SUPPLY CHAIN INSIGHTS

DIGITALIZATION IMPROVES DHL RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ON A GLOBAL SCALE

From the first contact between DHL Supply Chain and a potential employee, we seek to build long-term relationships. We use today's technological advances in HR not only for efficiently finding and hiring suitable candidates but also to help maintain bonds.

DHL Supply Chain – Excellence. Simply delivered.

Our extensive warehousing and logistics operations require high-volume recruitment across multiple geographies and markets worldwide. Much attention is focused on frontline workers and their immediate supervisors, who make up around 85% of our workforce.

Frontline Challenges

We must respond to seasonal activity peaks and valleys in some industry sectors, along with sudden spikes in demand as new customers come on board. AI and analytics developments have been crucial in boosting recruitment speed and economy, improving selection quality and ensuring the best possible start to each employee's journey with the company.

For DHL frontline staff, pre-existing knowledge requirements are relatively basic. Much more important is how candidates' personalities fit with the organization's culture of customer service and dedication. In line with the recruitment tech world's increasing emphasis on soft skills, our assessments especially target qualities relevant to good teamwork.

Competition among recruiters from this pool is intense, especially in countries with low unemployment. Improvements in the candidate experience – another major HR tech trend – are essential to attracting people into our business. At DHL, this is just the beginning of a longer process which aims to keep our people connected, informed, engaged, and committed to the company. Connecting with the front line is more challenging than with office-based personnel, but technology has the answer.

Digital Gamechangers

The general underlying movement toward cloud-based technologies has been a big enabler for DHL. In the HR space specifically, vendors' ability to update solutions frequently, and to add extra functionalities

as new approaches develop, avoids the upheaval of big projects. In addition, cloud solutions come with embedded analytics, so there is no need to develop them separately. The analytical insights we gain enable faster advances in processes which enhance recruiters' and workers' experience, increase productivity and optimize our service to customers.

Digital assistants reduce recruiters' workload, save time and cut costs. By removing delays, we can hire people as and when needs arise – with less risk of losing out to faster recruiters. In an age of instant online interaction, candidates could easily be put off by slow procedures. Our digitalized approach addresses this with easy instructions, quick responses and a clear, positive impression of the job and company.

While market conditions may vary greatly between regions and countries, DHL seeks consistency in its recruitment strategy and candidate experience. From the market-leading ATS tools in each geography, recruitment centers are given a choice of systems with similar functionality. Process flows are then standardized between them. A standard DHL recruitment center definition has established the layout, equipment and processes which all are working towards. Progress and measures of success are reported and judged against standard global KPIs.

Digital matching and sifting tools are highly effective in highlighting suitable and unsuitable applicants, based on their profile information and job-fit assessments. Nevertheless, a proportion of successful candidates in any industry soon leave after discovering that life there is not what they expected. DHL is piloting a method of tackling this source of turnover in its highest-volume recruitment roles through virtual job try-outs. Offering a realistic preview of a day in the work role, they also assess

potential supervisors' aptitudes by testing reactions to challenging scenarios. As a result, we have seen improvements in process effectiveness and efficiency, recruiter capability, candidate quality, retention, conversion from interview to hire, and many other traditional recruiting metrics.

Continued Connection

Once hired, we use the Connect app to strengthen DHL's connection with frontline employees. Accessible via their own phones, its functionality has a familiar feel. Employee Services and information they need are easily available at the touch of a button. Crucially, it also serves them with news and opportunities for social interaction which engage them as part of our global community.

The app's 'social walls' are especially popular. As on Facebook, they present a scrolling wall on which people post information, raise issues, respond and chat. A variety of walls connect staff in particular sites, job types and logistics industry sectors, for example. Leaders who would rarely have been accessible to staff in the past now have a vital role in providing content and responding to questions.

These connections give workers a sense of belonging, and of being listened to, while helping us identify and remedy causes of dissatisfaction which would previously have led them to leave us.

To help employees grow within the organization, we are implementing AI-based techniques internally as well as outside. Our staff can upload profile information, including skills they want to develop and areas of DHL's work that interest them. The system points managers to people whose suitability for a vacancy might not otherwise be obvious.

Leveraging the same in-house talent marketplace, functionality currently in development will enable the matching of employees to short-term projects which can be carried out without leaving their existing post. By engaging and nurturing our people in all the ways described here, we aim to maintain their loyalty and make any career moves internal.

Claudius Christmas Jr
Vice-President, Global, HR Transformation, Digitalization and BPO, DHL Supply Chain