

# **RUNNING YOUR RECRUITMENT PROCESSES REMOTELY:**

A complete guide

Michael Page



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# An introduction from



## Nick Kirk

**Managing Director, UK & Ireland,  
PageGroup**



There is little doubt that we are living in unprecedented times, as the world adapts to the complex human and economic realities of the coronavirus outbreak. First and foremost, it is important to underline that as a business, PageGroup is following Government advice and taking every precaution to ensure that the health and safety of our clients, candidates and our own people are paramount.

Whilst it is natural that there may be some level of uncertainty over your plans for hiring at the moment, it is our firm belief that recruiting top talent is still the best way to future-proof and grow your business. We also recognise that the established process for recruiting new members of staff, particularly meeting face-to-face for interviews, needs to adapt quickly with the times. This is the moment for video technology to truly come to the fore.

Whilst this pivot to running a recruitment process remotely is a relatively short-term measure, it is already becoming clear that this sudden and widespread adoption of video technology will have a longer-term impact on the recruitment industry. Although the use of platforms like Skype, Zoom and Microsoft Teams will never fully replace interviewing in-person in the long-term, the current situation has underlined their clear benefits: they are quick, efficient, and completely safe to use when social distancing measures are in place.

**On the following pages we will break down each stage of how to recruit remotely, explaining how to source, assess and then embed top talent into your team using our leading-edge technology, access to comprehensive market data, and over 40 years of recruitment expertise.**

Internally at PageGroup, we have already adapted our key business functions to new ways of working, transitioning to home working and activating our suite of digital tools to ensure that our operations continue to run smoothly. One of the many advantages of being part of the global PageGroup business is that we already have numerous learnings we can take from markets, particularly in Asia, which have been dealing with the outbreak for much longer than Ireland. Many of our markets in this region are already returning to good levels of activity, showing incredible resilience in the face of this unprecedented global emergency.

At PageGroup, we are facing the challenges of the global pandemic head on – and are committed to helping you to do the same with your business. Across multiple sectors right now there are urgent talent gaps that need to be filled and we are adapting our operations to be able to support our clients with whatever types of roles they need our help with, however unusual they may be. Our consultants are available through email, landline, mobile, and video to assist you in all of your recruitment needs. You can also get in touch with us and request a call back by clicking [here](#).

Above all else, we wish you and those close to you good health at this challenging time.

Yours sincerely,





## Attracting the right talent

**Whether your recruitment needs have changed or not, your process for attracting talent must evolve**

There is no escaping the fact that within a few short months, the global health emergency has already fundamentally changed how the world does business. This is an unprecedented situation and adaption and evolution is going to be key across all areas of commerce. Although many companies will have had contingency plans in place for such situations, it is clear that there are many unknowns, and professionals at all levels are learning as they go.

Of course, the situation around your hiring needs will depend entirely on a number of factors, including your sector, nature of your business and any changes in demand in the market as a result of the pandemic. Some employers will be recruiting at relatively normal levels in the immediate term. For others, for example in healthcare, logistics and supermarket retail to name three, the outbreak has meant there is a sudden need to

significantly increase staffing quickly. It is also natural that you could be currently reassessing which hires remain business critical, which can wait and which new talent needs you have now.

Whatever your situation, one fundamental has not changed: attracting the right talent is crucial to your organisation's long-term success. Here are some key things to be aware of:

### **Your company brand remains the most important factor**

There are so many factors that come into play when a candidate is considering applying for a role, so it is crucial to ensure you effectively manage your controllables – especially if you are looking for a business-critical hire. Securing the talent you want starts long before the offer stage of the recruitment process – it begins with your organisation's brand and reputation.

**More than ever, purpose is paramount. What is the purpose of your organisation?  
More importantly, what purpose would an employee fulfil in their role if they were hired?**





Today's candidates are very proactive when it comes to thoroughly assessing the opportunities available to them. Gone are the days when salary was the prime factor that an individual would consider when looking at opportunities. More than ever, the best talent is looking for a company that will not only help them achieve their career goals, but also align with their personal values and beliefs. This is still pertinent even at a time of global crisis. Indeed, it may well be that for many, the lockdown has offered the chance for a period of reflection on what truly matters to them and the direction they want to take their career from here on in as a result.



There are five things that make businesses stand out to top talent: culture; development; flexibility; salary and benefits packages; and reputation.

**Jon Dolbear, Manager, Michael Page**



## Scrutinise your employee value proposition (EVP)

Your employee value proposition is a great way to showcase why professionals should want to join your team. A key starting point in developing and improving your EVP is to properly identify what it is that you want it to say and do for you.



