



 HirePro

A Definitive Guide to Virtual Campus Hiring

Strategies for the Present and the Future

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Introduction

Students in formal clothes, recruitment teams making pre-placement talks, placement officers fielding eager students' queries, job fairs being organised - these were some of the common campus recruitment scenes across universities and colleges everywhere. Palpable anticipation and excitement would fill the air at the time.

But then COVID-19 happened and brought this annual hubbub on campuses to a grinding halt.

With students forced to attend classes from their homes, recruiters were faced with closed campuses. The financial implications of the pandemic also resulted in several large organisations postponing their hiring plans in the year 2020, impacting the placement prospects and internship offers of an entire batch of students.

The world, however, proved resilient!

In sharp contrast, the year 2021 has seen **unprecedented hiring numbers** from most of the large IT majors. With the job market picking up, most companies are seeing attrition in high numbers and are looking to hire fresh talent to maintain workforce numbers. According to Careernet's Hiring Outlook report (April 2021), about 9 out of 10 employers are actively hiring. As per Moneycontrol.com, in FY22, the top four Indian IT firms plan to hire 1.1 lakh freshers.

In short, the campus hiring scene is bustling once again, albeit, in a virtual manner.

Recruiting in the New Normal:

It's tech all the way!











“Companies have a new, and powerful enabler in this competition for talent: technology”

In India, hiring by IT services firms begins by July/August and continues till the month of March the following year. In-person campus recruitment has become challenging. Companies have limited options of physically visiting campuses, interacting directly with students and answering any queries the students might have about the organisation. Therefore, companies have adapted, and **relying heavily on technology** have opted to shift the entire process online. And, online platforms have stepped up to meet the requirements.

Online platforms can replicate all the processes of a traditional campus recruitment drive. They provide an end-to-end hiring solution for companies by enabling pre-placement interactions with students, online assessments, one-on-one video interviews and interactions with shortlisted students during pre-boarding. During traditional campus recruitment, if 200-250 assessments were conducted at a single sitting, in the current situation, organisations are choosing to run assessments for the entire batch of students.

Let's face it. The **talent war is real and brutal**. Even after getting their first offer, students scout around for better offers. They have the upper hand with the multiple job offers that they get from companies looking to hire the crème de la crème. This is precisely why companies need a good remote hiring strategy in the new normal.

Companies have a new, and powerful enabler in this competition for talent: technology. With the right technology on their side, **recruiting in the new normal, even at scale, is no longer a problem!**

	Yesterday		Today
 Branding	Physical, in-campus branding	>	Virtual, year-round branding
 Sourcing	Manual, using spreadsheets	>	Digitized, using systems
 Screening	Manual, using spreadsheets	>	Automated, using systems
 Assessments	Small-scale assessments	>	Large-scale assessments
 Interviews	In-person/video conferencing softwares	>	Interview-specific platforms
 Fraud Management	Manual and sporadic	>	Automated at all stages
 Post-offer	Manual and sporadic	>	Digitized and constant
 Systems	Different systems for registrations, assessments, interviews, onboarding	>	A single system for registrations, assessments, interviews, onboarding

This guide introduces recruiters, hiring managers and HR teams to the six pillars for success in remote hiring. Use it as a playbook to kick-start or give momentum to your remote hiring efforts. The pillars can form the bedrock of your strategy in the new normal.

Happy, frictionless hiring!

Six Pillars for Successful Virtual Campus Hiring

Based on decades of experience in the recruitment space, HirePro has enabled hundreds of enterprises to successfully transform their recruitment digitally. We have distilled our experiences and expertise to shortlist these important aspects that function as the pillars for successful remote campus recruitment.

1. Employer Branding
2. Process Management
3. Candidate Experience
4. Scale Management
5. Fraud Management
6. Post-offer Engagement

We will parse through each of these aspects in the rest of the book, along with a handy 'What this means for recruiters' section to serve as a ready reckoner.

Pillar 1: Employer Branding

(Your Brand Matters)

Pre-COVID times saw organisations building relationships with specific colleges over a period of time, recruiting students from these colleges and having several alumni working for them. This built an aspiration factor for most students, upon seeing alumni who had been successful in their jobs and were happy at their workplaces.

However, the pandemic has adversely affected the level of interaction freshers would normally have with their college seniors. There is also the lack of on-campus brand visibility among students due to the process being digitised. In the current times, social media is one of the largest means by which candidates gain awareness of companies, their vision and their work culture.

