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Finding Stability in Uncertainty

RPO partnerships can deliver a competitive advantage to organizations coping with the volatility of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With Tina Tromaticzak, SVP/GM of Recruitment Process Outsourcing at ADP

The challenges of 2020 devastated some talent acquisition teams, heaped new demands on others, and ushered in a period of transformation as companies adapted to hiring in the remote climate. Now, organizations need to prepare for further uncertainty as they redefine the new normal in the post-pandemic workplace. Here, Tina Tromaticzak, SVP/GM of ADP Recruitment Process Outsourcing, discusses how RPO partners are evolving their offerings to help companies cope with the challenges ahead.

Q What are the top talent acquisition (TA) challenges facing companies today?

A The past year has brought volatile markets and changing dynamics to all TA teams. Prior to the pandemic, we saw the lowest unemployment rates in history. Now, due to extended unemployment benefits and an influx of stimulus money, people are staying out of the workforce for a prolonged period of time, causing staffing challenges for entry level roles. When you add in the broad geographical possibilities of remote work and the reality that anywhere from 1.1 to 5 million women have left the workforce during COVID, there has been a significant change in the hiring landscape.

Technology has also created major challenges for today's TA teams. The initial investment and upkeep of recruitment technology is a significant capital cost that is unavoidable in today's virtual world. And then there is the problem of integration—often, companies have disparate solutions that limit visibility into the full talent pipeline, hindering talent acquisition efforts.

Q How have RPO partners evolved their offerings to confront these challenges and adapt to the needs of the post-COVID workplace?

A Throughout the pandemic, RPO partners have proven their worth by offering their clients stability in a moment of extreme volatility. Many companies completely halted their hiring

processes during the peak of the pandemic, going so far as to eliminate their entire TA functions. RPO partners responded by pivoting to help organizations handle severance packages, furloughs, and communications as they struggled to cope with the ebbs and flows of COVID-19. Now that the economy is recovering and employers look to ramp up hiring once again, those with an RPO engagement have the advantage of a partner that can fill specialized and high-level roles quickly and at scale.

Another benefit that RPO partners bring is a wealth of data and analytics that offer critical insights into the workforce. The ADP data cloud, for example, houses anonymous data on 30 million workers in the U.S. and their families. We can see where the population of workers with critical skills is growing, where it is shrinking, and what the market rates are for key skills across geographies. This allows us to better guide our clients who are expanding their business operations or opening offices or facilities in new locations. We can also evaluate our clients' talent acquisition spend, ensuring they are leveraging their existing tools wisely and offering compensation rates that make them competitive in the marketplace.

Additionally, our depth of knowledge and expertise gives us the tools to help our clients optimize their talent acquisition processes and reduce turnover. For example, we can examine the application process, find bottlenecks and points of drop-off, and develop interventions to

improve the process for better results while keeping costs steady.

Q What are some of the key technologies RPO partners are offering to enhance the candidate experience in a remote climate?

A To succeed in today's TA climate, you need a great brand and you need to make the hiring process feel effortless. To do that, having mobile-enabled technologies like chatbots, easy-apply platforms, integrations with Google and LinkedIn, text-to-apply, and self-scheduling capabilities is critical. RPO providers offer these features and more, delivering an intuitive candidate experience that can differentiate an employer from the competition.

From there, organizations can benefit from an RPO partner's screening technologies that leverage artificial intelligence and candidate matching to identify the most relevant candidates in the talent community and offer side-by-side comparisons. This automates manual screening processes, reducing time to hire while improving quality of hire.

Another critical value-add that RPO partners deliver is a recruitment dashboard that reveals progress on D&I goals and specifics about where each candidate is in the process. The technology can reveal weak points in the process and automate email reminders to candidates, lightening the burden on hiring managers and giving them more time to focus on relationship building and other value-add activities.