What is your culture?



Why do employees enjoy working for you?



What can you offer in terms of benefits, flexibility, training and development?

These questions are important to answer and outline in your EVP before you share it with the wider business and potential employees. Your EVP should be unique to your business and if it is a true reflection of what it is like to work in your company, it will attract the right talent.

Even if your organisation already has an EVP in place, it is sensible to review it in the current circumstances. Whilst it is not a good idea to make wholesale changes based on a temporary situation, you could consider what makes your company stand out at a time of great change and reflect this. This could be how you are continuing to invest in training and development, delivered remotely, or supporting employees with their wellbeing at a time of great uncertainty.

## Five ways to better promote your brand

### 1 Have a clearly **defined mission, purpose, and set of values**

Invest time into creating a brand overview which provides insight into the company values and ambitions. Showcase the company background and culture, and ensure that they are available to candidates. Where professionals are bought into your mission, purpose, and set of values, the opportunities to work for your brand are consequently more appealing to this talent.

### 2 Share your **company journey and goals**

Regardless of where your business is or how well you are doing against your targets, if you are clearly communicating how you are overcoming challenges and share your overall journey and goals, professionals will be more bought into your organisation.

### 3 Mirror your **external comms internally**

Your employee value proposition will fail if the feedback from your current employees is misaligned to the brand and culture you are selling externally. Communicate clearly that the company is engaged with employees and is actively making changes to ensure they are happy and engaged in their roles.

### 4 Invest in **quality external contact points**

The way people interact with your website, social media, job descriptions, and even your interview processes are key in setting the right tone and messaging. The best talent will explore these and use them to scope what it is like to work for your company.

### 5 Promote a **clear value proposition**

How well does your value proposition sell your products or services? It is key that your value proposition demonstrates your understanding of the customer through clear selling points. The stronger your value proposition and the better you highlight the qualities you offer, the more appealing your company is.

## How to write a great job description

In the current climate, job descriptions need to work harder than ever to encourage top talent to apply for roles. Given you will not be able to meet candidates face to face for the time being, it is crucial that the JD tells them everything they need to know about a role, leaving no room for ambiguity. It is no good for either side if your JD sells a role as being one thing, when it is actually another.

It may be the case that you have had the same JDs in place for your key roles for many years. In this instance, it is crucial to review their content and tone to attract the right talent. It may even be that JDs that are only a few weeks or months old need to be given more present-day context too.

In some instances, it is worth spelling out how the role will work if the successful applicant is expected to work remotely for the first few weeks and months whilst social distancing restrictions are in place. However, a job description should also sell your long-term strategy and overall goals and objectives, as candidates will still be paying attention to this as they look ahead to a life outside of lockdown.

### When reading a job description, candidates want to know:



What does the organisation **do**?

What is the **purpose and mission**?

What does the business **want to achieve and how**?

Where is the business function or company on its **journey**?

How does the role **fit** into this journey?

How is the **culture** described?

Are there **role models** in the business?



# Assessing CVs and covering letters

## Do applicants have the right skills and competencies?

In any recruitment process, the CVs and covering letters that you receive from candidates for a role form the foundation of your shortlist, and provide the first insight into your potential new employee or employees. However, in the current climate it is important to review candidate applications through a slightly different lens. At a time of great upheaval, for both employers and individuals, it is more important than ever to pay attention to skills and competencies, as opposed to career fluidity.

### How to quickly identify a good CV

When first assessing a CV, use the below checklist to identify whether the CV you are reviewing is a likely match for your role.

#### Basics

A clear and presentable format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Key achievements throughout their career	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Previous experience of similar markets worked in	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transferable skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Time spent in previous roles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Professional training courses and qualifications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Performance against targets and results	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Consider

If the fundamentals are right, it is key to ask the following questions

<input type="checkbox"/>	Do they have key skills that can be applied in the role?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do they have a unique skill set that you would like to bring in?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have they worked with a similar client base?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have they used similar products, systems, and processes?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have they impacted change in other organisations?
<input type="checkbox"/>	How qualified are they for the position?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Were they successful in their previous roles?

## Leave no stone unturned

When reviewing a CV as an employer, it can be easy to fall into the trap of looking out for career gaps and questioning whether you would want to interview, let alone hire, someone who has been out of work for a period of time. However, in the current climate, where many people are finding themselves displaced as a result of the global crisis, ruling out a candidate on this basis could mean ultimately missing out on the best person for the job.

