

The impact of COVID-19 on graduate recruitment in 2020 and the benefits of employing a graduate now

What is the post COVID-19 world going to look like? This is a question that students, job seekers and businesses are already asking themselves.

What do we know? The short answer is not much at the moment, with so many uncertainties surrounding a lockdown exit strategy and the economic restart. However, this also means employers are being careful not to change their plans significantly if they can help it. It is suspected there will be a shrinking number of graduate positions being recruited for whilst businesses recover especially in the smaller short-term graduate placements, but the larger graduate recruiters are looking for long term placements and 'leaders of the future' so will continue to invest in graduate talent.

As a graduate it would be important to remember that even in this crisis, some employers are booming. Technology companies, IT, logistics and the food sector are all booming. Therefore, whilst a graduate might not start out with the job they hoped for, they may still be able to secure a position with a reliable employer. Then when the time is better, career moves can be made. At this time, an employer should consider the same approach and perhaps consider a change from their 'normal' hires as a graduate could be a very exciting prospect for a company. See the following reasons below...

- During COVID-19, employers have been quick to react and move to digital recruitment and selection processes. This is something that graduates will find very easy as they are going to be familiar with all of today's technology.
- More so than ever, right now a key skill for an employee is adaptability. A graduate is hugely adaptable – they are fresh to the world of work. The new 'normal' will not be new to them and they will be open to changes in ways of working.
- Employing a graduate could be a more affordable option for a business taking a cautious approach after the pandemic. A graduate can be offered a lower salary than experienced hires, but still have plenty of potential and eager to learn. They are also more likely to be open to contract opportunities to gain experience.
- As above, an employer has the chance to mould their graduate into what is needed. Whilst obviously beginning the graduate with the role that needs doing most, an employer can introduce all areas of a business to the graduate and find out where their skills are best placed. A graduate can also solve succession planning concerns for this reason as they can be shaped into a future manager with an expert understanding of all areas of a company.
- Having spent the last few years studying, a graduate can apply current thinking and ideas from academia and important transferable skills will be newly developed.
- The enthusiasm of a graduate will be an injection of passion into a company. Perhaps even more so after COVID-19, as everyone will be appreciative of the jobs and rebooting business and growth as much as possible. A graduate is quick to learn and eager to take on new challenges.

It is going to be a tricky road ahead for both employer and graduate, especially as the situation develops so quickly around us all. Whether you are a recruiter looking for graduates or a student looking to discuss the current options, the team at Talent Search is here to help. Please contact us on: info@talentsearch.careers. We are in this together.