

## How to Optimize Your Recruitment for Post Pandemic

By

Mostafa Sayyadi, The Change Leader Consulting Inc.

Michael J. Provitera, Barry University

As the world recovers from the COVID-19 crisis, the world economy is still in flux. Many jobs disappeared from the scene as many organizations adjusted their workforce. Attracting the best skills and best talent has also been a challenge for many organizations. Traditional recruitment methods are outdated, and our recommendation is to move to use a competency and knowledge-based recruitment process. The competency and knowledge-based method of recruitment revolutionizes the process of recruiting and attracting future human resources for the organization and brings extraordinary results, such as the development of innovation and the assembly of a pool of top talent to better meet the ever-increasing needs of today's ever-changing business environment.

**The competency-based recruitment process can be a suitable solution for many organizations that are struggling with the new consequences of the COVID-19 crisis.**

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Too much focus on the classic job interview questions, such as “Explain your background and why you think you are the right person for this job?”, “Why should we hire you?”, or “Why did you leave your last job?” will not provide the necessary skill-level organizations need for today’s evolving business environment. A recent empirical study in Australia shows that only 19% of newly hired people have the necessary skills to perform the desired job (Jackson & Michelson, 2021). This empirical research clearly shows that many of these organizations have used continuous questions like the three mentioned above in their traditional recruitment process. In fact, the reason that relates to this failure is that the traditional employment method has not stood the test of time, but nevertheless is still being used in a world different from what it was fifty years ago.

What can leaders do now? Leaders must be aware that today’s global economy and the emergence of dramatic changes after the COVID-19 crisis require the recruitment and promotion of new skills for organizations, which requires a change in perspective toward the recruitment process (DiBenedetto, 2018; Lee, 2020; Chen, 2022; Li, 2022). For example, in our interview with one of the Australian organizations, it was shown that the recruitment processes have suffered from severe deficiencies and traditional interviews had attracted a disproportionate number of human resources for the organization. But the question is: What is a traditional interview exactly? The answer is: In a traditional interview, candidates are asked a set of questions to investigate and determine how they may work in a specific situation (Smith & Robertson, 1993; Brinkmann, 2014; Bergelson et al., 2022). Our goal is simple. We wanted to optimize this traditional method of recruitment in these organizations to provide them with the best talents and skills and ensure their long-term retention. Our initial research showed that many of the views on hiring and long-term organization retention have changed drastically since the Corona era. We found

that most of these talents attach special importance to the continuous development of skills or the same learning environment and assess a high level of meaningfulness for jobs as the main requirement for a long-term stay in the job.

We also believe that the crisis of COVID-19 and remote work have increased the expectations of employees for more freedom in their work and have boosted virtual learning increasingly. We also found that less fortunate families had to play a harder role in managing both careers and families while the more affluent employees found the means to meet the needs of their children. People ran out and bought iPads, workbooks, laptops, and computers to ensure that they, and their children, could work effectively from home. The less fortunate lacked the means of acquiring the necessary resources and fell short of both career and educational pursuits. The talented competent skill-based workforce began to redefine and play a stronger role in the design of their jobs (Tomlinson, 2012; North et al., 2021). This is also enhanced by not only the changes in the views of employees towards their jobs but also by the needs of consumers that have also changed drastically. To respond more effectively to these new customer needs, organizations need a new set of skills. With the loss of many jobs due to the Corona crisis, many organizations are unaware of the fact that many of the skills of these eliminated jobs can be transferred to new jobs and used more effectively to respond to the new needs of customers (Coates, 2018; Deutscher & Winther, 2018; Li & Yuan, 2018; Barrick, 2019). The Corona crisis has also caused the organization to interact more and more with the external ecosystem, and organizations rely on competency-based skilled workers to be more involved in the organization’s projects. These changes require new functions for the recruitment process.

