HR by CATHERINE

Using Social Media for Recruitment

- By Catherine

Social media platforms have made strong inroads into the world of business and commerce, and have become important recruitment and hiring tools for HR professionals across a wide range of industries. But indiscriminate use of social media and improper deployment of social media resources can be detrimental to productivity and can expose a company to reputation problems, loss of capital, and legal action.

This white paper will summarize the following aspects of this topic for human resource managers as they incorporate social media into their recruitment strategies:

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How Viral Outreach has Modernized Recruitment Practices

While the use of social media has become almost universal among individuals, its applications to the corporate sphere remain promising, but unclear and unregulated. Social media is currently being adopted by marketing strategists and shaped to the purposes of customer outreach with impressive results. This medium has also been used for personal network building and the establishment of the contacts and partnerships that help businesses grow and thrive. It stands to reason, then, that the same device that connects partner to partner and business to consumer should also form a valuable point of connection between employer and employee.

The assumption is well founded, but this point of contact has not been clearly defined. Its legal implications are still murky and its effect on hiring success and business productivity are difficult to quantify. Until these issues are resolved, HR professionals should primarily regard social media as a pillar of workplace brand building and a locus of outreach to potential applicants.

The Use of Social Media to Find and Recruit New Candidates

The reach of social media can be vast as well as targeted. This means that Facebook and Twitter content can be disseminated to a global audience in an instant, but can also be positioned toward promising areas of the talent market using minimal budget resources. Therefore, social media as a recruitment and workplace brand building tool should not be overlooked.

Social media supports recruitment success as defined by

1. Broad response to recruitment material.
2. Specificity of applicant backgrounds.

This suggests that a larger number of appropriate candidates are exposed to postings that have been disseminated through social media. Extensive information about job duties, expectations, company culture and other details can be made available through social-media supported links to company websites and blogs. This may also increase both the breadth and the applicability of responses.

The Use of Social Media to Verify Existing Applications

The use of social media to verify existing applications can draw companies into complex, as-yet-unresolved issues of ethics, legality, business productivity, and information security.

Improper use of social media to screen candidates can expose a company to serious reputation problems, which can affect the branding of a company's culture as well as its product.

Reckless use of social media can also lead to the loss of valuable capital, including human capital, and can make a company vulnerable to legal action including accusations of privacy violation and discriminatory hiring practices.

Conclusion

Social media has shown great value as a recruitment tool, but its use in hiring and recruitment should be limited to outreach and the generation of an initial applicant pool. Social media should be used sparingly during applicant screening and verification and should be deployed with caution when applied to these tasks. As in all areas, both within and beyond the milieu of human resource management, company social media policies should be well documented and clearly defined.