

# VIRTUAL RECRUITMENT IS THE NEW NORMAL

AN OFFICIAL CLIENT UPDATE OF PT HEADHUNTER INDONESIA



It has been four months since the first case of Covid-19 was confirmed by the Indonesia Government. Ever since then, a lot of things have changed. The cases have continued to claim people's lives. Though some cities have eased the social restriction regulations, extensive health protocols are still heavily encouraged to curb the spread of COVID-19, such as frequent hand washing and good hygiene, wearing face masks, and maintaining at least one meter apart from people in public places.

Schools across the country are being shut down and will probably remain closed until 2021. We have sadly witnessed several businesses that have ceased their operations, causing the rise of unemployment. This virus creates a significant knock-on effect on daily life.

## The Era of Digital Transformation

When COVID-19 has greatly restricted our physical interactions, we turn to the virtual world. By this time, it is exceedingly rare that one does not know what Zoom, Google Meet, and Skype are. These three most used platforms have taken over our lives for the past four months as everyone is spending much of their time virtually, for work, school, and even for a casual meetup with friends.

As a result, the demand of better and faster internet access has skyrocketed. Communication and Information Technology Minister Johnny G. Plate said in a teleconference with the Regional Legislative Council's (DPD) Committee I in Jakarta this past May that, "We're entering a new era, the era of digitalization, during this pandemic." He added that during the pandemic, the demand for internet access is not only coming

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from facilities in the cities but are coming from the households, including those in country areas. Currently, according to Johnny, Indonesia has nine satellites which consist of six telecommunications satellites and three earth exploration satellites. The two new satellites will be launched in 2023 to provide a more powerful internet connection. The pandemic indeed brings out the digital transformation in almost every aspect of our lives.

## Virtual Recruitment

One of those aspects of lives that gets shifted by the acceleration of digital transformation is recruitment. The transformation eventually produces a virtual recruitment trend. Virtual recruitment is not something new. Probably one of you who is reading this essay has experienced a virtual recruitment process during your career, either being the recruiter or the candidate. However, since extensive health protocols are still being conducted by most businesses, virtual recruitment has become the new recruitment. The recruitment must adapt to ensure those good talents that are still interested and play an important role in business.

## The Benefits

The rise of virtual recruitment has brought several benefits both for the businesses and the candidates. With only a reliable network, both the candidate and the recruiter can start the interview session immediately. This offers great flexibility, especially for a candidate who resides far from the interview place. Furthermore, virtual recruitment can make a recruitment process shorter.

When a candidate does not have to commute to the interview place and can do the interview online from his house, for instance, he has made his interview process shorter and more effective. Another benefit that comes out of virtual recruitment is reducing bias between the recruiter and the candidate. A fellow recruiter has told me that his candidate for his client was rejected after the first face to face interview because of the candidate's strong body odor, despite his qualifications matched the job requirements. If he had gone through a virtual recruitment process, the recruiter believed the candidate would have passed the first stage of the interview.

## The Limitations

There are two sides to any coin—so, while a virtual recruitment boasts positive benefits, conversely, there are few limitations that recruiters must pay attention to. The lack of personal touch has been discussed as one of the limitations of virtual recruitment. [When everything is processed by a machine](#), one might think that a personal touch might get lost in the digital-

shuffle. Even before the pandemic, when the notion of AI (Artificial Intelligence) was introduced to the Human Resources community, being promised to make the recruitment process faster and more efficient, HR practitioners felt an anxiety thinking that AI would replace their jobs, and, as a result, would make a recruitment process feels less personal and more robotic for the candidates.

Another limitation, [as cited by Harver](#), is the difficulty to measure the culture fit for the candidates. Without candidates going into the office for the face to face interview session, introducing them to the team, and showing them around the office and its facilities, determining whether the candidates complement the office culture can be a challenge. This, of course, greatly affects the way the candidate will perceive its future company.

They might accept the job, but once they find out that the work environment and the colleagues do not fit with their expectations, they will resign. These drawbacks do not necessarily discredit virtual recruiting. Instead, they pose interesting challenges for recruiters that, with careful thought and nimble action, can be overcome.

## Conclusion

This transition to the 'new normal' has indeed accelerated digital transformation in recruitment. Even though virtual recruitment has limitation that can greatly affect candidate's experiences, we should not ignore the benefits that virtual recruitment can bring to the table.

Despite, now, the style of the recruitment might be different from the usual, a business must keep in mind their original intention of recruitment—to find the best talent. During such uncertain times, recruiters who want to stay on top of the game must willing to adapt to this new culture. [Josh Bersin](#), a global research analyst and writer on the topics of corporate human resources, said that Virtual recruitment was something that 'cool to have' before the pandemic. Now they are business-critical.

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