The same could be said for people who have been out of work for many months or even years, perhaps after taking time out to raise children or care for their family. These could be the people with exactly the sorts of skills you are looking for, even if they have not applied them to a role recently. This is the very reason that returnship schemes have become increasingly popular in recent years, and the core principles remain the same.

Ultimately, always review job applications on merit, matching the skills and experience listed on the CV with those in the job description. As we will explore later in this guide, interviewing candidates over video is much quicker and more efficient than face to face, meaning you could potentially meet more people in a shorter space of time than before – some of whom may have not made the shortlist in the past due to not being a 100% match on paper. It is essential to leave no stone unturned when looking for top talent.

**Emma Gregson,**  
Operating Director,  
**PageGroup**

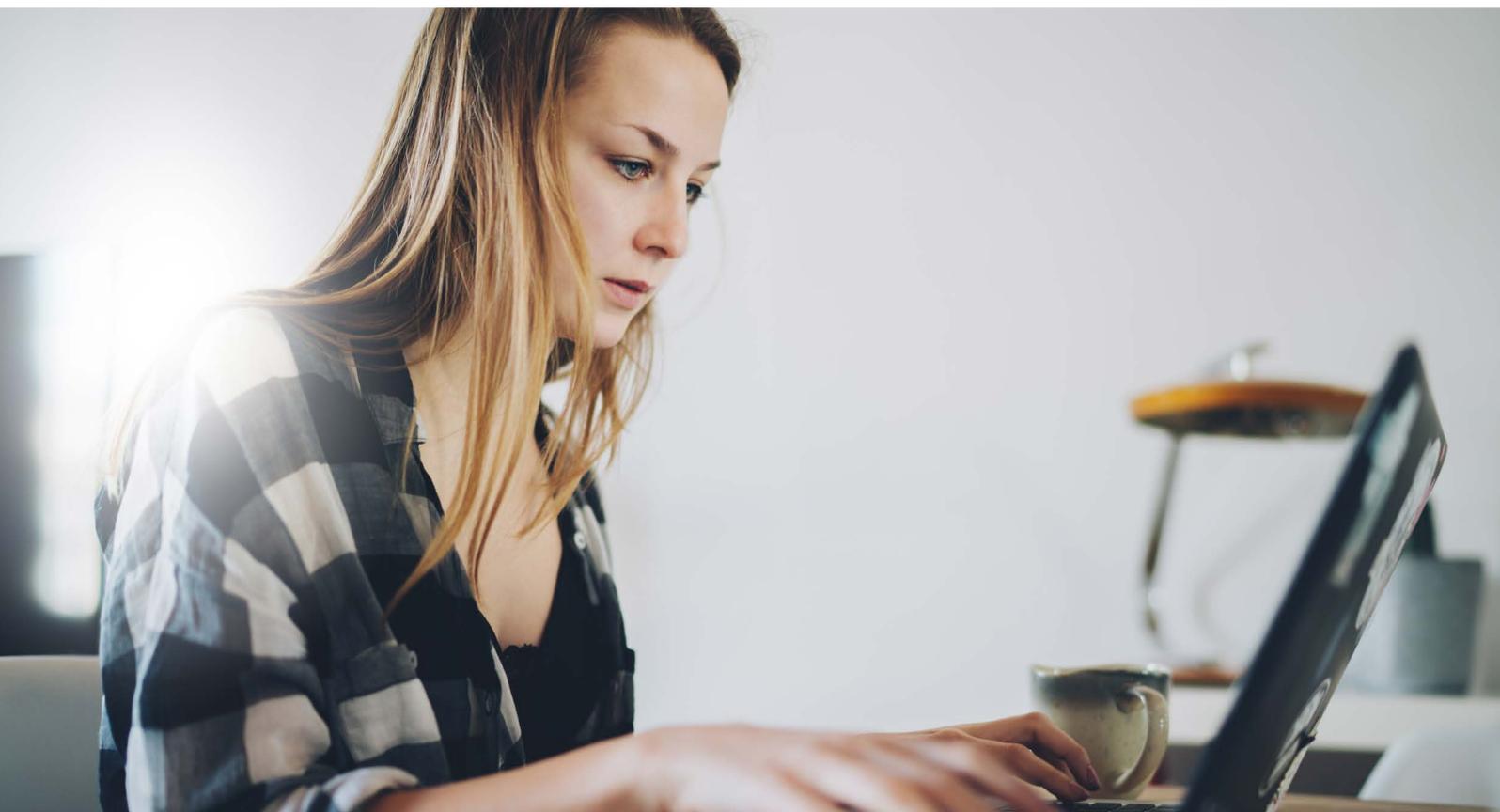
“CVs need to be reviewed in line with the objective of the role. For example, if you are looking to recruit a progressive role, with the expectation that the candidate will develop quickly, you should focus on their career journey so far.”

