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Five Ways COVID-19 Is Reshaping HR

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has upended the entire world, it seems. With fluctuating infection rates and conflicting official guidance, organizations will need to adapt quickly if they want to succeed in the post-coronavirus landscape.

HR teams stand at the forefront of these efforts. For years, HR departments have been tasked with ushering in fundamental workplace changes, and this moment is no different. This article includes five ways the coronavirus is reshaping HR and how departments can adapt to these new challenges.

1. Greater Remote Working Opportunities

When nonessential businesses shuttered due to COVID-19, many couldn't function at all. Only organizations with some remote-capable workers were able to maintain operations. This is spurring business leaders to consider allowing employees to continue working remotely after the coronavirus pandemic eases. Technology giants like Twitter and Facebook have already signaled that they will extend remote opportunities to employees who want them.

Employers should consider whether there are areas where they can expand their own remote-working roles. Having at least some employees who can work from home enables adaptability if the workplace must close suddenly. Such arrangements can also reduce costs, especially if they allow a business to reduce its office footprint and pay a smaller lease.

2. More Mental Health Benefits

Reopening a business does not erase the hardship endured by its employees during its closure. Employees may still be grappling with mental health issues that can impact their performance when the doors reopen. Even workers who were fortunate enough to continue working during the COVID-19

pandemic may be suffering from mental health issues that may cause them to burn out.

Employers are taking steps to reduce the mental health burden of employees. Many are already offering mental health benefits, including counseling and access to health professionals. Some businesses are simply working with employees to accommodate their needs. This may include offering flexible scheduling, reduced work hours or other holistic approaches.

3. Virtual Training Solutions

As remote working has shown, employers are eager to maximize their virtual capabilities. Virtual training is another way they're doing so. This training is just what it sounds like: employee learning conducted online, though an app or some other virtual platform. With more employees working remotely, this type of training makes the most sense.

Even employers with no remote workers should consider virtual training. Not only does it reduce face-to-face interactions (critical during a pandemic), but it can help learning retention. Companies like Walmart, Home Depot and Best Western are already using virtual training solutions. Expect more companies to do likewise in the near future.

4. Virtual Interviewing

Virtual interviewing is the safest option during the coronavirus pandemic, but it will likely remain a popular solution for employers post-coronavirus as well. Virtually interviewing can save time and resources for both employers and candidates, since there is no commute nor meeting space involved.

Virtual interviews can also help employers draw from a larger talent pool, since many people primarily search for jobs online anyway. Many job seekers frequently use websites such as LinkedIn, Indeed and Handshake. Having the ability to recruit from one of these sites, then seamlessly move to a

virtual interview, could help employers get talent in the door faster.

5. Reskilled Workforces

Worker reskilling is perhaps the most significant way COVID-19 is reshaping HR at the moment. In effect, employees must learn brand new processes, workflows and standards in order to function in a post-coronavirus workplace. These elements may include stricter hand-washing guidelines, social distancing protocols and updated customer-interaction policies.

Some employers are going beyond health protocols, instead opting for a holistic approach to training. Companies like Amazon and AT&T are investing in training solutions to ensure a more dynamic, capable workforce. These training efforts may include developing social skills, resiliency, critical thinking and other soft skills. By improving these qualities, employers are investing in their workers and, ultimately, providing a better overall product.

Conclusion

These are only some of the ways COVID-19 is reshaping the HR landscape. As more challenges arise and circumstances evolve, employers must adapt as well if they want to stay competitive.