According to Glassdoor, 75% of active job seekers are likely to apply to a job if the employers actively manage their brand. 68% of Millennials, 54% of Gen-Xers, and 48% of Boomers indicated that they visit an employer's social media channels to evaluate the employer's brand. In the light of all this, it is clear that **employer branding is a key driving factor** for successful virtual campus hiring.

What this means for recruiters:

Organisations must reach out to candidates, highlight the interesting work that they do and share the value proposition that the company has to offer. The company website must showcase the company culture, its stand on diversity and inclusion, as well as the testimonials of college alumni hired in the past. This helps freshers understand whether they would fit in, and thrive in the company's culture. Companies can also market themselves through **branding activities such as hackathons and offer internships** to attract the best of fresh talent.

Build a well-planned career portal that speaks your brand to potential candidates. Leverage this high-potential digital property to showcase various aspects – job openings, the employer-of-choice awards, happy employees or success stories.

5 Easy Steps to Employer Branding

1. Prepare a destination that candidates can regularly visit
2. Design a value proposition that resonates with college freshers
3. Provide engaging content that candidates can interact with
4. Highlight the principles of diversity, inclusion and equality
5. Highlight the testimonials of recently hired college freshers

Pillar 2: Process Management

(Streamlining Processes)

The **demand-supply gap is a reality** that all recruiters must face. Bearing this in mind, organisations can no longer afford to cherry-pick candidates from tier-1 institutions only or select students from certain branches in the engineering stream alone. With the need to assess and hire more people, it becomes imperative to reach out to more colleges than what an organisation would have done in the past. More people now need to be assessed and interviewed and so, hiring efforts have to be augmented.

What this means for recruiters:

Processes need to be stringent and streamlined in order to handle the vast number of students in the system. Sourcing processes are becoming digitised, with the creation of rich micro-sites and registration forms. Assessments are focused on the skills and the area that recruiters are looking to hire for. With the extensive use of online hiring platforms to shortlist top talent from various colleges, companies have realized that the reputation and prestige of the college, and high CGPA cut-offs no longer make or break matters.

Organisations could also prefer to keep the recruitment process short with one written test, one technical interview and if needed an HR round. The current emphasis is on **faster recruitment** to grab the best candidates in the market.



5 Mantras for Seamless Process Management

1. Target the right college / degree / branch for the right role
2. Allow more colleges, degrees, branches to participate
3. Relax the percentage / CGPA cut-offs
4. Design assessments to be the true assessor of talent
5. Conduct the entire evaluation in a single interview

Pillar 3: Candidate Experience

(Friendly in the midst of Touchless Hiring)

Remote hiring is here to stay. It has resulted in the breaking down of geographic boundaries, facilitating the opening up of a rich talent pool for organisations. Nevertheless, in the midst of the fierce talent war among companies, this pool of candidates needs to be nurtured. Nurturing candidates during touchless hiring is no walk in the park, and yet, it will determine whether the candidate stays or leaves.

It is thus quite clear that employer branding is intertwined with the candidate experience. With candidates being completely remote, the onus of providing an excellent one-to-one candidate experience rests squarely on recruiters. It is no secret that top-class candidate experience results in high quality hires for the organisation.



What this means for recruiters:

Organisations must provide a destination (like a website) that provides the process details and addresses the common questions that a student might have. The destination could also have mock assessments and tips for students on how to prepare for interviews. This will help allay any fears or nervousness that they might have and will send out the message that the organisation wants them to succeed.

Students must also be able to register for the tests with ease. Follow registration with a **quick shortlisting and the screening process**. Communicate proactively with the students at every stage of the recruitment process with emails and/or SMSes to keep them constantly engaged.

How to create a superlative candidate experience

1. Prepare a destination with hiring process details for candidates
2. Provide a good registration and shortlisting experience
3. Prepare candidates well for assessments and interviews
4. Provide easily accessible FAQs and technical help
5. Proactively notify candidates via Email/SMS at every stage

Pillar 4: Scale Management

(It's all about scale!)

This year will see the **volumes of resumes** and new hires to be processed, getting amplified. The pace of processing will also be much faster.

These high volumes are required for two reasons. Firstly, there are no physical or geographical constraints in remote hiring, thereby enabling companies to evaluate candidates from more colleges. Added to this, college placement officers often request companies to process the entire batch of students at one go and at a faster pace than before. Sifting through applications, understanding job roles being hired for and shortlisting candidates is not easy when large numbers are being dealt with. With the kind of numbers that organisations are looking for upcoming seasons of campus recruitment, managing high-volume hiring could prove to be a huge challenge.



What this means for recruiters:

Organisations must **implement digital systems** where registration and eligibility checks can happen in a non-manual, streamlined fashion. From an assessment standpoint, use a reliable platform that can actually service the high volumes. Lack of suitable technology to handle the large volumes could send all recruitment efforts into a tailspin!

