



How to hire SUPERSTARS in a challenging market

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MERAKI HR

Executive Summary

This year has been billed 'The Year of The Candidate', due to the mass of skills shortages in the marketplace. Ever since the term was first coined in a Wall Street Journal article, the concept has quickly gained momentum amongst HR circles.

But as a business owner, how will this have an impact on the work you do? Basically, there aren't enough people to go around! If you want to fill your skilled or non-skilled roles, you're likely to face a struggle. It'll take more time, and you'll have to be much more pro-active in your search, than you have ever been!

Here at Meraki HR, we work with our clients to help them create and implement a recruitment strategy which helps them attract the right candidates in the first place and then create a recruitment process that becomes a great candidate experience! So that when you find the right perfect person for your business, they will want to accept your offer and not the other two offers they have on the table! (because that's what will happen if you have a good candidate these days!) We'll also take a look at what you can do to ensure you can have a pipeline of good people apply speculatively to your business, so that you have the right people available when you need them.

These trends may well last longer than just 12 months, so if you're keen to win the war for talent, you need to make sure that you're fit for battle.

Struggling to find the right people to help you to drive your business forward? Then let's meet for a virtual cuppa and a chat and see how we can help you. Click [here](#) to book a virtual cuppa.

Step 1 – Your Employer Brand

Before you even think about employing someone, how is your Employer Brand? Not sure what I mean by this? Your Employer Brand is the “story” you tell prospective employees about what it’s like to work for and in your business. It might include things like your history, your purpose or why you are in business, your culture and your values, employee stories about the day in the life of a Customer Service Advisor, or the Career Path of John Smith who joined us as a Technician and is now a Team Lead, as well as things like your perks and benefits.

Your Employer Brand is what helps you attract and retain top talent, so you need to make the time to develop your Employer Brand as it’s a key component of your Recruitment strategy.

Did you know?

75% of active job seekers are likely to apply to a job if the employer understands the importance of employer branding and actively promotes it.

Step 2 – The Job Description

Next, make sure you write a clear job description outlining the roles Key Responsibility Area’s (KRA’s) that also details the Key Skills or behaviours they need to perform in their role.

A good way to test whether the job description you have written makes sense, is to ask someone else to read it. If they can tell you what the person will be doing in their role and what skills they need, then you have written a good Job Description. If they can’t tell you – then you need to have another go at getting it right.

The Job Description will help you write a good advert for attracting the right candidates to apply for the role. Make sure when you advertise the role, that you do not indirectly or directly discriminate against any protected groups as outlined by the Equality Act 2010. A discrimination claim can be brought against an employer, not just by an employee, but also by prospective employees’ if you are seen to discriminate in the recruitment process.

Finally, the Job Description will also help you to set objectives for the new person when they start. This will ensure that both parties are clear about what is expected from day 1..... so no surprises!!

Did you know?

75% of candidates said the Job Description was the most important piece of information they received from their future employer. ***Total Jobs Recruitment Survey 2021.**

Step 3 – Preparation is Key!

Once you have a good job description, you need to prepare for the interview process. Remember the interview is a two way process, and if you want to attract good quality candidates and you don't prepare, this will not create a good impression of you and your business and may put off the best candidates!

Think about the questions you can ask at interview, that will allow the candidates to demonstrate their suitability for the role. Ask open, competency based questions, such as "Please give me an example of when you have had to work to a tight deadline. When was this? What work was it that you had to do? Why was it important to be delivered by a certain date and what was the outcome?"

Make a note of your questions before you go into the interview, so that you are prepared. You should ask each candidate the same questions ensuring you can demonstrate a fair and non-discriminatory recruitment process. You can then score each question, and then create a shortlist of the best candidates to invite back to the second stage interview. The scoring process is also important because if anyone were to raise a discrimination case against after attending an interview, you can give them constructive feedback as to why they were unsuccessful using their lowest scoring questions as examples. It is also important that you keep all interview notes for at least 24 months as candidates have 3 months from their application to make a claim. However, as there is a 24 month backlog of Employment Tribunal Claims, you may not hear about a claim for some time, so keep hold of those interview notes for 24 months – just in case!

Step 4 – The Interview

Because of how quickly the job market is moving at the moment, we would suggest that you try to make your interview process 1 stage, to ensure a speedy process and to ensure that you don't lose candidates in this challenging marketplace.

Your interview process needs to be designed to allow people to demonstrate whether they have the right skills and behaviours to do the role you want them to do. So when designing the process, you need to create tasks/or assessments and create questions that allow the candidate to demonstrate the key skills and behaviours needed for your role.

If possible, try to have two people from the business in the interview process. This will allow one of you to concentrate on making notes and one can focus on asking the questions. The note taker should not write their opinions of the candidate in their notes; they should simply write down the answer they hear from the candidate, thus keeping the notes factual and un-biased. Try to make the candidate feel relaxed at the start of the interview. Maybe ask them how their

journey was this morning, or what they are doing after the interview. You want the candidate to be relaxed and at ease so that you see the “real” person. When someone is relaxed, they are more likely to talk openly and honestly about themselves.

