

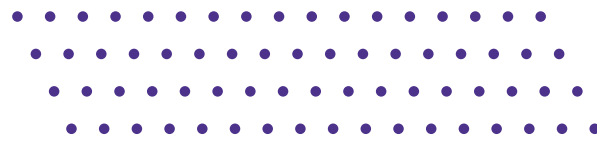


# ACCELERATING VIRTUAL RECRUITING PLAYBOOK

*A guide to attracting and engaging  
top talent in the new normal*



# Foreword



First and foremost, I hope you and your families are healthy and safe as we continue working through the challenges of such an extraordinary time together.

The past five months have been rife with ups and downs across the country and around the world. Governments, businesses, and each and every person have had to continually pivot and accept a new normal of uncertainty in the wake of the pandemic. Along the way, countless jobs were lost, and many employers and workers are still reeling from a historically altered talent landscape.

The good news? Despite the difficulties of putting the economy back together, people's commitment to adapt and forge ahead has never been stronger. My conversations with CHROs representing disparate companies and industries support this sentiment, as they work tirelessly to map out a viable future for their organizations and employees.

Here at Phenom, we have been innovating non-stop since COVID-19 hit, launching updates to our Talent Experience Management platform to help candidates, employees, recruiters, and hiring managers overcome instability across the talent landscape. That instability comes in different forms for businesses, and we are committed to producing solutions that address both the unique employment challenges we're facing right now, and the ones we'll face as the economy begins to recover.

To guide talent acquisition and management professionals through this unprecedented period, we created *The HR Resiliency Playbooks*:

- *Accelerating Virtual Recruiting*—Filling essential roles faster and remotely
- *Establishing Employee Agility*—Engaging internal talent
- *Preparing for Talent Recovery*—Building a community

Each playbook provides organized, actionable takeaways that meet your current business needs and can get you where you want to be. It is my hope that these tools will prepare you to move forward with the educated resolve needed to emerge from this crisis stronger and more resilient than ever.



**Mahe Bayireddi**  
CEO & co-founder  
Phenom

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# Introduction

## ► The State of the Talent Landscape

Only a few short months ago, the talent experience was a candidate-driven one. With plenty of job opportunities to choose from, job seekers held the upper hand in choosing where to work. Among employers, the competition for top talent was fierce.

Then the pandemic struck.

In early May 2020, more than 30 million Americans filed for first-time unemployment benefits since the coronavirus pandemic forced the US economy to shut down in March. And it's been projected that more than 1 billion workers worldwide could be out of work by the time it's over.

Although the pandemic and subsequent virus prevention measures have elicited a colossal surge of unemployment across the country, the statistics don't paint a full picture of the current—or future—talent landscape.

While many businesses were furloughing and laying off workers, employers across select industries such as health care, manufacturing, and food industries needed to ramp up hiring to fill critical positions on the frontlines.

As organizations were forced to either increase hiring efforts for essential jobs, freeze talent acquisition efforts, or furlough and layoff employees, we have witnessed a major shift in the talent landscape.

**For the first time in decades, the supply for talent now surpasses the demand.**

A CHRO's job has never been more difficult. In order to protect employees and prepare our organizations for success, a redesign of the talent experience is necessary. Transformation must take place across the acquisition, management, and evolution of talent. We have identified the following core areas to focus on:

### **Hiring Velocity**

Meet hiring demands faster.

### **Employee Agility**

Enrich and match internal talent with critical work.

### **Talent Recovery**

Build an engaged alumni community.

### **Virtual University Recruiting**

Find the right fit in a remote world.

## ► **Embracing a Virtual Candidate Experience**

For organizations with in-demand services, the challenge is being able to hire quickly and effectively at scale, without putting recruitment professionals and the public at risk. With less recruiter overhead, they are being tasked to do more with less—while figuring out the ins and outs of virtual recruiting and hiring.

As the world reopens, many more companies will need to hire extensively and cost effectively to recoup lost revenue and stabilize their trajectory toward future growth. Consequently, the need to adapt or prepare new recruiting and talent acquisition strategies is critical. Fortunately, technology is already poised to help HR professionals support this shift and enable fast, productive hiring.

This is an opportunity to learn and prepare for the unknown future that awaits. As you work your way through this playbook, consider how different capabilities and tools will equip your team to master virtual recruiting and hiring velocity.





