



COMMON CHALLENGES IN A RECRUITMENT PROCESS AND HOW TO SOLVE THEM

AN OFFICIAL CLIENT UPDATE OF PT HEADHUNTER INDONESIA



Recruitment is often undervalued within the organizational ecosystem. While not as glamorous as closing sales deals or crafting brand strategies that go viral on TikTok, it plays a critical role. Some may underestimate its complexity and attempt to navigate the process without a proper structure. However, without a robust recruitment system, finding the right talent for essential tasks becomes challenging for any organization.

Recruitment directly impacts the composition of the workforce, influencing the company's culture, productivity, and long-term success. Though it plays a vital aspect in shaping the workforce, over the past years working as a headhunter, I have noticed there are several common recruitment challenges that organizations face. Below are some of the challenges and my suggestions for solving those challenges.

Unstructured Interview

An unstructured interview occurs when an employer believes that a job interview only involves asking spontaneous, random questions, and assessing the candidates solely based on their answers. This perspective often stems from overconfidence in perceiving recruitment as an easy and improvisational task. Research indicates that unstructured interviews can introduce cognitive biases and are less reliable predictors of on-the-job performance compared to general mental ability tests, aptitude tests, or personality tests.

A more effective alternative to an unstructured interview is the adoption of a structured interview. Google's experiment with a structured interview for hiring has proven successful for both interviewers and candidates. By using pre-prepared, high-quality questions, guides, and rubrics, an average of 40 minutes per interview can be saved, and interviewers reported feeling more prepared.

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Even rejected candidates experienced a 35% increase in satisfaction compared to those subjected to an unstructured interview. Additionally, a structured interview demonstrated higher predictability of job performance when comparing interview scores to the performance scores of hires across various functions and levels.

A simple guide to having a structured interview is to first identify important traits that are prerequisites for success. Second, create a set of questions that reliably show evidence of those traits. Finally, calibrate scores across responses. For instance, in my company, specifically in hiring apprentices for recruitment consulting roles, first and foremost, we have previously identified important traits that are prerequisites for success in this role. One of the traits is having a growth mindset, which we have agreed to define as "Open-minded, always willing to learn new things in life and belief that everything can be improved for the better."

Before the interview, each interviewer formulates a set of questions specifically designed to assess the candidates' potential for possessing a growth mindset. On the day of the interview, interviewers will stick to the questions and guidelines to avoid any biases. Moreover, each interviewer is advised to include additional notes about the interviewee's performance during the interview to enhance the comprehensiveness of the report, aiding the team in the final decision-making process.

What Makes Your Company Different Than Other Companies and Why Should I Join Them?

When I recruit for a senior position on behalf of my client company, candidates often inquire about what sets the client's company apart and why they should join. These questions are valid, as senior talent seeks unique opportunities. However, some companies struggle to provide clear answers, often relying on abstract and aspirational statements like "In the next five years, we aim to be the best agriculture company in Indonesia."

We live in the age of a candidate-driven market. This is where job seekers, especially those with rare skills, have the freedom to choose where they want to work. Top talent does not need to actively seek jobs; they can just sit and soon they will receive job offers on LinkedIn from potential employers. Essentially, the power of choice has shifted from employers to potential employees.

Given this situation, employers must go beyond selecting candidates; they must know how to 'sell' the job role and their company to potential candidates—and the best way to do that is through creating an employer branding strategy. Haryo Suryosumarto, the Founder and Managing Director of Headhunter Indonesia—someone who has helped organizations create their employer branding strategy—believes that having an employer branding strategy that is strongly rooted in authenticity and unique company values can make the company stand out in the candidate-driven market.

When it comes to creating an authentic employer branding strategy, Haryo advises several techniques:

1. **Conduct a Brand Audit:** Evaluate your current employer brand to ensure it authentically represents the company's ethos.
2. **Engage Employees:** Utilize your employees' insights and experiences in the brand-building process to shape a brand that reflects the workforce.
3. **Tailor Strategies to Your Culture:** Align branding strategies with your corporate culture and values, avoiding generic approaches.
4. **Narrate Your Unique Story:** Showcase your unique story, emphasizing your distinctive culture, values, and vision (I would also add that showcasing your story using a social media platform would help get your story heard and spread faster to the market).

Anxiety-Driven Recruitment

Anxiety-driven recruitment refers to a situation when the recruitment process is heavily influenced by a strong sense of urgency. Companies are so concerned about roles going unfulfilled that they rush the process and even discount potential red flags along the way. As a headhunter, I can tell when a company feels anxious about hiring. Some of the common characteristics are imposing tight deadlines on the recruitment process, unclear job descriptions and requirements, and unstructured interviews that lead to a subjective assessment of the candidates.

Decision-making in recruitment is challenging on its own, and adding anxiety to the process can further hinder our ability to make smart choices. Anxiety has the potential to turn us into poor decision-makers, leading to bad decisions that we later regret.

I can empathize with an organization that feels anxious when it comes to hiring. 'An empty chair' at the organization can feel intimidating, especially if it is an important role. Though having a sense of urgency can get your work done faster, it is never wise to rush through the recruitment process.

What I am suggesting is to always plan carefully your recruitment needs with, for instance, a clear expectation of the new hire, prepare for structured interviews, and have a solid objective assessment of the candidates. While finding the right talent may be challenging and time-consuming, enduring this short-term challenge can lead to long-term benefits for the organization.

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