When recruiting temp roles, some businesses are put off by CVs that show multiple roles including shorter-term contracts. However, this is not a negative for a temp role. Moves from one contract to another with no gaps suggest that they have completed the role successfully and are good enough to move straight into another role.

It is important to remember that the CV is a first introduction to a candidate and these should be explored further at the interview stage.

**David Asbury,**  
Business Manager,  
**Michael Page**

CVs are a great tool to build your interview questions from. Using this method, you can learn more about their past experiences and really build a conversation about their work, and what they can bring to your business.





## Utilising video technology for interviewing

### Adapt your approach to communicate with candidates remotely

One of the most fundamental shifts in the recruitment process as a result of the global health emergency is a pivot towards the utilisation of video technology to conduct interviews. At PageGroup, we have been utilising video technology such as HireVue and Hinterview, for a number of years, allowing us to assess multiple candidates for roles remotely.

However, with the Government's social distancing guidelines stating that people should avoid unnecessary in-person contact and work from home where possible, there is now a need to use video interviewing for all stages of the process, whether this is one, two, or even three or more stages.

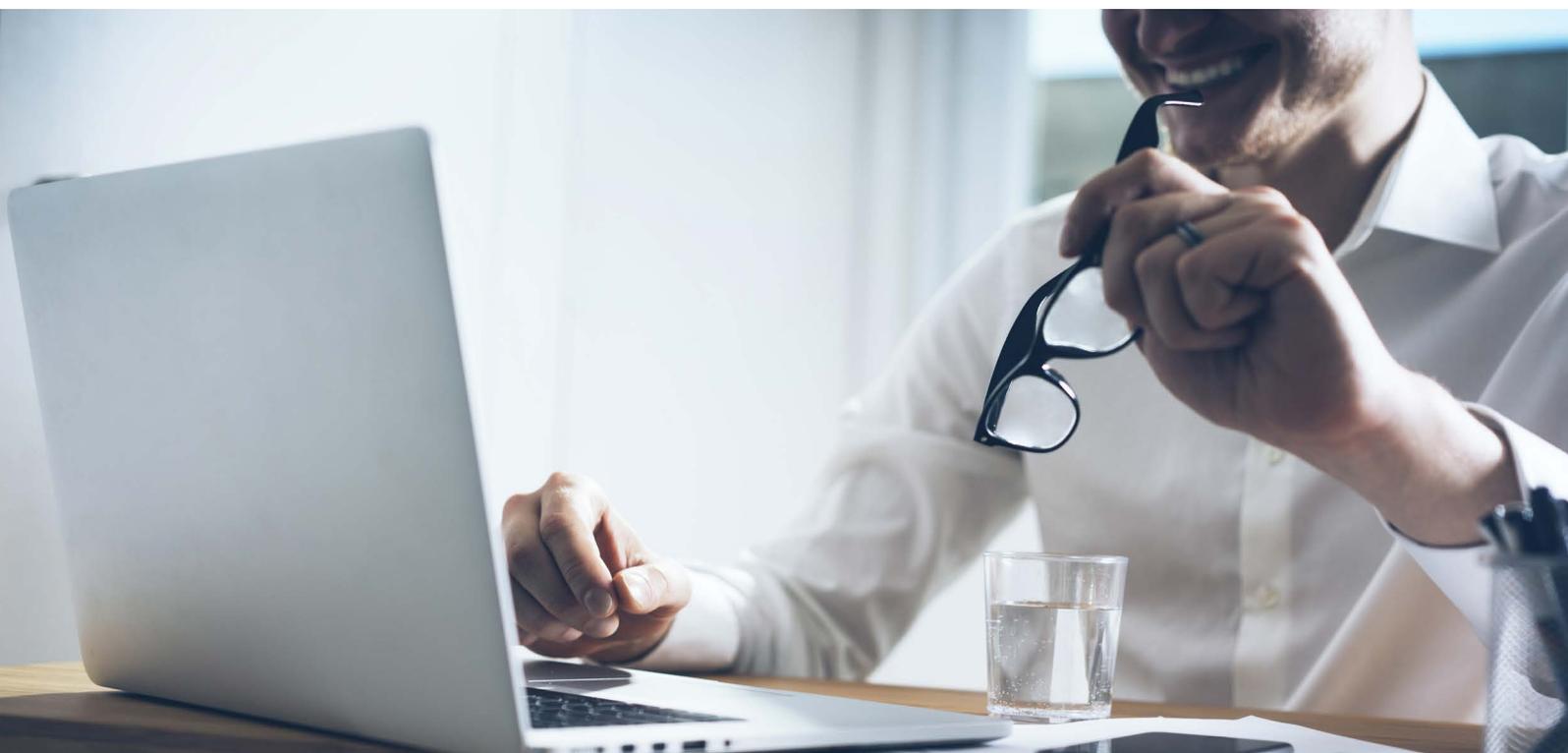
So, how do you do this successfully?