# Overview of Recommendations

In the following sections, we'll review the key areas to consider as you continue to meet or prepare for hiring demands. Here is a high-level summary:

## ► Identify a plan

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- ☐ **Initiate change** by identifying your goals, creating a vision, and establishing a minimum viable product (MVP) strategy.
- ☐ **Communicate change management** to your teams.
- ☐ **Empower your teams** by equipping them with the tools and information they need.
- ☐ **Encourage decisiveness and agility** so teams can take quick action, assess performance, optimize what's working, and evolve the original vision as necessary.

## ► Update your employer brand

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- ☐ **Refine your employer brand** to reflect company changes since the pandemic.
- ☐ **Review your candidate experience** by going through your application process (from job board to career site to submitting an application).
- ☐ **Update external brand presence** on job boards and social platforms.
- ☐ **Update your career site** with COVID-19 related messaging.
- ☐ **Ensure consistent employer brand messaging** and imagery across all channels.



## ► Grow your pipeline virtually

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- ❑ **Host virtual recruiting events**, including career fairs and virtual open houses.
- ❑ **Create social media campaigns** highlighting available job opportunities and company culture that drive back to your career site.
- ❑ **Invest in paid digital advertising opportunities** to reach a wider talent pool.
- ❑ **Experiment with new job boards** that might be a watering hole for your ideal candidates.
- ❑ **Identify and focus efforts** on channels that are driving the most traffic and qualified candidates.

## ► Engage job seekers

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- ❑ **Stay hyper-connected with candidates** by adopting conversational recruiting strategies and technologies—including SMS, messaging apps, and email.
- ❑ **Implement a chatbot** on your career site to amplify and automate sourcing, screening, scheduling, and answering candidate FAQs.
- ❑ **Create informative, engaging content** that showcases your company culture, including career site content, blog posts, videos, and employee testimonials.
- ❑ **Send regular targeted emails** to your talent pools with relevant job openings, company news, and upcoming events.





## ► Interview candidates

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- ☐ **Review & update your interview process** by evaluating technologies that optimize experiences and support video.
- ☐ **Create memorable interview experiences** that engage candidates, even remotely.

## ► Onboard new hires

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- ☐ **Create memorable hiring experiences** that help new employees feel welcome.
- ☐ **Set up onboarding during orientation** and address a virtual options.
- ☐ **Establish a strong virtual company culture.**

## ► Track & optimize

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- ☐ **Establish micro-level analysis** to review ongoing career site performance.
- ☐ **Create 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day metrics review plans.**
- ☐ **Replicate what's working** and optimize areas that need improvement.





## IDENTIFY A PLAN

Leading your people through change is challenging. Now is the time to reset goals among TA teams and develop a plan that addresses what is happening now and what's to come as the economy reopens. The key is to remain agile and communicate consistently and clearly with your teams.

### ► Initiate change

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- ☐ Identify your goals for your teams and job seekers.
- ☐ Create a vision for your future-proof acquisition strategy.
- ☐ Establish an MVP strategy that focuses on helping your teams operate more efficiently.
- ☐ Establish a strategy that empowers job seekers to discover and engage with your brand, and apply for a job.

### ► Communicate your vision

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- ☐ Let employees know change is necessary, powerful, and transformational.
- ☐ Ensure everyone hears a consistent, clear message.
- ☐ Set weekly or biweekly meetings to review new plans and allow for Q&A.
- ☐ Establish 'champions' to support and model new plans among individual teams and geographic locations.
- ☐ Align expectations with hiring managers and internal teams across the business.



## ► Empower your teams

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- ☐ Embody the behavior change you wish to see.
- ☐ Equip employees with the tools and information they need.
- ☐ Practice proactive problem management and remove obstacles swiftly.
- ☐ Celebrate team wins early and often to energize the team.
- ☐ Recognize individuals who are embracing the change and demonstrating desired behaviors.

## ► Encourage decisiveness & agility

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- ☐ Foster TA teams to take quick action.
- ☐ Prevent ‘analysis paralysis’ by identifying critical needs.
- ☐ Track and assess performance.
- ☐ Focus on and duplicate efforts that are effective.
- ☐ Optimize areas that are underperforming.



