

# 5 Top Recruiting Trends for 2021

2021  
TRENDS

**“There are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happen” – we seem to be living through a time where this quote is more applicable than ever.**

Recruitment is changing – over the last year, there have been shifts in the recruitment and staffing sector and the wider world of work that none of us could have predicted.

For businesses looking to hire this year, it means a new mindset needs to be adopted by those responsible for your recruitment. Whether you are a business owner, part of a larger company with a dedicated hiring department, or if you already partner with a recruiter – in this report, we cover the trends that will be affecting recruitment this year.

The pandemic has been the catalyst for most of the changes we have seen, but some shifts were already happening behind the scenes over the last few years. And as recruiters, we have been keeping a close eye on business growth, H.R. and hiring trends.

We have created this report to highlight the key themes to be aware of when embarking on your recruitment this year.

So – let us get started.

*Sarah Warne*

MANAGING DIRECTOR [Change Recruitment Services Limited](#)



## TREND 1 Remote-First Recruitment

**It won't have escaped your attention that the most significant alteration to the way we live, work, and recruit has been the rise of remote and virtual interactions.**

Zoom interviews became a 'thing', with some companies hiring and onboarding entirely remotely – a concept that would have been hard to believe just a year ago.

In a short space of time, businesses, candidates, and recruitment companies have gone from perhaps being sceptical of remote communications to carrying out much of our day entirely on Zoom, MS Teams and using virtual messaging tools.

Virtual and remote communications and recruitment came of age in 2020, and this trend is set to continue this year and beyond.

But with such a huge part of recruitment hinging on the 'connection' between the hiring manager and the candidate – how can you make remote recruitment work for your business?

You might be dubious that a remote recruitment process can return the same quality results as a face-to-face interview. The

thing with video and virtual recruitment is that it is still such a new concept.

Businesses need time to adjust, see the benefits, and then work out what works for them when incorporating remote recruitment into a hiring strategy.

I am not suggesting that everyone reading this switch to 100% remote recruitment – that would not work. It is about striking the right balance and utilising these tools in a way that works for you.

One benefit of using video interviews in your hiring process is the increased number of candidates you can interview thanks to the time-saving element of jumping on a video interview.

Video has made the recruitment process more of a two-way meeting. Before, the (often nervous) candidate would arrive at their employer-to-be's office, and the scales seemed tipped in one direction.

Remote recruitment means there is a more even playing field thanks to Zoom and MS Teams. There is a good chance that

in a video interview, the candidate and the hiring manager will catch a glimpse into each other's homes – this can be beneficial for both parties. It is a fact that candidates perform better when they are relaxed, which the video interview situation provides. A [2020 study by JDP](#), a company which aims to protect employee and organisational welfare found that 93% of candidates admit to experiencing interview anxiety – but being in the surrounding of our own home automatically makes candidates more relaxed.

In a [recent article](#) entitled, What to Do If Your Team Doesn't Want to Go Back to the Office, HBR looks at why many employees are still tentative about returning to the office full-time.

Imagine what it must feel like to be a candidate with the possibility of starting a new job remotely?

The article stresses that finding a balance that works best for everyone will be key to your post-pandemic team's success, including your new employees.

Do you offer new employees a welcome pack if they are going to be working from home? Are you and your team maintaining a professional manner when on video calls?

Remote recruitment – it is here to stay in various forms, so it is an idea to continually improve your virtual interview and onboarding skills.



## TREND 2 A New Type of Talent Pipeline

**Traditionally, talent pipelines are the pool of candidates that your organisation has been in communication with either individually or more likely working with a specific recruiting partner – the individuals who you have singled out as a possibility for your next strategic roles.**

These are often people with whom your company has formed a bond; perhaps they are previous unsuccessful applicants, former employees, customers, or part of your online network.

Hiring managers often have specific ideas about what 'kind' of person they are looking for when they have a vacancy they need to fill.

The pandemic has changed all of this.

Talent pipelines are changing – let me explain how.

Technology has disrupted the vast majority of B2B and B2C relationships and the relationships between organisations and the candidates who apply to their roles.

Diverse talent pipelines are now developing full of individuals you might never have possibly considered for your roles. In

some cases, businesses hire employees for remote positions based in parts of the U.K. or world they had never considered pre-Covid.

Additionally, the skills that some organisations are now looking for will have changed. In just one year, the need for digital aptitude and excellent virtual communication has skyrocketed.

Think about how your business has changed since Covid. Are there now new skills and attributes that you know will benefit your team's mission and success?

This is particularly important when you are thinking about hiring new managers or team leaders. Your managers need to be inspiring leaders and excellent communicators. Still, the pandemic has shown how vital other characteristics are: empathy, resilience, and the ability to flex and improvise in difficult situations.

Make a note of the skill set you know will benefit your organisation in light of our Covid-altered world and be looking for these attributes when creating your role description and instructing recruiters.

## TREND 3 Quality Over Speed

When Covid struck, many businesses went into self-preservation mode with their current employees and their recruitment.

The furlough scheme saw mass temporary working shifts on a scale like never before. Some organisations needed new employees – fast – while others made the difficult decision to downsize or furlough their teams.

A movement is happening now in recruitment. Businesses understand the value of spending a little longer to find the 'right' candidate, rather than hiring fast to fill a vacancy.

You might think that this is always the case in recruitment, but sadly, the 'wrong' hire is made when time pressures begin to mount.

Over the past year, businesses have become acutely aware of how valuable some team members have become. This could be the marketing specialist who has stepped up to help solve tech problems remotely or the newly promoted manager who has gone over and above their job spec to ensure smooth running during stressful times.

I am sure you will have members of your team in mind who have taken the past year's challenges as an opportunity to step up – these are the types of people you want to identify and replicate in your recruitment process.

This isn't to say that recruitment needs to take longer to produce the best results, it's that recruitment now needs to be focused and specific to meet your business's growing needs.

For this, your company will need to re-evaluate your mission and vision to be clear on the direction you want to go. Then you should revisit your job roles – both the positions you currently have and the new talent you require to drive your organisation forward.

A [recent report](#) on the state of recruitment post-Covid, U.S. venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz referred to the recruitment taking place now as 'the Great Rehiring'. This phrase is symbolic of the significant recruitment movement that will be happening at many levels in the coming months.

During the pandemic, millions of employees were furloughed, while others were made redundant. Some individuals who weathered the storm with their current employer are thinking about switching jobs – the pandemic has been the catalyst for movement at every level.

While the increased talent pool is excellent news for employers looking to hire, it presents a dichotomy. Many hiring managers struggle with the influx of candidates and the logistical nightmare of finding the right candidate among hundreds – sometimes thousands – of applicants.

This is why it's so essential to have a recruitment strategy in place to ensure that you are identifying the right talent for

your organisation, and therefore not making rushed or wrong hiring decisions.

Consider the following steps to improve the quality of your recruitment process:

### DEFINE YOUR ROLES

Use a variety of sources to create your post-Covid job descriptions. Speak to employees and review if roles have changed over the last year and how; you might need to create a job specification that is now different from the one you had in mind.

### THINK ABOUT CULTURE

A significant part of hiring a quality candidate who will do well in your organisation is finding an individual with the right cultural fit. The pandemic has changed the very nature of many organisation's cultures, so this might need a revisit, too. If your team are now working remotely, what implications does this have in terms of company culture, and how will your new employee adapt.

### ATTRACTING THE RIGHT CANDIDATES

Now is the time to hone your talent attraction strategies with the support of a recruitment partner. More than ever, you must carefully monitor your talent pipeline and your network to ensure you are staying competitive.

Your employer branding, marketing materials and job descriptions should exude the message you are the employer in your sector or geographical area that top talent would want to join.

### MANAGING THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Having a manageable recruitment process is one of the key elements of successful hiring.

Be aware of unconscious bias, leading to poor recruiting decisions - reassess your interview questions, panel, and style.

There is a lot to consider when updating your recruitment process for our post-Covid world. If you would like to speak to an expert about updating your recruitment process, [arrange a recruitment planning meeting with us here](#) or call us on **01934 612288**.



