The Turnover Tsunami: Prioritizing healthy workplaces as hiring accelerates

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Hiring is roaring back as we recover from the pandemic. Employers added more than 900,000 jobs in March alone, and a recent survey shows 52% of employees plan to job hunt this year, up from 35% in 2020. At the nucleus of this turnover tsunami is a newfound awareness among employees of potential health hazards in the workplace. Health and wellness efforts to protect employees and customers are more than just incentives to boost confidence and safety, they are becoming a requirement.

So how do businesses prepare for this new recruiting opportunity? As we move beyond the pandemic, ensuring employee safety will be critical to attracting skilled talent. Companies must work to make permanent the temporary measures they used to boost safety confidence in employees and customers while combining proven best practices in process, technology, and data to mitigate risk in the future. Studies show 46% of employees now feel less connected to their current employer, and 42% say company culture has dwindled during the pandemic. Taking actionable health and safety measures to demonstrate how your organization prioritizes employee wellness is one way to rebuild those connections and recruit new talent.

Although Covid-19 is the latest catalyst for health and safety efforts, companies have long struggled to address the impact illness has on their business. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Foundation reported in 2015 the average cost of influenza for businesses averaged $87 billion annually. Now add a potentially annual seasonal outbreak of coronavirus to that number, and you are looking at a very real, very large problem. If Covid-19 has taught us anything, it is that viruses spread quickly, often with dangerous and terrifying outcomes. However, much of what we learned in the past 12 months can be applied indefinitely to ensure healthier, more cost-effective operations and better overall employee and customer experiences.

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This new health and safety data is merely another lens through which operations can be streamlined. Here are some of the approaches to health and safety that have proven to work best:

1. **Health screening.** Screening employees prior to work with a simple set of symptomatic and exposure-related questions can greatly reduce breakouts from occurring in the workplace. These types of questionnaires can be taken in under a minute from any device.
2. **Automated distance monitoring and contact tracing.** Small, low-cost wearables can be provided to employees and provide social distancing reminders, as well as post-exposure instant notification for contact tracing purposes.
3. **Occupancy tracking.** Automated occupancy tracking systems can help businesses steer traffic, staff adequately, and get better insights into potential areas of concern.
4. **Air filtration systems.** These systems can help prevent illness from spreading. Although there is no one size fits all solution, filtration providers can help strategize the best options for filtration, airflow, and circulation in any space.

When faced with attrition, many organizations will naturally look outward to fill open positions. It makes sense on the surface to replace one skilled worker for another. However, the pandemic has shown organizations the importance of looking inward and truly responding to the changing needs of their workforce. Employees and job hunters alike have made finding a healthier work-life balance a top priority, and this now includes feeling safe while at work. Companies that want to seize top talent during this turnover tsunami (or prevent attrition), must prioritize a healthy workplace.

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