CPA
Practice Advisor

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

change. While some firms may not have thought about having remote employees before March 2020, many have adapted to having their employees work remotely from home.

Jun. 03, 2021



By Josh Lance, CPA, CGMA

For most tax and accounting firms, COVID-19 has been a significant catalyst for change. While some firms may not have thought about having remote employees before March 2020, many have adapted to having their employees work

remotely from home. Hiring employees who may never step foot in your offices

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

and the type of candidate you are looking to attract for that position.

Your job description should highlight key attributes that a remote employee would need to have in order to be successful, including organizational skills, time management, and the ability to work with less direct supervision. Remote employees also need to be excellent communicators. Working remotely routinely requires employees to proactively communicate in a variety of ways and to be able to successfully communicate asynchronously with your co-workers as you both may not be working the same hours.

The job description should not only note that this job is for a remote position, it should also describe how your firm handles managing remote employees, whether there is any required travel to your offices, and any additional perks specific to remote work, such as a stipend for their home office. Having your job description focused on how your company handles remote work will allow potential employees to get a sense of what to expect when working remotely for your company, and make it more likely to attract the employees you are trying to hire.

Tip #2: Broaden your search channels

When finding potential remote employees for your firm, it's important to look beyond your normal search channels. If you typically post on traditional job boards or recruit through local headhunters, you will need to change how you advertise your remote position. Those more traditional channels will likely yield local candidates, but does not get your position out to those looking for remote work.

Posting your position on remote-only job boards, or using social media to get your position out to various groups or individuals across the country can yield better results and broaden your search base. A search channel that you might not think to utilize is networking with your peers — one of the best ways to find remote

employees is by talking to other firms and firm leaders. With firms looking to hire

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

leaders. While you may think another firm is not just going to hand you resumes of qualified candidates, the reality is that every firm is different, and their hiring needs are also different. With this approach, you'll get the added benefit of having that firm qualify a candidate and understand what that candidate is looking for.

Tip #3: Up level your interview process

In trying to find and identify the right employees for your firm, your interview process needs to change to ensure that you are bringing the best talent into your firm that can succeed in a remote environment. Beyond the normal interview questions, your interview should also cover several other items:

- How will this candidate function without direct supervision or having an immediate supervisor always available to answer questions? Remote employees may be working hours that are different from each other and, as a result, a good remote candidate should have the ability to complete their tasks without someone always checking in on them. In addition, they should not leave work items to the last minute in case they run into issues and their supervisor isn't immediately available to help.
- What is their remote work environment like? Having a dedicated space to work every day that is mostly free from distractions is important. Another aspect to their environment is security, as they will likely be handling confidential information. Having a workspace that is in a common area or can be accessed by roommates, for example, may not be the best situation for a good remote work environment.
- Do they already have experience working remotely? While they may not have worked in a remote position before, they may have had experience working from home, if only occasionally. Understanding their prior experience may give a glimpse into whether they would be a good fit for your remote position.

These additional interview questions are important because the answers can help

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

better candidates and better success in your hiring process.

Remember that every firm is different, so hire candidates based on your own set of core competencies and strengths.

=========

A licensed CPA and CGMA, Josh Lance is also a family man who calls Chicago home. Before venturing on his own with a mission to help small businesses at Lance CPA Group, Josh spent his early career at a top 10 national public accounting firm and worked at an ultra-high net worth family office. Josh is also head of accounting for Practice Ignition and an adjunct professor at Northwestern University. He enjoys making wine at home, cooking, traveling, and cheering on his favorite football and soccer teams. He was honored by being selected to the 2017 class of the AICPA Leadership Academy and was named one of the 40 under 40 in 2017 by CPA Practice Advisor.

Firm Management

CPA Practice Advisor is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2024 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved