

VIRTUAL HIRING

Best practices for virtual hiring and on-boarding



When Virtual Becomes Literal

Even as employers navigate through the chaotic landscape of 2020 and the disruption in our workforce, many businesses are still growing their teams and/or replacing staff.

A quick glance at the [Ohio Means Jobs website](#) reveals over 137,000 open positions throughout the state; including:

- 50,000 IT roles
- 40,000 Banking/Finance/Insurance roles
- 15,000 Healthcare roles
- 12,000 Manufacturing roles
- 12,000 Distribution roles
- 6,700 Construction roles

KEY POINTS

**UTILIZE VIRTUAL
HIRING EVENTS**

**STREAMLINE THE
HIRING PROCESS**

**ADDRESS VIRTUAL
ONBOARDING
CONCERNS**

**TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF TECHNOLOGY**

**COLUMBUS[★]
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

Meeting Job Seekers Where They Aren't

Since late March and early in the pandemic, the Chamber has collaborated with The Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio, Ohio Means Jobs and One Columbus to offer a virtual hiring platform to the community.

These Central Ohio Reemployment & Resource Virtual Hiring Events (CORRE) are held monthly to connect job seekers to businesses. If you are an employer currently hiring and would like to participate in any of the virtual hiring events at no cost to you, please contact the Business Solutions team at BusinessSolutions@wdbco.org.

Businesses create "tables" within the virtual pavilion and utilize chat technology to simulate the interactions between job seekers, recruiters, and hiring managers at a traditional in-person event.

Applicants can ask questions about companies and specific roles, upload their resumes and go through screening interviews.

"We participated in the virtual job fair for the first time recently. I see it as a much more efficient process than a live job fair. There was no travel involved. If candidates aren't actively engaging, you can focus on your regular job duties.

We can easily divide the time among multiple employees."

- Shawn Richard, VP Human Resources. Palmer-Donavin

The events are easy to promote and manage, effectively capture attendee data, and offer a personalized experience regardless of candidates' physical location—with a lot less overhead than traditional career fairs. Users and experts agree that the No. 1 selling point for hosting virtual hiring events is flexibility—for job seekers and recruiters.

These events also create opportunities for a more diverse population of job seekers.

CONTACT YOUR COLUMBUS CHAMBER

Are you a Chamber member looking for guidance and direction on your workforce strategy? You can schedule a meeting with Workforce Development Director Kelly Fuller to discuss the best ways to attract and retain talent in today's workforce, as well as ways to build a strong company culture.

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“I truly do think that organizations have much to learn and evolve, especially when it comes to technological spaces and needing to provide equal opportunity to ALL professionals. It has become critical for organizations to take accessibility into consideration for diverse job seekers. “

-Ankit Shah, Career Consultant, Lhota Office of Alumni Career Management, Outreach and Engagement

The loss of in-person interaction has presented a seismic shift in sourcing talent. Though many miss face to face contact with the candidates, the virtual hiring platform presents many benefits, such as reducing travel, especially when your business covers multiple markets.

In a discussion with Heather Mauk, Senior Consultant for Workforce Initiatives with CVS Health in Cleveland and frequent participant in the Columbus CORRE hiring events, she shared that convenience is critical. “We can hire for our Columbus market without the travel time. We are getting high caliber candidates for our more senior level roles. I hope this stays around!”

In addition to virtual hiring events, virtual interviews provide many advantages to businesses. Steps in the “typical” process can often be fast tracked, or eliminated altogether. One practice for businesses to consider is to send the candidates a set of questions in advance of the interview, whether written or video recording. Asynchronous video interviews are recorded at a candidate’s convenience, meaning there is no need to deal with scheduling.

Standardize the interview questions and the post-interview debrief so that all assessors follow the same framework when assessing and ranking candidates to ensure fairness and equity in the process, which can also serve to significantly reduce implicit bias.

Keep in mind the ease, convenience and cost reduction to your business when you migrate to virtual recruiting, hiring, and onboarding. Most likely, your past experience included paying a fee to the fair host, setting up a table and paying staff to wait for job seekers to stop by and engage.

With virtual platforms, businesses can access a list of who registered, along with their contact information. Small businesses with little time and money available for recruiting events can reach more quality candidates by using virtual recruitment options.

Onboarding in a Virtual Space

A recent article published by the Society of Human Resource Management reports that today's new hires may experience some anxiety with virtual onboarding. What can businesses do to address these fears? First, let's talk about a few of those concerns:

WILL I HAVE THE TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT I NEED, IF I AM ALSO WORKING REMOTELY?

In a pre-pandemic world, the employee's first day, or even week, was typically making the rounds from a first day onsite orientation to the various departments or offices of their new co-workers. Today, businesses should try to replicate that experience virtually with pre-recorded welcoming messages and meet ups utilizing the organization's virtual platform of choice. Make sure your onboarding packet includes an org chart so that new hires are clear on everyone's role and who to contact for inquiries. And chat services, such as Microsoft Teams, can facilitate more casual conversations and conveniently address quick questions.

WILL I BE ACCEPTED AS PART OF THE TEAM?

Building trust is critical in any relationship, and that happens over time and a series of encounters. Being brand new to an organization and having those interactions over platforms like ZOOM or Microsoft Teams gives little opportunity to have spontaneous conversations in a traditional office. Being a part of the culture is something new hires worry about. [The Chamber recently published some best practices to address those concerns and ways for employers to create and maintain strong culture in a virtual world.](#) We also took a deeper dive during a virtual "huddle" on this topic, which you can watch [here](#).

HOW WILL I GET HELP WHEN AND IF I NEED IT?

As a brand new employee, your newest hire is dealing with a new job, new organization, new processes, and procedures and balancing the unknown brought on by the pandemic. Now, more than ever, it is critical for HR professionals, managers, and small business owners to conduct regular check-ins with the new recruit and provide specific and detailed guidance on how and when to elevate any concerns they may have. [Check out the Chamber's recent guidance to help businesses better navigate working from home.](#)

It is important to understand that not all Columbus-area job seekers have broadband service in their homes or the digital education needed to search for jobs online. Columbus does have strong digital infrastructure thanks, in part, to Columbus Chamber members like Spectrum and AT&T.

In addition to providing a robust, fiber-rich network that delivers quality, high-speed internet throughout the Columbus region, the private sector continues to step up to help more people bridge the digital divide.

For example, Spectrum is investing millions in digital education through its [Spectrum Digital Education Grant Program](#) that aims to help eligible seniors and low-income families. And AT&T has expanded low-cost internet access to qualified households during the pandemic, which employers can learn about [here](#). Additionally, applicants with their own devices in need of internet connections can visit [AT&T retail stores for wifi usage](#).

“One lesson learned from doing virtual onboarding is having to follow up more frequently with candidates about completing tasks, i.e. completing the skills/plans test, signing all HR documents, uploading needed documentation. Many people are accustomed to doing all of these types of tasks in one sitting when they come into an office for onboarding. I make sure I give candidates enough time to complete these tasks in their own time while emphasizing their start date as the deadline for when tasks are due. Giving them several days means the candidate doesn’t feel pressured to get everything done at once; however, I need to make sure I give a gentle reminder when that deadline does approach and not everything is done yet.”

- Tim Yanok, Recruiting Manager, Singleton Construction, LLC

Many HR teams are also using this time to re-evaluate the organization's job descriptions, reassess the workforce to make sure the right people are in the right jobs, and check to see that high-potentials are on track to progress into future leadership roles. The Columbus Chamber has moved the popular Elevate Cbus to a virtual offering with the next cohort launching on September 8. Your business can continue to develop your own high potential candidates by [registering here](#).

Small businesses should also consider developing a video series for candidates and new hires, walking them through the application and onboarding processes.

For more information on best practices and innovation on hiring and onboarding virtually, reach out to Director of Workforce, Kelly Fuller, to schedule a one-on-one consultation.