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TALENT SOLUTIONS



## Recruiting in a Post Lockdown World

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How do you manage recruitment while everyone is in isolation and not allowed to meet? Your first response may be, “What recruitment?” And, it’s a valid comment.

Many businesses have furloughed staff or taken the more drastic step of making redundancies so, clearly, aren’t recruiting.

Some companies have shelved recruitment plans as they wait to see how long the lockdown continues, even if they still have a recruitment requirement. Others have continued their recruitment process as far as reasonably practical.

They’ve then focused on maintaining contact with the candidate until it’s feasible/possible to bring them in for a face-to-face meeting. A few are carrying on regardless, taking the view that the lockdown will end sometime, and they need to strengthen their team with specific skills. They believe they will adapt to the new situation, whatever that may look like. Basically, they have the mentality to view all this as another challenge that they will deal with and simply will not just give up.

There’s no right or wrong answer as everyone is reacting to an unexpected situation which is continually changing.

However, there has been a sudden influx of highly qualified people to the job market. People who, a few weeks ago, would have been passive candidates are now very active. If you needed a particular skill set in your business before the lockdown, now is a great time to recruit that person. The battle for talent may be easier as there is also less demand for that person as other companies put their recruitment plans on hold.

But, how do you manage a process, which has traditionally been conducted face-to-face, when people can't meet face-to-face?

I would be pleased to talk through the various options that we have deployed for our clients and to assist you if you are considering recruitment in the coming months.

Best regards,



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*Homes have replaced offices, and people are working independently of each other.*

## Change the Recruitment Process

The generally accepted way of recruiting has been under fire for some time now. It hasn't moved with the times and is far too reliant on face-to-face meetings. Great, passive, candidates are busy people. They're already gainfully employed and will have to use their holiday allowance to attend interviews with recruiters and clients. It doesn't have to be that way, and the Covid-19 lockdown has provided a wonderful opportunity for recruitment to evolve.

Here are a few ideas.

Look at the workplace now. Homes have replaced offices, and people are working independently of each other. Video conferencing platforms are now an essential part of workplace life. They should be a central part of the recruitment process too.

### **Imagine this process:**

Rather than writing out a full job specification, emailing it to a candidate, letting them review then respond with questions, why not record it?

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Maybe the MD of the business creates a short video about the company, incorporating a site tour which is then used for every role. If the HR Manager records another one about the recruitment process and the hiring manager does one for the role, these can all be sent to prospective candidates.

Immediately, the candidates will engage with the opportunity. They now understand the role and have met some of the key people involved. After the recruiter has carried out an initial assessment, they can record an interview with the candidate, using questions they've agreed with the client beforehand.

The client then receives the video interview, CV and any supporting documents. They can watch the videos and leave feedback or ask further questions for the candidate to answer.

Video also removes a significant element of unconscious bias that can creep into face-to-face panel interviews. With the whole panel reviewing the candidate videos independently of each other, they can form completely unbiased views without anyone else's opinion being factored in.

Combining video interviews with online psychometric profiling provides the interviewers with a wealth of information to make as good a decision as if they met in person.

Having said all that, we should not ignore the more traditional methods of using presentations to demonstrate skills and knowledge. The old and the new can combine well if done right.

The offer-management part can be conducted remotely, with ease. However, before reaching offer stage, understandably, some companies may insist on a face-to-face meeting. In the midst of Covid 19 restrictions these are

still possible to hold if the HSE and company Social Distancing Policies are implemented and strictly adhered to.