## TREND 4 Diversity and Inclusion

**Acknowledging diversity and inclusion within your recruitment process is less of a trend and more a movement which businesses can't ignore any longer.**

A diverse and inclusive recruiting process is one which is accepting of all applicants, and which welcomes, rather than excludes, a varied range of candidates.

But particularly this year, the Black Lives Matter movement and the cultural shift that has happened since has changed the working – and recruiting – landscape.

If you haven't included updating your recruitment process to be diverse and inclusive – now is the time.

All applications should be considered equally:

- Race
- Sex
- Age
- Background
- Disability
- Sexuality

Diversity and inclusion are a wide-ranging topic, and the fact that it's still a relatively 'new' H.R. concept means some organisations struggle to get it right. Employers are increasingly turning to recruitment experts to understand better and provide a more inclusive recruitment process.

For candidates, the values and ethics of their employer are of growing importance. The best talent will not apply to your roles, no matter how suited they are or how competitive your salary is if you lag behind in terms of being progressive.

Additionally, due to Covid-19, the inclusivity with which organisations view those with mental health problems and their wellness programmes are also of growing importance.

Candidates want to know that the employers they are considering for their next career move are considerate and accommodating to employees from all walks of life.

Are you promoting D&I in your recruitment process? The following are ways to introduce inclusivity to your hiring process:

- Make sure your job descriptions use inclusive language and are not discriminatory, for example, stating that a degree is needed when other qualifications or experience will suffice.
- Broaden your search to include a more diverse pool of talent.
- Continually review your shortlists and shortlisting process to ensure it is fair.
- Train managers on diversity and inclusion in your organisation.
- Make reasonable adjustments to your job roles and interview process to avoid discrimination.

Finally, let's look at how tech is changing recruitment this year.

## TREND 5 Tech Takeover

**Whether it's for cost-cutting reasons, as a result of our new socially distanced world or streamline recruitment processes, smart businesses are exploring the limits of technology.**

The U.S. Department of Labour found that while the recruitment sector has been early adopters of technology to improve recruitment decisions, it is [only 16% more effective](#) than traditional recruiting.

When used correctly, automation and artificial intelligence will enhance the overall recruitment process, saving recruiters time to spend on refining the 'human' element of recruitment; finding out what clients need and getting to know candidates.

Speaking to the Financial Times, Professor Peter Cappelli, director of the centre for human resources at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania revealed that while AI in recruiting is making things easier for some companies, it still has its limits. He [stated](#) "Part of the challenge with tech is that

it's more efficient but it reduces human contact. People want speed and convenience, ideally from a person."

What kind of automation or A.I. are you or your recruitment company currently using in your hiring process? Could it work better for you?

- Using an algorithm eliminates bias while saving everyone in the process time.
- Introduce the use of psychometric tools such as the [DiSC profile](#) or aptitude tests to make your recruitment more scientific and data-driven; many recruitment and staffing companies include this in their fee.

Since the pandemic, businesses are increasingly looking to technology to solve their H.R. issues. Using A.I. and automation can improve your recruitment results, as well as free up extra time for your H.R. department to undertake essential tasks.

## CONCLUSION

The world has undergone many changes in such a short space of time, and organisations who are now pushing forwards after finding their feet in the wake of Covid should bear in mind these critical recruitment trends this year.

Candidate considerations are changing – we have seen the biggest shake-up in a generation in terms of job opportunities, working styles, and recruitment.

If you would like an in-depth look at your recruitment process with the help of an expert to make sense of your post-pandemic hiring practices, we can help.

**Contact us today on 01934 612288.**

*Sarah Warne*

MANAGING DIRECTOR [Change Recruitment Services Limited](#)

## CHANGE RECRUITMENT SERVICES

We have spent over a decade working together as a team helping organisations find the best people to join them just when they need them.

We still have the same passion and enthusiasm to help our customers grow and succeed, through recruiting and retaining their talented employees, as we did right at the beginning in 2006.

Over time becoming experts at designing our services around what delivers the best value for you, our customer.



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