## Encourage & Celebrate



Thank your team for their efforts



Incentivize teams to embrace change



Share your team’s top 3 wins weekly



## UPDATE YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

Job seekers today want to know if organizations have updated company policies in response to the pandemic. From new hiring procedures to remote work policies, communicating these changes externally is critical. To establish trust among candidates, embrace transparency and over-communication whenever possible.

### ► Refine your employer brand

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- ☐ Review or create employer brand guidelines that articulate what differentiates you from other companies and why people should work at your company.
- ☐ Update your employer messaging to incorporate company changes that have been made to protect candidates and employees.

### ► Review your candidate experience

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- ☐ Go through your application process (from job board to career site to submitting an application) as a job seeker would.
- ☐ Identify areas where candidates might abandon the process.
- ☐ Determine what your ideal candidate experience looks like.
- ☐ Focus on implementing changes that are critical and will make the most impact.
- ☐ Review the post-apply process, including email and SMS campaigns, and update accordingly.

## ► Update your career site

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- ☐ Update your career site to reflect any new hiring and company policies.
- ☐ Create an FAQ page as a primary source of information for candidates.
- ☐ Update your chatbot communication to reflect new hiring and company policies.
- ☐ Showcase employee stories about how your company has adapted to change.

## ► Update your job board presence

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- ☐ Ensure job boards leverage your most recent corporate logos.
- ☐ Review company descriptions and update them for consistency.
- ☐ Add information about your company's response to change where appropriate, and link to your FAQ career site page.
- ☐ Go through the application process from a job board to check for any disruptions to the candidate experience.

## ► Ensure consistent branding

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- ☐ Make sure all company social media profiles and review sites use your most recent logos.
- ☐ Check that imagery across all external sites feels like an extension of your employer brand.
- ☐ Review all company descriptions and job postings for accurate language and tone.





## GROW YOUR PIPELINE VIRTUALLY

As some companies continue uninterrupted hiring, others are experiencing unplanned and unprecedented demand. There are also organizations that have slowed down acquisition efforts, but are planning for the increase in demand once hiring resumes. The lack of in-person events means TA will need to focus more on digital sourcing and recruiting.

### ► Host virtual recruiting events

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- ☐ Identify the type of event best suited for your hiring needs, including panels, roundtables, webinars, virtual career fairs, and university recruiting events.
- ☐ Choose a technology platform that works best for your type of event. Two-way communication should be a core functionality for any platform you choose.
- ☐ Promote your event and stay connected with email campaigns and SMS messages that nurture job seekers at scale.
- ☐ Increase attendance by promoting your event on social media, then encourage engagement by using event hashtags—or leverage live streaming sessions with chat.
- ☐ Screen attendees and schedule virtual interviews using a chatbot, live chat, or integrated video solution.

### ► Invest in paid ads

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- ☐ Identify paid digital advertising opportunities on social media and search.
- ☐ Focus on roles that require niche skills or need to be filled quickly.
- ☐ Target job seekers for open positions based on their interests and relevant user behaviors.
- ☐ Experiment with different types of ads, including videos and animated GIFs, to attract and engage talent.
- ☐ Track ad performance and focus spend on content and channels that are driving the most traffic to your career site.



## ► Create social media campaigns

- ☐ Identify roles that require niche skills or need to be filled quickly.
- ☐ Research social channels or groups where your ideal candidate is active.
- ☐ Highlight available job opportunities on appropriate social channels when possible.
- ☐ Showcase available employee testimonials for the department or position to help establish credibility.
- ☐ Consider creating dedicated social media channels to express your company culture.
- ☐ Display your company culture with relevant photos, videos, employee testimonials, and blogs.

## ► Experiment with new job boards

- ☐ Research job boards you aren't currently using to identify new opportunities.
- ☐ Determine if current users reflect your target audience.
- ☐ Focus on trying 1-2 new job boards.
- ☐ Ensure branding and messaging are consistent.

## ► Identify and focus efforts on high-performing channels

- ☐ Establish KPIs for traffic-driving strategies.
- ☐ Track and communicate performance weekly to your teams and leadership.
- ☐ Focus on efforts that are driving traffic and quality candidates to your career site.
- ☐ Optimize efforts that are underperforming—or sunset completely.



