

TikTok and other social media channels: A recruiting avenue worth exploring?

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ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

Eric Sydell, executive vice president of Innovation at Modern Hire, explores the pros and cons of recruiting job candidates via social sites.

FULL TEXT

Where did your company's last new hire come from? Did they find your job posting on LinkedIn, or perhaps ZipRecruiter, Monster or Indeed? What about TikTok?

Yes, in today's cutthroat recruiting environment companies are leaving no stone unturned. But are things like video resumes and hashtags an effective way to expand the candidate pool and find the best individuals for the job, or are they just passing fad?

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Before your hiring team decides to open the floodgates of social media recruiting, it's essential to think about whether such channels fit with your company's goals and what you really stand to gain. Eric Sydell, executive vice president of Innovation at Modern Hire, recently shared some insights with BenefitsPRO.

In light of rising quit rates and ongoing labor shortages, the U.S. is seeing companies turn to unique channels, such as TikTok, to recruit candidates. How is this impacting candidates?

Companies are always interested in reaching candidates where they are, but the pandemic has made it more challenging than ever to do so. And while platforms like TikTok may be effective in reaching Gen Z and Millennial candidates, there is little proof that social media information can enhance the effectiveness or fairness of the hiring decision --or the candidate experience.

For candidates, this means more channels to submit applications and resumes through. However, candidates should be aware of the downfalls of submitting an application through a social media platform, and should focus on submitting for jobs using tools with more surefire results.

TikTok is certainly an exciting new recruiting tool, but companies need to keep their hiring goals --and the candidate experience --in mind and not be distracted by a shiny new technology tool. It's important to separate a flashy recruiting opportunity from one that provides a seamless candidate experience and leverages job-relevant data to evaluate candidates and determine who is most likely to succeed on the job.

According to TikTok, candidates based in the US can apply for entry, associate and senior-level positions by tagging videos they upload to the platform using the #TikTokResumes hashtag. What potential problems does hiring a candidate based on a video present?

The problem with video résumés is that they can be biased toward candidates who are attractive, personable and funny, as well as the traditional biases around race, color, religion, gender and more. As a result, candidates with certain qualities will likely have greater success in a hiring process that includes a video résumé as a component than those who do not.

But these characteristics are not usually related to job performance. What about problem solving, creativity or being a team player? Those are useful skills in a variety of jobs, but they're harder to convey with and assess in a video résumé.

Personality is often one component of the hiring process, and it should ideally be measured with psychometric assessments or other rigorous, proven hiring techniques, rather than judged based on a simple video. Remember, if you are making decisions about who to hire, you are no longer just recruiting –you are now selecting, and that is subject to an array of regulations and laws. In order to fill open positions with top talent, science-driven hiring practices need to be the core of your selection approach.

How can recruiters avoid bias when reaching out to candidates through social media platforms like TikTok or LinkedIn?

Using a video résumé could create a positive candidate experience if that candidate is the type of person who likes creating videos. If not, then using a social media platform to create a video résumé is not going to be a great experience or way for a candidate to find their dream job. Filling critical, in-demand jobs should focus on using virtual hiring practices grounded in science, and not just communication tools like virtual resumes. Tools should be efficient, effective, promote fairness and value a positive candidate experience.

Science-informed hiring has the ability to eliminate those unconscious biases that may unintentionally exist while vetting candidates during the hiring process –especially when social media platforms are involved in that process. It begins with an understanding of what drives success in the job and constructing measurement systems to identify those job relevant characteristics in candidates. AI and advanced analytics can be applied to this data to create models that optimize the prediction of success while also maximizing the diversity of the qualified candidate pool.

What tips do you have for candidates that do choose to use social media or other unique platforms to find a job? Candidates that opt to use social media to search for jobs should always be cautious. When uploading a video resume to TikTok, for example, a company may have the ability to click on your profile and see other videos besides your video resume. Because TikTok and other social media platforms were not originally created to be a professional platform like LinkedIn was, recruiters may see more than a candidate anticipated or wanted. Though it's a great way to provide a window into your personality, be sure to consider whether you would want a future employer viewing your TikTok content or other posts on social media.

If a job posted on TikTok sounds intriguing, I would suggest creating a separate professional TikTok profile. A good interview is going to be relatively serious, and it's okay to let personality come through, but there's a level of professional focus that's helpful to have.

When it comes to recruiting Gen Z candidates specifically, what should companies keep in mind during the hiring process for applicants in this generation?

While TikTok's new tool is certainly innovative and meets Gen Z candidates where they already are, in order to fill in-demand roles with Gen Z talent quickly and at scale, companies should leverage technology like AI and predictive analytics. With a large portion of Gen Z just recently entering the workforce, and many more to come, it's important to find candidates that are fit-for-hire. Instead of relying on virtual resumes, virtual hiring practices that are grounded in science, ethical AI and predictive analytics will help better attract and assess Gen Z talent.

That said, TikTok's exploration of a recruiting tool is something organizations should take note of. So many organizations have already started using texting and mobile-enabled job applications to recruit and interview more tech-savvy candidates. At Modern Hire, we took it a step further with the launch of our Text-Based Assessment product, which integrates short 1-2 minute assessments into an existing hiring workflow to insert job-relevant content and ask questions that measure candidates' risk for turnover within the hiring process. This also provides candidates with a quick, engaging experience that can be accessed on any device, appealing to Gen Z's + millennials' preferences for their smartphones.

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