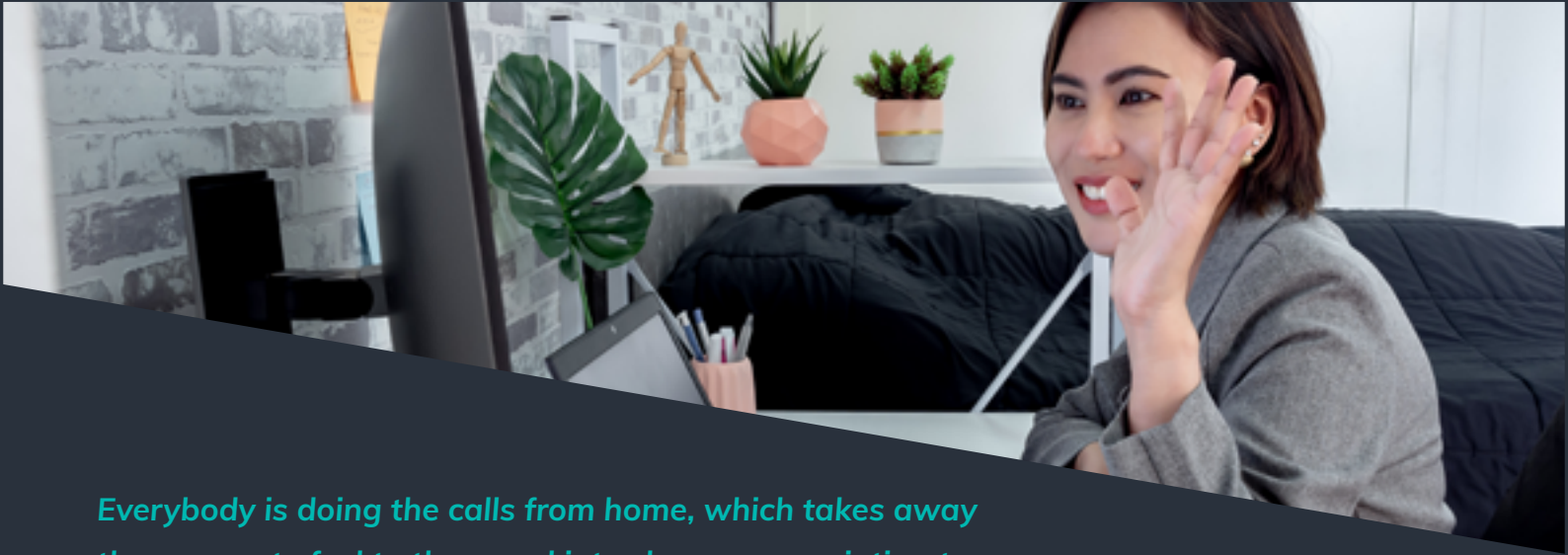
This is particularly relevant to roles where they can't be done remotely. Many companies and candidates will insist on viewing the facility before making or accepting an offer of employment. Using PPE and social distancing may be the only way for these recruitment processes to conclude. Although it may generate issues with the availability of PPE, given the ongoing shortages.

At Martin Veasey Talent Solutions, we have many of these new systems in place already. We have successfully recruited roles using Skype, Microsoft Teams and Zoom. A separate video interviewing platform is incredibly effective, with clients and candidates all loving how it works. We've found it can also speed up the recruitment process. Nobody has to coordinate diaries, and everyone fits their recruitment tasks around their workday as it suits them.

## Change the Onboarding Process

Traditionally, an onboarding process starts with somebody like the HR Manager taking the new hire around the business on a whistle-stop tour of the departments. There will be a few brief handshakes and chats with key personnel, security passes issued, IT system orientation and meeting the immediate team of work colleagues.

Some companies do this excellently. They have a well-structured induction plan for the first day, which then evolves into an onboarding plan for the following weeks, months and first year. They've learned the benefit of a professional onboarding process to help new hires acclimatise to their new workplace and quickly become productive.



**Everybody is doing the calls from home, which takes away the corporate feel to them and introduces a more intimate element.**

But, how does a company do that when the workforce is scattered around, and the workplace isn't open?

The temptation will be to shortcut or ignore the whole onboarding process. But, many companies are finding they have made changes to their operations which are so successful they are implementing them as a permanent change.

During the lockdown, companies are going over and above their usual efforts to welcome new hires into the business. They are avoiding the easy option of having a group Zoom chat with the new hire as the main attraction. Most people would be uncomfortable in that position, so they are having individual video calls with management and reports. The unexpected benefit from these calls is that they have become naturally less formal. Everybody is doing the calls from home, which takes away the corporate feel to them and introduces a more intimate element.

A large part of onboarding can be done online very effectively. It is relatively easy to set up online training for new hires to learn the software systems. Online collaboration tools like Microsoft Teams and Slack, provide shared workspaces, areas for collaboration, direct communication and can incorporate customers and suppliers as well as internal team members.

In the current situation, the focus of onboarding has moved from making people as productive as possible, as quickly as possible, to building stronger relationships with their teams and peers. This alone is improving the engagement of new hires as they're getting to know the company on a much deeper level than they would have done before.

## What does the future hold?

We all hope that, at some point, the lockdown restrictions will ease and we will be able to return to work. But, how different will that new version of work be to the one we left a few weeks ago? It's entirely feasible that Covid-19 will remain with us indefinitely and we will need to make long-term changes to our lives. There is much debate and speculation, but the following points seem to be reasonably common in everyone's thinking:

The most immediate and impactful change we have had to make is our workplace. Covid has forced every company around the world to change and adapt to a new way of working.

Office blocks have practically shut down as companies moved all their staff out to work from home. Remote working has been a heavily debated topic for many years. Some companies had already incorporated elements of it, e.g. work from home one day per week. Other businesses had acknowledged it was something they should look into, but there wasn't any rush. And other firms had discounted it completely.