**88%**  
of 18-29 year olds



**78%**  
of 30-49 year olds

**USE SOME FORM  
OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Source: [Pew Research](#)





## ENGAGE JOB SEEKERS

As the volume of job seekers continues to increase, engaging and converting best-fit talent at scale will be essential to filling roles quickly. Leveraging strategies and tools that allow for mass communication will enable your teams to do more with less.

### ► Optimize your chatbot

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- ☐ Update your chatbot FAQ responses to include COVID-19 messaging and any updates to hiring or company policies.
- ☐ Review questions from job seekers in your chatbot knowledge base to discover what is not yet being addressed.
- ☐ Add answers to unaddressed questions to optimize the chatbot's FAQ responses.
- ☐ Include automated interview scheduling to drive efficiency.

### ► Stay hyper-connected with candidates

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- ☐ Add an email signup form to your talent community on your career site.
- ☐ Set up automated emails that welcome new talent community members and regularly drive them back to your career site.
- ☐ Leverage SMS and messaging apps, like WhatsApp, to engage job seekers one-to-one or send mass updates.
- ☐ Live chat with screened candidates to help them find best-fit opportunities.



## ► Send frequent email campaigns to your talent community

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- ☐ Build an email calendar to plan future sends.
- ☐ Share one-time messages with relevant job openings, company news, and upcoming events.
- ☐ Create automated drip campaigns to nurture new leads or job seekers with hard-to-find skills.

## ► Create informative content


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- ☐ Make videos that showcase employee testimonials, a “day in the life” at your company, and employee events.
- ☐ Publish blog posts once a week that highlight what it’s like to be an employee.
- ☐ Review existing career site pages to ensure they’re up to date and accurately reflect your EVP.

# the power of a text message



**98%**  
open rate



**45%**  
response rate

Source: [Gartner](#)



## INTERVIEW CANDIDATES

Virtual interviewing continues to be the norm for many organizations. Managing multiple interviews across different teams can create friction in the hiring process for both candidates and job seekers. A team's ability to hire efficiently and effectively in the virtual environment will help them both thrive.

### ► Audit & optimize your interview process

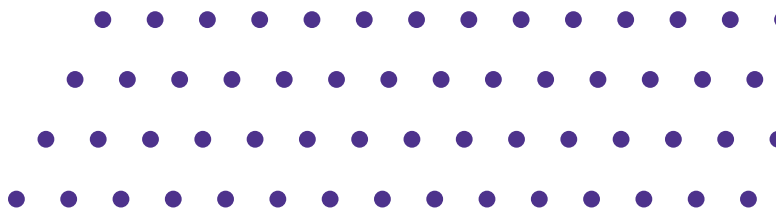
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- ☐ Review your interview process—including recruiter communication with hiring managers and candidates.
- ☐ Leverage a chatbot and live chat to help screen candidates and schedule interviews.
- ☐ Conduct virtual interviews using video tools for individuals and teams.
- ☐ Set clear expectations for candidates regarding changes or new technologies in the interview process.
- ☐ Create scorecards to streamline feedback from hiring managers.

### ► Create memorable interview experiences

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- ☐ Leverage a virtual waiting room before interviews that simulates your office.
- ☐ Use branded backdrops or a photo of your office bull-pen during virtual interviews.
- ☐ Mail candidates a personalized thank you note, regardless of hiring status.





## ONBOARD NEW HIRES

For many companies, the challenge is creating a memorable *virtual* onboarding experience for new hires. From establishing a powerful company culture to providing a strong sense of community, it's important to focus on elevating the best areas of the company and its people.

### ► Create memorable hiring experiences

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- ☐ Welcome new hires with personalized videos from their new team members.
- ☐ Update new hire communication with refreshed company policies and expectations before they start, as well as for their first day and 30-day check in.
- ☐ Send tailored “welcome” packages before their first day.

### ► Set up onboarding during orientation

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- ☐ Create or review your virtual onboarding experience.
- ☐ Include representatives from other departments to help new hires “meet” others and learn more about the company.
- ☐ Encourage employee referrals by asking new hires to recommend former colleagues they would want to work with again.

### ► Establish a strong virtual company culture

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- ☐ Promote employee resource groups for internal talent to connect with others.
- ☐ Re-share company values and present them to new hires.





