



How ema achieved 22 high-level recruitments during lockdown

Whilst some organisations have delayed recruitment for leadership posts, hoping the global situation will become easier, ema has developed an effective system to carry on, despite the disruption.

In fact, since lockdown started, we have completed the search and selection for 22 directors, chairs, non-executive board members and senior interims and our assignments continue to grow to the extent that we currently have another 20 positions in the pipeline.

We have supported our clients' whichever way they've wanted to progress. It's very much a personalised approach. Partial, or total, online recruitment has been incredibly effective, even providing additional benefits during the process.

Many of the restrictions from Covid-19 are likely to stay with us, so our blended online and face to face approach to recruitment should serve our clients well and achieve great outcomes, whatever the challenges we all face.

So, what have we been up to and what can we all learn from it?

Starting from your brief

With more communication options available to us, we increasingly use tools like Zoom and MS Teams to collaborate 'face to face' when formulating a detailed recruitment campaign for client recruitment.

Whilst some clients still prefer us to prepare a PDF pack of information, many more are opting for an online bespoke microsite. This trend has definitely accelerated during 2020.

A microsite is not only more cost effective it also presents your organisation more creatively. Instead of relying on words and images alone, you can include videos from the CEO and other senior team members. Prospective candidates can see some of the people they would be working with and gain a better understanding of the culture of your company. It helps them determine whether you are good organisation to work with.

Having more options to present your organisation, we can more effectively tailor the approach to suit your needs precisely and so attract the best candidates for your role.

Online candidate search gets personal

Since lockdown, we've significantly increased our online search activities, with extremely positive results.

With home-working more the norm, LinkedIn has seen an upturn in traffic and our online search process takes full advantage. For example, a recent ema recruitment advert for a Chief Executive role with a six-figure salary achieved 2,000 views in just five days.

As people become more familiar with video calls, we have additional options open to us when it comes to contacting applicants for an initial chat. As a result, our conversations have been more insightful, and we have got to know potential applicants better prior to screening.

Candidates have also gained a clearer understanding of the role and of our involvement in the recruitment process.

The results have been clear - a much stronger pool of candidates to feed into the screening process.

Since March, we've been carrying out online screening interviews on behalf of clients using video conferencing.

Candidates can find an online interview rather different, so we've provided practical advice on our website to help them prepare for this scenario. We want to ensure they present themselves well on video, helping our clients have a positive online recruitment experience.

[Read our advice to candidates on preparing for video interviews](#)

Of course, the home environment can be an unpredictable location for interviews. Internet connections can fail, whilst pets and family are often in the next room (and sometimes in the same room). During lockdown, we've taken this in our stride and accommodated specific challenges when necessary.

Shortlisting by Zoom, MS Teams or equivalent

Pre-Covid-19, we'd meet clients in person to feed back on the screening stage and support shortlisting. Since March, our online method has served us well. Meanwhile, reduced travel allows us to devote more time to candidate assessment, helping to identify those with the greatest potential.

In addition to helping candidates prepare for their video interviews, we've created some tips about online interviewing for our clients too.

[Read our tips for interviewing by video](#)

Completing further stages remotely

You might think it's impossible to carry out a group exercise with the executive team by video. Or for shortlisted candidates to collectively meet the board. And yet, our recent experience suggests there are surprising benefits in doing this.

For some time, we've been carrying out personality profiling remotely too. The results have been incredibly helpful. Using a variety of techniques, we send each completed profile to the candidate for review. They provide feedback during a more personable video call and, once confirmed, the profile is fed into the selection process for consideration.

Despite the social distancing challenges, some of our clients prefer to carry out the final interview stages in person. Our approach to recruitment is always tailored to the needs of our clients.

How should you tackle your recruitment from now on?

Even in such an unpredictable world, recruitment for high-level roles must continue. Your leadership must be strong to facilitate your progress through choppy waters.

High-quality candidates are available and ready to interview online. It's a new way of thinking but extremely effective. With support from ema, candidates and organisations will benefit from the process.

Going forward, your preferred method might be a combination of in-person and online interviews. Whatever your preference, we can help you achieve the outcomes you want.

Whether it's a short-term interim position or a longer term non-executive director or CEO, talk to us early. We'll help you tailor the best route forward for your organisation and support you all the way.