



MONSTER HIRING AND RECRUITING IN A CRISIS THE LESSONS OF COVID-19



PART 2: URGENT HIRING



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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented upheaval across the board. Everything from the simplest task (grabbing a cup at your favorite coffee shop), to complex decisions (how and when should your company adapt new hiring strategies), has become a challenge. And many of those challenges can't easily be overcome.

The scope of the coronavirus crisis has caught us all by surprise, and the impact has been felt by companies of all sizes, across all industries. Some tough decisions have been (and continue to be) made regarding layoffs, policy changes, hiring, and unfortunately, in some cases, whether or not to shut the doors permanently.

We understand you may be struggling with this new way of doing business and could probably use a resource to turn to for answers. Monster, with our long history of supporting companies, is here for you with curated crisis management content for businesses.

We've created a three-part eBook series that takes a look at lessons learned and strategies developed during the pandemic, and how these can help companies be better prepared for, and able to move forward, during challenging times in the future.

Urgent hiring

In part two of our three-part series, recruiters and staffing professionals share their strategies for quickly hiring and onboarding healthcare and other urgently needed front line workers, despite a national shutdown and a looming worker shortage. Many of these strategies remain as permanent parts of their hiring plans.

The Monster Team

HIRING URGENTLY NEEDED HEALTHCARE WORKERS

One of the biggest challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic has been addressing the shortage of healthcare workers. Recruiters and staffing professionals worked quickly (and creatively) to ramp up healthcare hiring.

As the system reached its maximum capacity and healthcare professionals themselves began to get sick and need to quarantine, hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare facilities in need additional help and backup staff.

Here's just one example: more than 160 employees at Berkshire Medical Center in New England were furloughed for quarantine after possible exposure to the coronavirus from patients who have tested positive. A temporary agency was asked to quickly hire 54 nurses who specialize in medical/surgical, intensive care and emergency services.

This happened all over the country as the crisis worsened, forcing state and federal governments, and staffing and recruiting professionals to ramp up—and get creative.

“Due to COVID-19, there are many positions right now that are crucial,” said Greg Musto, CEO of The Roman

Healthcare Group, a member of the Sanford Rose Associates network. “Every hospital across the country is potentially short-handed. As some of our healthcare workers get exposed and possibly come down with the virus,

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The sense of urgency was off the charts.

Greg Musto
The Roman Healthcare Group

this will place a further strain on an already strained system.”

On the government side, the U.S. Senate approved a bill waiving telehealth restrictions. In New York, the hardest hit state, Governor Andrew Cuomo called retired healthcare workers as well as nearly graduated medical students to work – even if that meant waiving or fast-tracking



the usually stringent certification and recertification requirements.

That left recruiters and staffing professionals to pick up the slack. See how some of them stepped up, and how you can adapt these solutions for your business.

They fast-tracked the hiring process

“At the outset of the pandemic, we got calls from two to three hospitals every day needing an infection preventionist for a 13-26-week assignment,” says Musto. Systems that normally take one to two weeks to approve contracts for interim candidates got approval in mere hours, he says. “The sense of urgency was off the charts.”

Long-time client hospitals also put their trust in The Roman Healthcare

Group’s vetting process, giving them permission to extend offers.

They used remote screening tools

“Video conferencing and interviewing is having its moment right now,” says Bob Bailey, Managing Director of Healthcare IT Leaders, PAC Leaders and Locum Choice. “Every hiring manager in the country should ensure that their recruiters have the tools and knowledge to effectively video screen candidates.” He also points out that it also means helping candidates get up to speed and help them shine on video calls.

Musto agrees, reporting that many more video interviews are being used as a final interview as opposed to candidates going on-site.

HIRING URGENTLY NEEDED HEALTHCARE WORKERS



They sought help from struggling industries

Rather than trying to find new sources of talent, savvy staffing firms reached out to credentialed professionals who are temporarily out of work. “With many schools closed, there are a lot of school nurses out there,” says Dan Peterman, Director of Clinical Staffing at Becker, a talent solutions firm specializing in health. His team reached out to school nurses they work with who are laid off and got them oriented as quickly as possible to help supplement hospital and long-term care needs.