## TRACK & OPTIMIZE

Data is the key to understanding what is and isn't working. It will also encourage adoption and agility among your TA teams. Keep in mind that the KPIs you measure in the beginning will be different than what you measure on an ongoing basis. Considering the dynamic, evolving nature of the pandemic, it's also important to remain agile. The metrics you used to track might be different than what is truly important now.

### ► Establish micro-level analysis

- ☐ Review the total number of job seekers visiting your career site.
- ☐ Review the top sources of traffic to your career site.
- ☐ Review campaign open and click-through rates.
- ☐ Track talent community subscribes and unsubscribes.

### ► Create a 30-day review plan

- ☐ Focus on apply analytics.
- ☐ Review average time to apply for candidates.
- ☐ Identify critical drop-offs in the apply funnel.
- ☐ Address drop-offs by updating content and fixing broken steps.



## ► **Create a 60-day review plan**

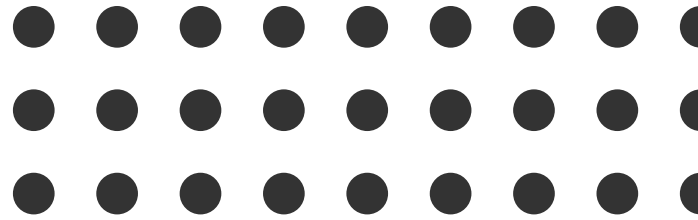
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- ☐ Focus on campaign analytics and hiring pipelines.
- ☐ Review aggregate metrics on leads and applies from campaigns.
- ☐ Identify pipeline bottlenecks, overall or by job category.
- ☐ Review campaigns and optimize low-performing efforts.

## ► **Create a 90-day review plan**

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- ☐ Focus on the hiring funnel and career site page analytics.
- ☐ Review conversion through the funnel, overall and by category.
- ☐ Identify improvements for the workflow process.
- ☐ Review exit and bounce rates on career site pages.
- ☐ Optimize site content on pages where job seekers aren't spending a lot of time.





# Conclusion



For many reading this guide, this is not the first time you have experienced rapid change at an organization as a result of an economic crisis—and it won't be the last.

As you continue leading your team through change, remember to continue communicating your vision for transformation, and reward behaviors that indicate adoption. The success of every employer during this time ultimately comes down to its people. And the teams that adapt the fastest will be the ones that come out on top, hiring the right talent at the right time.



# Engage and hire candidates for essential roles faster

Connect with candidates at scale and meet increased hiring demands faster with [Phenom's Hiring Velocity](#) and [Virtual University Recruiting packages](#), featuring:



## CONVERSATIONAL CHATBOT

Leverage Phenom Bot—powered by AI—on any website to automate job search and discovery, answer frequently asked questions, capture new leads, and initiate screening and scheduling. Plus, live chat with candidates in real-time and deliver powerful campaigns that attract job seekers.



## CAMPAIGNS

Build meaningful relationships with candidates through one-time email sends and automated drip campaigns that nurture job seekers over time. Communicate instantly with candidates one-to-one or at scale with SMS messaging. Follow up on interviews, arrange next steps, and launch campaigns to promote new job openings and upcoming events.



## VIRTUAL RECRUITING EVENTS

Maintain hiring momentum and create meaningful moments—wherever you and your candidates are. Create and manage end-to-end recruiting events, screen and schedule candidates, and conduct interviews using seamless integrated video technology.



## CRM

Discover top talent prospects with AI with the Phenom CRM, which leverages artificial intelligence to elevate best-fit candidates. Build, engage, and track talent pipelines, and get access to dynamic lists, actionable insights, fit scoring, and more.

## Hire more with less.

## About Phenom

Phenom is a global HR technology company with a mission to help a billion people find the right job. We do this through an AI-based SaaS platform, which we call Talent Experience Management (TXM). TXM is the holistic approach and platform that connects every interaction throughout the talent lifecycle and delivers hyper-personalized experiences for everyone. The Phenom TXM platform is built on artificial intelligence (AI), driving personalization, automation, and accuracy for candidates, recruiters, employees, and management. It eliminates multiple-point solutions, connects with quality candidates and employees through personalized experiences, and delivers top talent while driving ROI. This means candidates find the right jobs faster, recruiters are more productive, employees are able to evolve, and management gets the insights they need.



### Connect with Us

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