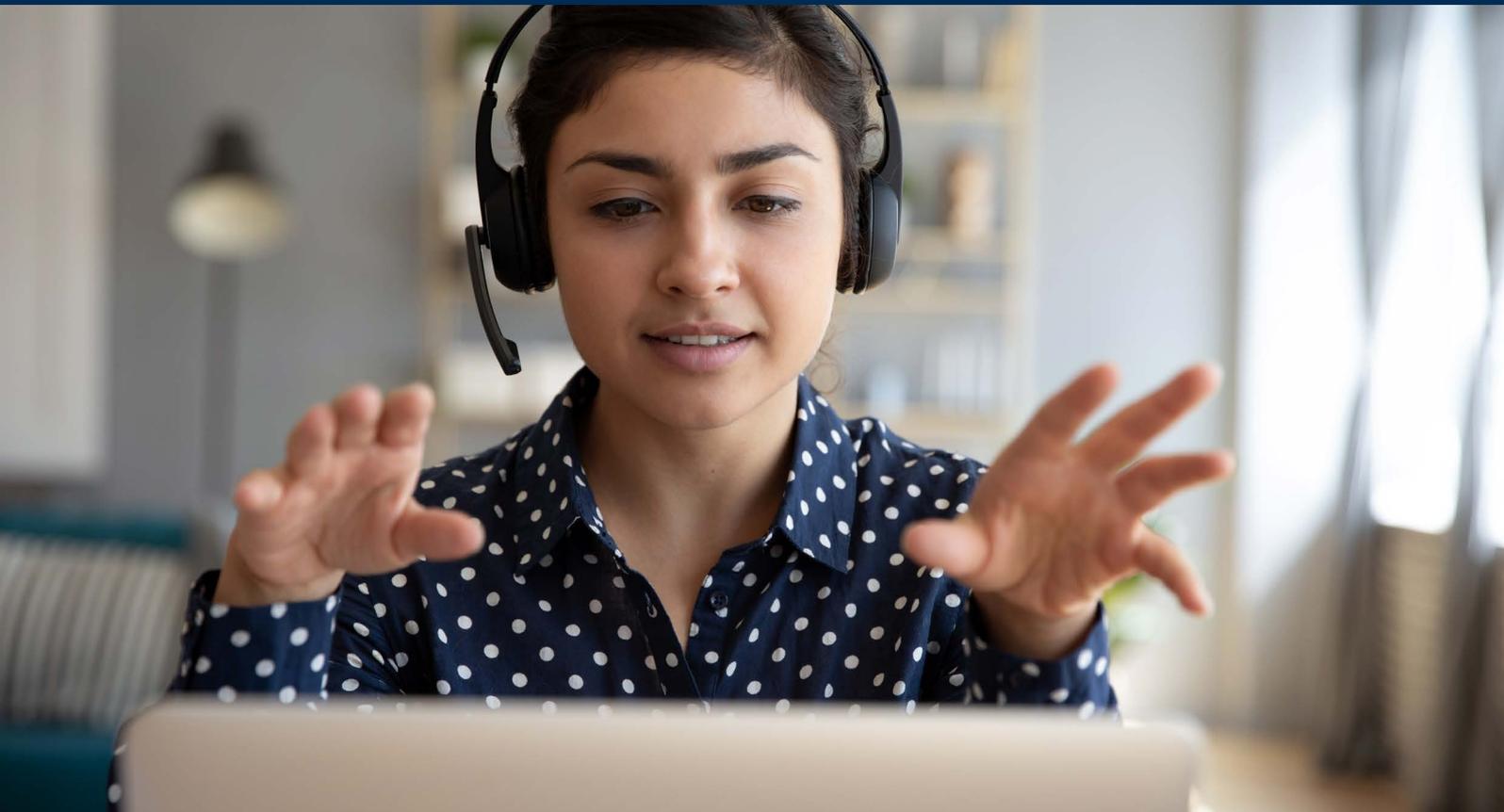


#### Widen your technology options

There are numerous options in the market for video calls, including Zoom, Skype, and Microsoft Teams to name but three. Rather than adopt one platform over the other, it is worth having access to as many as possible, given that not all professionals will have access to the same platforms themselves. If your company does

not already have a preferred video technology provider, speak to your IT team as soon as possible. This is important as you will need to ensure that the platform(s) you adopt are compliant with your internal IT security and can be configured for use on your remote cloud systems.