All of that changed when the global lockdowns came into effect. Companies had to make it work, and it looks like they have. Entire office-based companies are now fragmented around the local area and are working well. Factories and other workplaces that physically can't have staff working remotely have introduced social distancing and additional hygiene procedures.



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Recent reports show that now they've adapted to the new way of working, many people want to keep the remote element permanently. Commuters have realised how much time and money they are spending getting to and from work. They've enjoyed the additional time at home with family or more time to spend on their interests or hobbies, which is lowering stress levels. People have also said they enjoy the short and direct meetings rather than the seemingly endless ones they used to endure(!)

It seems that, rather than working from home one day per week, they want to only work in the office for one day per week.

If that becomes a widespread feeling, there are ramifications for the property markets, particularly in large cities as workers move out to the suburbs. A significant impact of the Covid pandemic is making people consider population density. It's no coincidence that the most considerable infection rates have happened in major cities like London, where everyone lives, travels and works in densely packed situations.

In a recent interview, Morgan Stanley CEO James Gorman said they will need much less "real estate" in the future. Presumably, as they restructure their operations to have fewer people in the office and more working remotely.

It could lead to large cities becoming smaller, with outlying towns growing. This, in turn, could lead to smaller businesses starting and growing in those smaller towns.

This is fine for businesses who can adjust to working remotely. But, what about the ones that can't, like factories?

There will need to be massive changes to shop floor layout to facilitate social distancing procedures. Companies will need to spread their workers over additional shifts (assuming they aren't already). Perhaps "Workplace



## How do you motivate, inspire and lead teams who aren't physically there?

Organisation” could become a new, stand-alone discipline, with specialists working with companies to look at how their facilities are designed, with Covid in mind.

Robotics and AI may play a more substantial part in the day to day operations in many facilities, with human input moving remotely to programme and control the automated processes. Controversial, no doubt, but those debates will need to be held.

One of the barriers to remote working, previously, has been the assumption that employees won't work as hard or not achieve their targets. The initial reports coming out from the Covid lockdown are that many companies have seen no change with many seeing an increase. However, security is a significant risk with remote working. During the past few weeks, one booming part of the economy has been IT Support businesses. Companies have to ensure that people accessing their systems remotely are doing it securely.

There are other issues around protecting their Intellectual Property, which is relatively easy when contained in the walls of the company office, but less so when spread around the local area.

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With more people working remotely, management will need to make considerable adjustments to how they manage their teams. In fact, management, as a subject, will need a thorough overhaul. How do you motivate, inspire and lead teams who aren't physically there? Some people are more suited to a structured work environment and need office life to function. How will they fit into the new world of work?

Whatever the future holds, you can be assured that, at Martin Veasey Talent Solutions, we have plans in place to cover many eventualities. We are operating remotely and using advanced AI searching tools, combined with cutting-edge video interviewing technology to source the best candidates from around the world.

If you'd like to know more about our Remote Recruiting operations, contact me now on **+44 (0)1905 381320** or **[email info@martinveasey.com](mailto:info@martinveasey.com)**.



## About **Martin Veasey Talent Solutions**

*The Secret to your Success is Hiring Exceptional Talent.*

*Our Talent is helping you find it.*

- ✓ A 35-year track record successfully recruiting for blue chip and SME businesses both in the UK and Internationally.
- ✓ Essentially, we match exceptional talent with excellent jobs. We have a reputation for proactively finding and placing hard to reach talent into our clients' businesses. Our testimonials and completed assignment portfolio confirm this.
- ✓ Martin Veasey Talent Solutions have a unique expertise in hiring managerial, professional, technical, functional specialists and senior executive roles, including complete teams both in the UK and internationally.
- ✓ A boutique consultancy, with Director led account management of your recruitment campaign; offering national and global reach whilst retaining personal attention, expertise and support.
- ✓ We place a strong emphasis on developing partnerships that enable us to get to know your business objectives, your challenges and your specific requirements.
- ✓ We then create a tailored campaign that delivers the best talent to add value and become an integral part of your business growth and success.
- ✓ We have invested in State of Art recruitment technology to ensure that we are always able to source the best UK and international talent, both passive and active, for our clients' key roles.
- ✓ Highly qualified & experienced team of recruitment experts, including degree and Masters educated consultants, with memberships of professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, the British Psychological Society, Institute of Leadership & Management and Association for Coaching.
- ✓ Our Recruitment Solutions division is complemented by our Talent Management Solutions division, which offers talent strategy planning, psychometric testing and executive coaching.

### **Divisions: Recruitment Solutions & Talent Management Solutions**

So if you are looking to work with a highly accomplished recruiting partner, please call us on **00 44 (0)1905 381320** or get in **contact today**.

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