In particular, we believe that the emergence of these new needs and major changes in the post-corona business environment can be effectively answered

<b>Traditional Interviews</b>	<b>Competency-based Recruitment Process</b>
<b>Having a short-term perspective</b>	<b>Having a long-term perspective</b>
<b>Meeting the immediate needs of managers</b>	<b>Paying attention to the needs of the customers in the future</b>
<b>Taking a reactive and not-continuous approach toward employee learning</b>	<b>Taking a proactive and continuous approach toward employee learning</b>
<b>Focusing more on educational degrees and certificates</b>	<b>Focusing more on the diversification of competency skills</b>
<b>Helping employees to perform functions right</b>	<b>Innovating and advancing the perceptions of current and prospective employees toward excellence</b>

through a competency-based recruitment process. In comparison, a competency-based recruitment process that clearly determines the required competencies and tests each candidate for them is more realistic and fairer compared to a traditional interview which is very narrow and passive (Kobets et al., 2020; Shikova, 2020). These distinctions denote the differences between a traditional interview and a competency-based recruitment process. These are illustrated in the following table and will be explained in the next section.

## A Competency-based Recruitment Process In Action

We have been working on the competency-based recruitment process for the past few years and have seen an improvement in the quality of recruitment in organizations that have used this new way of recruiting their new workforce. We would advise executives to take the following steps.

- The first step in the competency-based recruitment process is to change the views towards the hiring process and evaluate the human resources for promotion (Siegel & Proeller, 2021; Feng, Su & Li, 2022; Wirges & Neyer, 2022). Instead of trying to meet the immediate needs of managers, organizations first should pay attention to longer-term horizons and also pay attention to the needs of the customers in the future (Duchek, 2019; Appel et al., 2020; Khaw et al., 2022). For example, the replaced new perspectives consider human resource skills as the core of the organization's ability to better adapt to the changing business environment. To achieve a higher level of this adaptability, a learning culture can play a crucial role for organizations (Nyambe et al., 2007; Martin, 2012; Chughtai et al., 2023). Under this learning culture, a key factor of the continuous development of skills will be the main criterion for the promotion of human resources. This continuous development of skills will create a platform for the development of innovation in the organization and attract and retain new talent.
- To change the views to better match the competency-based recruitment process, we also recommend that managers abandon the traditional views about the importance of educational qualifications and certificates and consider competency based on skills of a diverse workforce and rely more on the importance of their skills. Where did this suggestion come from that is so important to organizations? The answer is: Based on our consulting experience at the Sydney branch of a Japanese multinational automotive company, focusing less on educational degrees and certificates and focusing more on the diversification of competency skills

can help to develop diversity in organizations and bring together a set of talented people with more diversity, which will ultimately lead to the development of innovation in organizations.

An empirical study by Li (2022) also affirms this argument and illustrates that less focus on educational degrees and certificates and more focus on the diversification of competency skills considerably brings a set of the best-talented people for corporations and eventually improves innovation within organizations.

- The next step, after changing the views of the managers towards the recruitment process, is to change and improve the views of the external talent applicants and people working in the organization towards the organization. Organizations that use the competency-based recruitment process consider it necessary to advance the perception of external talent applicants and talent working in the organization toward excellence (Simon, 2010; Santana & Díaz-Fernández, 2023). Be aware that this is the path that the world's most successful organizations such as Toyota, Tesla, Apple, and McKinsey and Company are following and have invested heavily in developing their human resources. For example, McKinsey and Company found that in the COVID-19 human resource development matters more than ever, and these huge investments in learning not only lead to the creation of a learning work environment and enable organizations to respond more effectively to environmental changes, but also draws external talent applicants, and encourages talent to stay longer in the organization (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Nielsen et al., 2020; Bricka et al., 2022).

## Conclusions

Perhaps the innate desire for convenience in humans always tempts them to use traditional questions for the hiring process. What works, always works, and it is not necessary to change. But we can safely say that continuing this traditional path will mean failure. Today, the COVID-19 crisis has opened our eyes more than ever to the current divides. By adopting a competency-based recruitment process, the opportunity for organizations to attract and retain top talent for the long term to better adapt to their new business environment and respond to the new needs of customers and human resources is imminent. This new method of recruitment is a solution for many organizations that can ensure their long-term survival and growth in their new business environment in the post-corona world and the emergence of better workforces.

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**Review**

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**Authors**

	<p><b>Mostafa Sayyadi</b> works with senior business leaders to effectively develop innovation in companies, and helps companies—from start-ups to the Fortune 100—succeed by improving the effectiveness of their leaders.</p>
	<p><b>Michael J. Provitera</b> is an Associate Professor at Barry University. He is an author of <i>Level Up Leadership</i> published by Business Expert Press.</p>