### Adapt your interviewing approach

Even the most experienced hiring manager will need to adapt their approach to interviewing when pivoting to a remote model.

Although many of the video interviewing platforms generally offer good visual and audio quality, it will never completely replicate being in the same room as someone, reacting to facial and body language cues and building rapport.

While you should be cognisant of the limitations of video interviewing, try not to see it as too much of a barrier. An interview should run in much the same way as it would in person, allowing you to cover off the fundamentals around assessing competencies and asking questions on experience and team fit. Do not be afraid to incorporate an element of informal conversation, just as you would in person to break the ice and get to know a bit more about the candidate's personality.



### Ask questions about remote working

One of the key questions to ask is how the candidate would feel about working remotely for the initial period of their employment, until Government restrictions on social distancing have been lifted. They may even have examples of how they have been approaching this in their current role or have experience of flexible or dynamic

working where homeworking was offered by an employer. Of course, a lack of experience of home working should never be a deal-breaker when hiring a candidate, but it is important to understand how a prospective employee would approach this in their new role.

## Top tips for video interviewing



### Power, connection, and your device

It may seem obvious, but if you are using a laptop make sure that it is properly charged or plugged in throughout the interview. You do not want to get cut off in the middle of your conversation. Make sure you choose a location with a reliable internet connection too. Laptops

and desktops are preferable to tablets and mobile phones, although be aware that not all candidates have access to every type of technology – so do not be afraid to adapt to interviewing on a smaller device if need be.



### Light, background, and what to wear

Try to arrange your space so that there is a good source of natural lighting. Otherwise, ensure you have strong lights overhead and slightly behind. Shadows can make you look strange and your interviewees will want to see you clearly. A plain, light-coloured background is best. Avoid setting up in front of your feature wallpaper, bookcases, or posters.

Treat the video interview in the same way as you would a normal interview. Do not dress down in a t-shirt and jeans just because you are not in a formal setting. You need to look as professional and put together as you would if you were meeting face-to-face.



### Distractions

You need to be away from all distractions when you sit down to conduct an interview. Choose a quiet room somewhere and make sure that

any people who are around are aware that you should not be interrupted.



### Camera

Make sure your camera is set in line with your eyes. If it is too high, your interviewees will see the top of your head and if it is too low your face will be distorted. You want them to be able to see your head and shoulders clearly, so do not sit too close or too far from the camera.

During the interview, do not make the mistake of looking at the person on the screen. Yes, when they are speaking to you, you should be picking up on body language signals, but when you are asking questions, try to look into the camera.



### Pause before speaking

Often on camera, there is a delay. Like on news broadcasts, it is a good idea to wait a few seconds before responding to a question in case there is

a delay. You do not want a situation where you accidentally end up cutting off your interviewee mid-sentence.

“

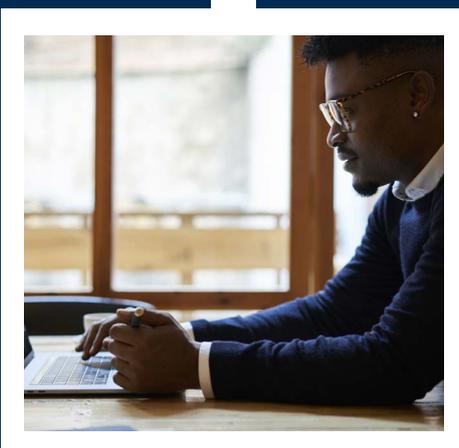
Since the Government’s social distancing measures were introduced in March, many of our clients have been adopting video tools to continue processes. We can help with this, particularly during the earlier filtering stages through our Hinterview tool. Some companies have also expedited the decision-making process, by foregoing or shortening the final senior stakeholder interview – providing the hiring manager is confident enough in the candidate.

**Matt Scarfe,** Manager,  
**Michael Page**

“

This is a terrible situation but it’s also an opportunity for organisations to start moving with technology and utilising it for the future. Some companies have been working like this for years – dynamic working attracts dynamic talent. Law is one of the most ‘traditional’ professions and could do with a shakeup. Maybe this is what we need to get the profession to embrace technology and adapt their businesses and recruitment processes going forward.