At the beginning of the interview, take the time to explain what is going to happen to the candidate. Tell them how long the interview will take, and that you are looking for them to give you real life examples of work and experiences they have had rather than theory. It’s also important that you explain the next steps to them after the first interview. Tell them how many people you are seeing for first interview and what date you will get back to them by, to tell them the outcome of the first interview. If you know what date the second or third interviews will take place, then ask them if they were selected would they be available on these dates.

Make sure that you start the interview by asking them to explain their understanding of the role they are applying for. This can be a very telling first question and if they have left out any of the major responsibilities in the role, its time for you to fill in any gaps they have about the role and what they will be doing. This ensures that the candidate now fully understand the role and what will be expected of them. You can also use this time to see if they have any questions about the role before you move into the main questions of the interview.

Once you have asked your questions, again ask the candidate if they have any questions for you. If not, it’s important to establish a few things before closing the first interview. Ask them what their current basic salary is and also what their expectations are if moving into another role as these two figures can be very different! Ask then what benefits they currently receive and lastly what their notice period is. These are all really important questions to ask at first interview to ensure that you can match their expectations should you wish to offer them a role.

Now you need to test whether they can do what they say they can do. You’d be surprised at how some basic skills tests can turn your favourite candidate into the least favourite, so it’s important to test what people tell you they can do in the interview process.

The skills test could be designed to test their accuracy if this is important or to use a specific system that you use such as SAGE, SAP, EXCEL, WORD or POWERPOINT. If they are going to be in a sales role, then think of an everyday scenario they will be faced with and ask them to play this out either face to face or over the phone. There are many ways you can test a skill, so get creative and if you need some help, get other people in the team to give you some ideas and suggestions.

You could also create some values based questions for the candidate to ensure they will be a good cultural fit for your organisation or team, or you can use psychometric profiling which will give you an insight into the way the candidate thinks and works which can help you to determine what further questions to ask them. Psychometric profiling is a useful additional interviewing tool but you shouldn't use it in isolation to make a recruitment decision.

From the candidates you have seen for interview you can then score each question, using the scoring system below. This will help you to create your shortlist for 2nd or 3rd stage interview.

- 1 = Little or no evidence shown of the skill required
- 2 = Some evidence shown of the skill required
- 3 = Good evidence shown of the skill required
- 4 = Excellent evidence shown of the skill required

Step 5 – Making a Killer Offer.

You have selected the best candidate for the role based on their skills and experience. You now have to make the offer of employment to them. We would always advise that this is done by telephone within 24 hours of the interview – strike whilst the iron is hot! On the phone, just have a little chat with them before going into the actual offer itself. Asked them how they found the second interview, did they enjoy it and how do they feel about the role and the company? Have they got any questions? This will help you to gauge whether they are really interested or not. I have done this many, many times and most people are enthusiastic and excited about a role. However, on a couple of occasions the people have been so disinterested and unenthusiastic about the opportunity or the Company that we've decided **NOT** to offer them the role! If you get all the right signals, then go ahead and make your offer.

Don't be afraid to ask them if they are going to accept it. Once they have verbally accepted the role, tell them you will be sending them all the relevant paperwork by email and by post within the next 48 hours and that you will be in touch with them shortly to confirm their start date and that you look forward to them joining you.

How can we help?

Our next Masterclass is all about helping you to attract and hire Superstars!

Our Disruptive Recruitment Masterclass is on Friday 18th March from 10am – 4pm at the Hilton Garden Inn Abingdon. This is a great value, in person workshop, aimed at ambitious SME's, Business Owners, Hiring Managers, People Managers or HR professionals, who are looking to grow their business and recruit this year.

I've been working in recruitment and HR for over 30 years and this is the most challenging recruitment market I have ever seen. If you've had to recruit in the last 24 months, you'll also know just how tough it is! If you are lucky, you may get a handful of people applying for your roles. You may then then find you are having to hire the best of a bad bunch. Sound familiar? If you want to recruit the best talent, you've got to stand out from the crowd and of course your competitors, but how do you do that?

In our workshop, we will be taking a non traditional approach to help you create your step by step plan to attract and recruit the best talent in this challenging marketplace. You will come away with your action plan to ensure you can attract and hire the best talent out there! Want a pipeline of future talent available to you? We'll be sharing the best recruitment strategies from some well known brands, which you can use to help you create a future pipeline of talent for your business.

This workshop is great value, costing just £145 for clients and £199 for non-clients per person for the day which includes lunch. *For the Early Birds among you, book your place before the 18th February to receive 10% off the price of your ticket/s.*

We are Meraki HR

We provide the perfect blend of practical and professional HR solutions that work for your business and for your bottom line.

Working with us will enable you to improve employee engagement, your culture, people processes and procedures, which in turn will help you to deliver your business goals. And we do it all with our special touch of 'meraki'.

Your people are your greatest business asset. Knowing how to recruit, manage, develop and retain them is key to your success.

To find out how we can help you, please contact us:



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Your People | Our Passion | Your Success