For SavaSeniorCare Administrative Services, which recruits leadership, healthcare talent and support services for their client center skilled nursing homes, the team is marketed to laid off service, hospitality, and restaurant industry workers. “There

are employment needs at a skilled nursing center that align with hotels like housekeeping and dietary staff,” says Lesley Mastalerz, SavaSeniorCare’s VP of Talent Acquisition.

SavaSeniorCare is also thinking ahead and offering training for new staff. “We have opportunities for anyone that is interested in a career change and they like the setting of working with the elderly. We are offering to train them to become Certified Nursing Assistants, paying them while they’re learning on site or offering non-paid online classes to learn at their own pace,” says Mastalerz. Once they finish and become certified, they’ll get an automatic promotion.

They did their part to stop the spread

“The environment right now is such that everybody wants to contribute,” says Renee Becker, Pharm.D., President and CEO of Becker. “If we are putting people to work, we are contributing to the community, and to the company. We’re on a mission to make sure everybody is getting a paycheck.” Not to mention that the employees themselves are eager to do their part to help others, which is indicative of the majority of nursing and healthcare professionals. But before anyone is sent out to

report to a job, they must complete a COVID-19 screening tool that Becker created. “We’re asking them if they’ve been out of the country, been sick, had fever, if anybody in their house is sick,” she says.



We’re on a mission to make sure everybody is getting a paycheck.

**Renee Becker
Becker**

For SavaSeniorCare, which recruits healthcare talent for their client center nursing homes, it’s perhaps even more crucial that hiring of new staff be done in the safest manner possible. Besides not allowing non-essential personnel to enter the centers, it also means on-site interviewing has come to a grinding halt, opting instead for video-conference interviewing. And, for the workers reporting each day, they are screened at the front door.

They stayed true to their values

“The closest thing I can compare this to is when 9/11 occurred,” says Musto. “So, as I did then, I am encouraging my recruiting teams to be patient with

people, be persistent, and be pleasant.” Candidates, whether they are active or passive, appreciate recruiters who are candid, honest, and follow-up, he adds.

At SavaSeniorCare, the team also focused on giving residents a way to communicate with their families through technology since they can no longer have visitors. And that’s going a long way with families, residents and staff. “What it says is that we continue to hold the care of our residents at the highest priority. Anyone who may consider working with us should see that as a benefit, that we do care so much,” says Mastalerz.

They did what they do best

Healthcare staffers and recruiters often work with partners who are in extreme or dire situations, reminds Peterman. “We built our model around situations like this. Not this extreme, obviously, but we are constantly evolving and growing to help our clients at the drop of a hat,” he says. “This is what we are used to – just on a larger scale.”



To learn more about how staffing companies like AMN Healthcare ramped up hiring so quickly during the COVID-19 crisis, [watch our on-demand webinar, “Triaging Healthcare Hiring.”](#)

HIRING ESSENTIAL WORKERS QUICKLY

Despite a good portion of the nation being shut down to slow the curve of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are some sectors that needed to ramp up in order to continue meeting society's essential needs.

Beyond the obvious need to hire additional healthcare workers on the front lines, suddenly truck drivers, delivery services, grocery store employees, cleaning crews, and manufacturing workers were in great demand to keep shelves well-stocked, put much-needed medical supplies into production, and keep the supply chains moving at rapid speeds.

Walmart announced it was hiring 150,000 workers, CVS said it would hire 50,000, and Amazon planned to hire another 100,000. Educational companies provided online courses, software companies, and telecommunications networks that had to be ready to serve the millions of students and professionals who were now at home.

More than ever, recruiters and staffing professionals were being asked to step up and source talent for these industries, ASAP. "This crisis put the staffing value proposition to the test—

real-time solutions for just-in-time labor," says Amy Bingham, a sales effectiveness consultant and coach to the staffing industry.