**Nellie Russell,** Business  
Manager, **PageGroup**





## Making a strong offer to secure top talent

More than ever, it is about much more than money

Once you have identified the talent you want to hire through the interview process, it is important to secure them with a strong offer. However, what comprises a great offer to one person, may not necessarily appeal to another. This makes it difficult when competing for top talent, particularly in markets that are candidate short. This is where the salary vs benefit debate often arises.

“ Enthusiasm and positivity are so important when making a job offer.

**Steve Hallam**, Managing Director, **Michael Page** ”

### Salary

If you like a candidate, it is key to ensure that you are assessing their skill set and experience against the market rate. It is rare for a candidate to accept an offer purely based on salary, but their requirements will depend on what stage they are at in their life and other personal circumstances. However, if you start with an offer that is too low, you risk losing that candidate to a competitor.

### Benefits

What really makes an offer stand out are the benefits highlighted in addition to the salary. Particularly if there is a comprehensive list of both core benefits and unique benefits offered. Typically, this might include dynamic and flexible working policies, days off on birthdays, or cycle to work schemes to name a few. In the current climate, you will need to review these benefits in light of the fact that the role may need to be performed from home for many weeks or months. It could be that some of these benefits come into play once Government restrictions are lifted and the working population returns to offices and begin commuting again.

## Make a great offer: Four steps

### 1 Summarise

Following the decision that you would like to offer the role, summarise why they have been selected as the preferred candidate. Additionally, run through the reasons the role fits the candidate's needs and why. Reinforce that your role is right for them.

### 2 Confirm

Once you have given a summary, confirm how the candidate is feeling about the process and the experience they have had with the company. Ensure that the reasons they want to change jobs in the first place still stand and that this role meets their needs.

### 3 Details

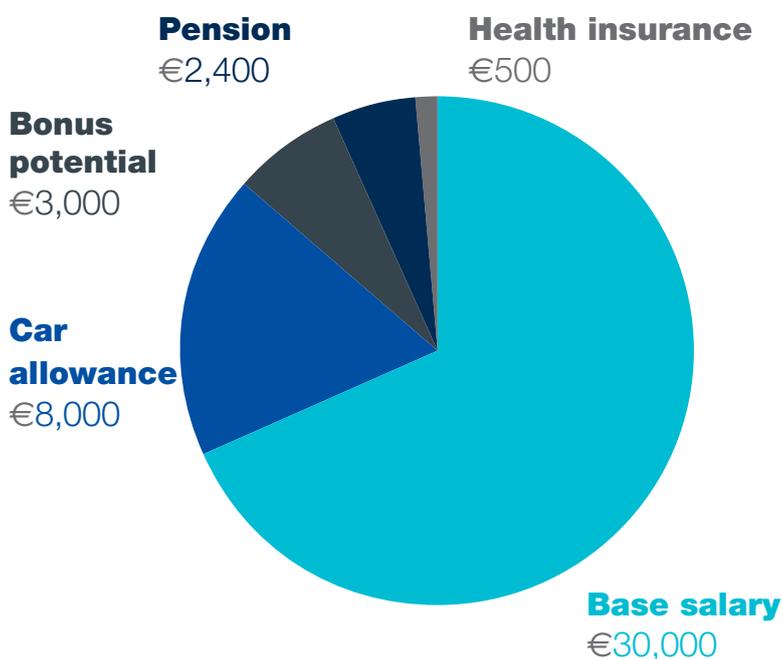
Next, run through the details of the offer including the role and responsibilities, reporting structure, and how the professional will directly contribute to the organisation's wider goals and objectives.

### 4 Remuneration

Finally, share the full salary and benefits package with the candidate including base salary and the monetary values of the benefits on offer. If possible, visualise this in way that reiterates the full value rather than focusing purely on the base salary.

#### Total salary and benefits package

€43,900



The most successful companies I work with offer a pie chart, which shows a breakdown of the monetary value of every part of the offer. This demonstrates to candidates how highly valued they are as the investment is significantly higher than their basic salary.

**Sam Tuckey, Manager,  
Michael Page**



# Adapting your onboarding to a remote process

**It is still very possible to give a new employee a flying start remotely**



## Conduct pre-boarding

This step can sometimes be missed, but is ever-more important when onboarding someone remotely. It all comes down to one key question: what do you want your new employee to do on their first day? A welcome email should be sent to your new starter a week or two before they begin their new role to tell them just this. It should set out the itinerary for the first few weeks, day one to five, grouped into morning and afternoon. This will give the employee a mental prep about what to expect once they commence their employment.

