Recruiting Hard-to-Find Talent

IBM Talent Acquisition Optimization is filling key positions for a global company's complex recruiting needs

IBM

Insight

Unfilled jobs were hurting productivity

The company annually makes around 21,000 hires, including internal hires, in more than 60 countries collectively. To meet this challenge, the organization uses multiple recruitment process outsourcing (RPO) vendors. IBM became one of the company's RPO partners in 2014 to recruit in the MEA region.

Before IBM began its partnership with this client, the organization needed to solve several recruiting challenges that were impacting the bottom line:

- A heavy reliance on agency hiring (up to 58% of hires)
- A high time to fill (75 days)
- Unfilled jobs were hurting overall productivity

Idea

A strategic, process-driven approach to talent acquisition

IBM designed an RPO program for the company to recruit candidates for difficult-to-fill roles concentrated in eight MEA countries—Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (KSA), and United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The IBM RPO team recruits more than 200 job titles spread over five business units for the organization, but with a focus on sales (30% of hires), consultants, and engineers. These job types had been a challenge for the company to hire.

In addition to improving hiring metrics, IBM identified that the client needed to establish and follow best practices in talent acquisition. Before, recruiting was transactional, with little to no consultation, proactive sourcing, recruitment marketing, or analytical reporting of recruitment activity. This resulted in hiring managers having little confidence in the approach.

IBM introduced a strategic process to source, attract, and recruit candidates, which was especially important for the professional roles IBM was asked to fill. IBM also began providing a variety of reports and analytics, including SLA monitoring reports and scorecards, so that this company could see the precise effect that recruitment activity has on the business.

Impact

Operational excellence and significantly improved outcomes

When IBM began recruiting for the client in 2014, agency usage had declined but was still more than 35% of hires. With IBM's RPO program in place, agencies now account for just 2% of hires.

The RPO solution also targeted the organization's high time to fill (TTF), which on average was more than 70 days. IBM's goal for recruiting targeted job families in the MEA region is 50 days, and the RPO team is averaging 44 days for TTF. Each day that the TTF is shortened means the company is not losing thousands of dollars in productivity.

Pleased with the improved talent acquisition metrics, including an overall better quality of hire (which is at 95%), the client renewed its partnership and expanded its relationship with IBM.

The IBM recruiting team is now hiring for the organization in four other countries: Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Jordan, and Turkey. Additionally, IBM coordinates onboarding for hires in UAE and KSA, which means all employees whom IBM recruits, regardless of job type, go through the same new hire experience, resulting in an improved end-to-end candidate experience and increased new hire satisfaction. Total annual hires for this firm's specialized job roles in the MEA region range from 380 to 470.

The IBM team made an immediate impact in Turkey, where the client was experiencing 78 days TTF and poor candidate quality. Often, hiring managers were receiving more than 20 candidates for each role. Hiring managers felt a large portion of their time was spent reviewing and interviewing poor quality candidates.

Implementation of the IBM RPO program in Turkey began in April 2017, with go live that July. Within one quarter, the IBM team brought process excellence and best practice sourcing and screening methodologies to dramatically reduce TTF to 32 days across all bands. The number of hires during that time was the same as previous quarters. Success continued into the next quarter with TTF trending at 29 days.

This industrial engineering firm recognizes the operational excellence the IBM RPO solution delivers and wants to see similar results in other facets of HR. As a result of the team's progress in driving down TTF, the client requested that IBM provide support on a global project to help drive down TTF across all RPOs, not just the region in which IBM is hiring for the organization. IBM also will introduce the use of IBM Watson Recruitment, a cognitive system that can match candidates to job skills, organizational culture, and predicted levels of success to identify best-fit talent.

For more information about IBM Talent Acquisition Optimization, visit **ibm.co/TAO**.

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IBM Global Business Services
Route 100
Somers, NY 10589

Produced in the United States of America
September 2019

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