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There are industries that have been drastically devastated.

Sandie Troup
Executive Recruiter

Of course, this was also happening at a time when we had an unprecedented amount of people who were suddenly out of work. "Companies that were hiring had a once in a generation opportunity to recruit and onboard talent," says Kevin Bachman, host of Background Check Radio, a podcast focusing on employment screening issues. "Through no fault of their own,



talented candidates are now searching for either new positions or temporary ones to support themselves and their family.” In other words, employers now have access to a far more talented labor pool than they could have dreamed of a month ago.

“What we’re seeing is that there are industries that have been drastically devastated, but also industries like shipping and delivery services where they can’t hire enough people fast enough,” says Sandie Troup, executive recruiter, and career coach. That’s why talent professionals are relying on their best practices, new technologies and a little bit of ingenuity to help these

desperate organizations fill roles. Here’s a look at what’s working.

Turning to the newly unemployed

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“Companies who are looking to hire quickly can contact their local, county, and state Unemployment Offices and recruit individuals who recently filed for unemployment,” suggests Joey Price, CEO of Jumpstart HR, a consulting company for small businesses. “This is a wonderful way to help keep Americans working at this time and soften the economic impact that the coronavirus is having on families at this time.”

HIRING ESSENTIAL WORKERS QUICKLY



And in fact, government entities and private employers have been doing just that. New York City launched a program to outreach to TLC-licensed drivers—an industry that was currently at a standstill. The initiative is called DeliveryTLC, and it’s designed to put out of work drivers back on the road, delivering food to senior citizens who need to stay home.

Hilton also announced that it is working to find temporary jobs for its displaced hotel team members through a new workforce resource center website.

Nursing homes turned to the hospitality industry to bring in food service workers and housekeeping. Restaurants kept their wait staff employed but shifted them to delivery service. School nurses (not working because of school closures) and even medical students are helping manned daycare centers for the children of healthcare workers and first responders.

In the private sector, the bottom line is that staffing firms are trying to keep as many of the people in their pipeline working as possible. “I think

the biggest push for staffing firms right now is to preserve their revenue base by first redeploying displaced temps and contractors into jobs in these hot-right-now industries,” says Bingham. And, she adds, the proactive ones are leveraging their deep database of talent to meet these unprecedented on-demand needs by contacting hiring managers in these industries and offering their help to staff up quickly.

Speeding up screening and onboarding

One major trend that arose during the aftermath of COVID-19 and has become common for anyone hiring right now is moving from the in-person interview to fully remote interviews, says Troup. “Not only does it save time, but it also adheres to the social distancing practice that everyone is having to do,” she says. Her advice to employers she consults with is that even though you’re speaking to candidates in a different way, don’t change your process. “I don’t think you need to cut the interview panel members or the amount of time you’re spending with the candidate,” she says.

In fact, even in uncertain times, safety and security are still paramount, especially in high-risk industries, says Jason Kimbrell, COO of Employment Screening Services. “Companies should not compound their risk by

neglecting their screening process simply to speed up hiring,” he says.

That said, there are creative ways to screen more quickly, including filling roles with individuals who already have transferable credentials. “Workers who might have been furloughed from their current job or serving in non-essential roles previously, can be cleared to provide childcare, deliveries, and other important responsibilities that are desperately needed right now,” says Kimbrell.



Companies should not compound their risk by neglecting their screening process simply to speed up hiring.

Jason Kimbrell
Employment Screening Services

His firm is also helping restaurant and retail clients fast-track Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) checks for employees who have suddenly been asked to make deliveries. “We know that having delivery services is what is keeping many of these establishments going right now, so we want to help them add drivers quickly, and safely,” he says.

RESOURCES

We're here to help you during these unusual times. Call us at 1-800-MONSTER with any questions, or visit us [here](#).

To watch “[Triaging Healthcare Hiring](#)”, the on-demand webinar, please go [here](#).

To read the other two books in our [COVID-19 series](#), click [here](#).