The email should also provide details for a point of contact, their line manager or HR, in case the new starter has any initial questions. Also, guide them through your digital learning platform if you

have one. And, if possible, assign a work buddy or mentor to the new starter to help them through those early stages of their tenure. As well as providing a wealth of knowledge, mentors can play a key part in aiding a new starter's personal and professional growth. Work buddies will be fundamental to new starter's support network when learning to navigate their way around their new environment, so it's worth arranging this at this stage.

Send your company handbook, or provide links to key areas of the business, preferably ones that are directly related to the role. This will help them to become immersed within the business culture, vision, and values.



## Set up tech

With the pre-boarding phase complete, make sure that your new employee is set up to work remotely. Are you going to provide them with a work laptop and phone or will they need to source this themselves? It is important to be clear on details like this from the outset. You should also check that they have a suitable workspace and access to a reliable internet connection. If possible, let

them have access to a team or an individual within IT that can offer dedicated support during the early part of the onboarding process. This can be structured as a set of meetings or in the shape of a dedicated online portal. Finally, company security is a necessity, so make sure the new starter is clear with the IT policies and logs on through a secured VPN network.



## Establish clear lines of communication

Some new starters may be working in their environment alone and feel cut off without regular communication. This is especially pertinent given they are unlikely to have met many of their colleagues in person, other than perhaps during the hiring process. For this reason, it is essential to set up a series of video/phone calls with key

people in the business in their first few days. There are a range of good tools to use from Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Skype, to name a few. This will help the new starter get a better understanding of how their role fits into the wider business strategy and help them build stronger relationships.



### Schedule regular check-ins

It is always good practice to check in with a new starter regularly, but this is even more pertinent when onboarding someone remotely. In fact, it may well be that these will need to be even more frequent than if you were inducting someone in a physical location with other team members present. It is important to strike a balance between creating clear lines of open communication and making someone feel like they are being micro-managed, even from a distance. For the first week or so, a check-in once a day is a must, but this can be reduced over the following weeks, particularly as your

new employee gets to know their colleagues and opens further lines of communication over projects and priorities. Reinforce your video call or phone chats with clear actions over email – this will also give you something to refer to in your next catch up. It is also important that induction training is varied. Endless days of compliance training, for example, will not be motivating. Ensure that your company's employee value proposition (EVP) is central to your training – and do your best to bring it to life and make it relevant to the individual.



### Provide feedback on performance

Although this is a unique scenario, the probation process still performs the same function in terms of allowing both sides to decide whether the role is a good fit and that the new starter is meeting expectations. However, you may need to temper some expectations or make allowances around certain elements of the role given the unusual remote set up and that fact that training or

shadowing can be made more difficult through being remote. It is also a good idea to get feedback on the onboarding programme overall from your new recruit – you can then feed any learnings back into the process when you onboard your next new starter remotely.





## Why should you partner with us?

Michael Page, the original PageGroup brand, is a market leading professional recruitment consultancy specialising in the recruitment of permanent, contract and temporary positions on behalf of the world's top employers.

We launched our business in Ireland in 2006, PageGroup's 30th anniversary year. From our office in Dublin's city centre we initially concentrated on accounting and banking opportunities, but our focus on the Irish market has since extended to sales, marketing, engineering and more.

PageGroup has been changing lives for over 40 years, and our access to exclusive market data drives both our own and our customers' hiring strategies to ensure the most efficient processes. Combined with this, we utilise our established position in the market to enable access to extensive online advertising packages with a strong focus on diversity and inclusion. We aim to build strong and lasting partnerships with our customers to help drive success across their businesses and support professionals in reaching their full potential.

### Leading recruitment technology

- 1 We guarantee the visibility of our customers' vacancies, ensuring they are seen by top talent.
- 2 We ensure speed of response and the quality of candidates is second to none.
- 3 We advertise to and engage with candidates before our competition can.

### Diversity and inclusion

- 1 Truly inclusive recruitment across age, gender, ethnicity, disability, faith, and LGBTQ+ is embedded in our operations.
- 2 We are industry recognised for diversity and inclusion, including the following accolades:
  - Stonewall's Top 100 Employers
  - WeQual Award for People
  - HR enei Global Diversity Award – Highly Commended
- 3 We provide specialist diversity inclusion advice and bespoke guidance to access a truly diverse talent pool.

## How to get in touch with us

As you and your business adapt to the realities of the global health emergency, we want to support you in any way we can. Our consultants are available through email, landline, mobile and video to assist you in all of your recruitment needs. For an initial confidential discussion, get in touch by clicking the buttons below.

**Request a call back**



**Submit a job spec**



**Get in touch**



Part of  
**PageGroup**