Your Guide
to Securing the Right Graduates

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How to Secure the Right Graduate Talent in Today's Market

As millions of graduates enter the workforce, and with many more still on the market from previous years, organizations like yours are under pressure to efficiently and accurately select the most suitable candidates from a wider group of talent.

In addition to this, you need to stand out as a first-choice employer, move the dial on diversity and inclusion, and build a talent pipeline of experienced hires – you've got your work cut out!

Get Started

SHL's graduate experts have put together eight simple steps to help you get there – read on to learn how to build a successful early careers hiring program for the world that we live in today.

Re-Examine the Core Ingredients you are Looking For in a Candidate

Step ①

Review the hiring criteria

Like every role in every organization, the core attributes you're looking for in a candidate have very likely changed in recent years. As organizations become flatter and less hierarchical, and as work becomes increasingly hybrid, it's worth reviewing the criteria you're looking for in an early career hire.

Step ②

Prioritize potential and style of working or experience and qualifications

Start by asking yourself: has the pathway for progression changed? How important is a candidate's potential and style of working as opposed to the experience and qualifications they bring?

Remember that recent graduates' experiences of college, work and life will have been impacted by the pandemic, so try to think about what is really core to success at your organization. This will help you identify individuals with the potential to grow and flourish despite perhaps having missed out on more 'normal' school and work experiences.

Communicate Holistically What You Can Offer

Step ③

Solidify your offering and employer story

In a very busy marketplace, with graduates applying to an average of 10 organizations, transparent communication on what you offer has never been more important. As we emerge into a post-pandemic world the contract between employers and employees has turned on its head.

Individuals are demanding organizations be more focused on broader purpose and societal impact. Consolidate your company messaging to build a coherent story of what you can offer.

Step ④

Showcase your culture and values

Students want to understand the impact they can have on society through the work they're doing, and feel a sense of belonging and connection with the teams and people they will work alongside. Take the opportunity to refresh your attraction materials to ensure they provide a compelling and holistic reason to want to join the organization.

Provide a Human, Meaningful and Fair Assessment Experience

Step (5)

Use assessments to see the true potential of every candidate

With many graduates having missed out on typical educational and professional experiences, objective assessments are more important than ever to fairly measure both current capabilities and potential for growth. Moreover, many candidates simply expect this - a fair and objective assessment process is non-negotiable.

Graduates expect an engaging and personalized experience with the chance to ask questions and evaluate for themselves whether they feel a connection with the organization and team. On the other hand, you need to ensure that the process is fair, robust and assesses against your key success criteria. Getting the balance right between fast, efficient and human hiring processes is vital.

Ensure Seamless, Intuitive Technology-Enabled Interactions

Step 6

Put yourself in the graduates' shoes and experience their recruitment journey

Have you recently tried to apply for an early career role at your own organization? How intuitive and simple is it to complete the application? How long do you need to wait for a response? How clear are the communications? With multiple applications in progress, top students will often self-select out of processes if they're too troublesome or confusing. There's no better time to check in on yours than now.

Step 7

Analyze the effectiveness of your tech stack and processes

Make sure the technology works for you – review previous data on drop-out rates and isolate issues to resolve. In today's world, early career candidates simply expect consumer-grade experiences at every step.

Through technology and often automated processes, the data now collated on applicants throughout the campaign is vast. Don't let that data go to waste. Identify areas you can target and improve on, using information on applications stages or rates by university or region.

Make Your Data Work Harder

Step 8

Turn data into insight to use again and again

The assessment data you collect on each candidate is potential gold dust. Not just for informing hiring decisions, but onboarding, developing and growing those you hire and learning about those who turn you down. Turning data into insight will differentiate employers as we enter the next phase of work, giving you a headstart in the ongoing war on replacing existing talent.

Great Hires Start with a Great Hiring Process

SHL's Early Careers Solution has been built to tackle today's hiring challenges. We'll help you create a hiring process that's objective, accurate and exciting – so your teams can start securing the right talent in no time.

Make the right graduate decisions with SHL.

Get in Touch →

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