

Are traditional interviews a thing of the past?

Special To The Washington Post

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Jan 12, 2018

Are you still relying on the traditional interview to select a new employee? If you're like me, you've probably never been 100 percent convinced that it's truly effective. But we still go through the motions because that's what we've always done.

That trend is starting a change, according to the 2018 Global Recruiting Trends Report released this week by social media giant LinkedIn.

Among the report's findings were the growing importance of diversity when deciding on a candidate, the rise of artificial intelligence in the recruiting process and the continued reliance on data to help make the right choice. But what really stood out to an employer like me was the study's findings on interviews. Basically, they're getting increasingly useless, providing less useful information and adding bias to the selection process.

About 63 percent of the 9,000 hiring managers who participated in the study said interviews fail to assess a candidate's "soft" skills (like communication, collaboration, listening and empathy) and another 57 percent said interviews fail to help them identify a candidate's weaknesses. "It's hard to evaluate grit in a candidate or spot disorganization simply by having a chat," the company said in a blog post.

As a result, the study found more managers are now relying on complementary tools and technologies to improve the interviewing process.

For example, many are now using online skills assessments to determine technical abilities. Others are offering job "auditions" where a prospective employee (and employer) can mutually kick the tires. Video interviews using tools like Microsoft Skype and Google Hangouts are popular. Some companies are investing in virtual reality technologies -like the training application used by a small restaurant that I wrote about last year-to give prospective employees a chance to demonstrate their skills. And more companies are taking the formality out of the process and instead choosing a casual meal as a relaxed place for both candidate and potential employer to get to know each other.

None of these methods provide a silver bullet for choosing the right person. But they certainly help to reduce bias and minimize the mistakes we all make when trying to conduct a traditional interview. That's encouraging news, because the wrong employee choice-particularly for a small company like mine-can result in a significant cost.

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