helps maintain a great reputation:

According to a LinkedIn survey, 83% of candidates said a negative interview experience can change their mind about a role or company they once liked. In another study conducted by CareerArc, of the 60% of applicants who had a negative experience, 72% shared that experience online and with family/friends.

Makes the interview process comfortable / puts the candidate at ease:

The interview experience is as much as for the candidate as it is for the interviewers, as they will be evaluating the company just as much as you are evaluating them. Preparing applicants beforehand – letting them know what to expect, who they will be speaking with, and how long it will take – provides ease on both ends.

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SIGNS YOU SHOULD EVALUATE YOUR CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE IN 2019

1. You're having trouble finding good candidates.

Simply put, if you're doing things right in the area of recruiting, you should have no trouble attracting qualified candidates. When you're having difficulty attracting qualified candidates, it's likely that you are not drawing enough attention to all that your company has to offer.

2. You're getting a lot of unqualified applicants.

A good candidate experience comes from people being able to quickly and easily tell if they are qualified for a position. Listings with vague job descriptions or qualifications requirements will frustrate people. Getting a slew of unqualified responses to your posting wastes valuable time that could be spent evaluating qualified candidates. If you find yourself rejecting most of the candidates based on their initial application, something needs to be addressed on your end.

3. You're not getting enough attention on social media.

More and more people are using social media to discover employment opportunities. Social media is an important piece of your overall employer brand and can be used to show candidate exactly what makes your company a great place to work at. If you're not seeing applicants come in through your social pages, you may want to spend more time branding your social media channels to better target prospective talent.

4. People are coming to interviews without questions.

Engaging interviews happen when candidates prepare beforehand and take time to learn about the company. It's customary for candidates to read up on your website and social media pages, but if the information is limited, or out-of-date, interview quality will likely suffer and can damage the candidate experience. A trend of unprepared interviewees may indicate that your organization's information is not as easily accessible to prospective employees as it should be.

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OPTIMIZING CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE TO JUMPSTART YOUR HIRING TODAY

Ensure your employer branding is up-to-date:

According to Amazon exec, Jeff Bezos, "your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room." Spend time developing your employer brand so that candidates know exactly what you're looking for and what you have to offer. Qualified applicants often follow their favorite brands on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook to learn about company news and new employment opportunities. Optimizing an individual's first interaction with the brand helps improve the candidate experience, so it's important to keep these channels up-to-date and engaging in order to showcase your thriving company culture! Be sure to align your brand with reality. Don't be tempted to stretch the truth – from reviews to word of mouth, the truth comes out. Your company branding should reflect your true company culture.

"Your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room."

Jeff Bezos

However, it's important to ensure that there's a balance — companies that spend a lot of time promoting their brand in the marketplace but fail to pay the same attention to their candidate experience are missing the mark. A company may greatly appreciate an employer's branding, but a poor candidate experience can destroy his or her good opinion of your company. When candidates have a bad experience, they are likely to tell others. According to a study conducted by Talent Board, 33% of job seekers who have a bad experience post about it online. Ensure that the brand you are looking to portray stands up to the test of online reviews.

DID YOU KNOW?

Companies who prioritize employer branding typically see a 28% increase in retention.

7 Reasons To Prioritize Employer Branding This Year

Craft meaningful job descriptions:

Ensure that your job descriptions clearly describe the expectations for the open role. This is your organization's opportunity to sell talent on the impact they could make at the company.

Ask relevant questions:

Avoid vague or general interview questions.

Sample Interview Questions:
- What interests you about our company? What inspired you to apply?
- How do you see yourself contributing to our company's culture?
- Describe the manager and management style that gets the best work from you.
- Why do you consider yourself a suitable candidate for this position?
- Tell me about a situation in which you have had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty to get the job done.
- Give me an example of a time when you felt effective while working as part of a team.

Streamline the process:

Candidates want to apply for positions in as few steps as possible and love to remain "in-the-know" of their standing throughout the process. Go paperless, if possible! Consider adopting a technology platform to help streamline the candidate experience.

Personalize the final decision:

Just because it's time to make a final decision on the offer doesn't mean that you should neglect the candidate experience. When extending an offer, deliver the good news over the phone to make it a more personal experience and help the new hire feel like a part of your company culture from the start.

Conduct an audit of the candidate experience from start to finish:

Walk through the entire process as if you were the candidate. Address each candidate touch point to see how each relates to the entire experience. Would you enjoy the interview experience you received?

Listen to candidates:

Listening to how candidates feel about your company's hiring process can help discover challenges they previously weren't aware of. Review candidate experience surveys, for both rejected and accepted candidates, to hone into specific areas of the candidate experience and determine where candidate feedback could assist in revamping the process.

Sample Candidate Experience Survey Questions:
- Overall, my interview experience was a positive one.
- The position was clearly explained to me during the interview.
- The people who interviewed me were prepared and conducted the interview professionally.
- I was treated with courtesy and respect.
- Overall, I have a more positive impression of the company having gone through their recruiting process.
- Is there anything you wish the company had done differently?

OPTIMIZING CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE TO JUMPSTART YOUR HIRING TODAY

As you're taking a look at your candidate experience for the, keep in mind that the job market is competitive – top candidates have a wide array of options when it comes to selecting a new company; a negative candidate experience can either make or break the selection. Treat your potential candidates as if they were already employees at your organization and work to continuously improve the experience.

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