Digital platforms also enable **faster assessment of the candidate** which is better for companies, since faster recruitment will help candidates commit themselves to the company. Though popular video conferencing applications can be used for online interviews, dedicated **interview platforms** are a better option. Using an interview-specific platform allows interviewees to participate in live coding sessions and live whiteboarding. Dedicated interview platforms allow interviewers to capture feedback in real time, saving time and effort for recruiters.

Scale at ease with these 6 steps

1. Use a single system for end-to-end process
2. Digitise the registration and eligibility check process
3. Conduct high-volume assessments on a reliable platform
4. Conduct interviews on a platform that supports bulk interviews management
5. Automate fraud-check during assessments and interviews
6. Automate screening, shortlisting, and all candidate communication

Pillar 5: Fraud Management

(Reining in fraudsters)

The COVID19 pandemic hit India's workforce quite badly leaving several thousands of workers without jobs. This led many to desperation, triggering a fake-jobs economy and a spike in job-related frauds. According to an Economic Times article, anecdotal evidence suggests a **50% year-on-year jump in the number of job-related frauds!**

Candidates come up with ingenious ways to commit fraud and believe that since everything is remote, they would be able to game the system easily. This has made it imperative for organisations to proactively put in place measures to control fraud and prevent non-genuine candidates from entering their workforce. The pressure on recruiters is to do fraud-proof hiring and hire genuinely good candidates.

What this means for recruiters:

During the registration process:

- Candidates must register with a photo. Registration photo must have a single person. The provided photo must match with the candidate's government ID card.

During Online Assessments and Interviews:

- Use a technology-driven platform that safeguards data privacy, to allow only registered candidates to attend assessments and interviews.
- Use advanced technologies to make sure that the candidate is not leaving the test window or taking external help either virtually or from someone else in the room.
- Such platforms ensure that candidates do not hide from the camera or block the camera or others answer questions on their behalf or exit the test window to search for answers online.

4 steps to fraud-proof hiring

1. Insist that candidates register with a photo.
2. Use a technology-driven platform to allow only registered candidates to attend assessments and interviews.
3. Do not allow candidates to leave the test window during assessments and interviews.
4. Ensure no other person is helping candidates during assessments and interviews.

Pillar 6: Post-offer Engagement

(The shift in power to the job-seeker)

Gone are the days when extending the job offer to the student was considered as the last step in the recruitment process. In today's world, a student's acceptance of a job offer is no guarantee for their actually joining the organisation. Joining ratios of students selected from campuses that used to be around 65-70%, have now dropped to abysmal lows of 35-40%. This could be due to several reasons - ranging from students getting multiple job offers to opting for higher studies and also to their opting to join PSUs (Public Sector Undertakings). According to CareerBuilder, 68 percent of employees believe their experience as a job candidate reflects how the company treats its people and so, building a **robust post-offer engagement experience is serious business**.



What this means for recruiters:

It is crucial for organisations to continue to engage with and build a relationship with students even after the job offers have been made. Once hiring managers give a go-ahead for hiring specific students, organisations must release LOIs (Letters of Intent) to the students as soon as possible. Digitise the process of document collection from students. Continually keep in touch with them and engage with them - several organisations send out personalised greetings and goodies, much to the euphoria of new joiners. Webinars, surveys, contests and quizzes are effective tools to keep them involved in the company. Students can also be trained to work remotely, through assignments and deadlines.

5 ways to boost post-offer engagement

1. Release LOIs in bulk and quickly
2. Digitise the document collection process
3. Build connect with candidates through webinars and surveys
4. Engage with candidates through contests and quizzes
5. Prep the candidate with research and training assignment

Read the tea leaves:

A tech revolution in recruitment

The pandemic has forced recruiters to rethink and reimagine campus recruitment. Given the current scenario, recruiters are left with no choice but to hunker down, embrace technology and utilise its benefits to hire the best talent. Indeed, technology has revolutionised the recruitment sector and recruiters are better off making the transition sooner than being caught napping!

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HirePro is a leading technology and assessments solution provider to corporates, educational institutions and governments. Established in 2004 and headquartered in Bengaluru, India, HirePro offers AI-powered technology platform and allied services to companies that require expert support to navigate the talent landscape. As a distinguished provider of automated selection platform and solutions, HirePro holds the prominence of a strategic partner in the talent acquisition and recruitment market today. Its cutting-edge technology provides a complete campus hiring solution for organisations enabling frictionless virtual hiring and offering software solutions to digitally transform the recruitment supply chain.

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