



Froedtert Health Creates a Culture of Readiness

The Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin regional health network is a partnership between Froedtert Health and the Medical College of Wisconsin supporting a shared mission of patient care, innovation, medical research and education. The network includes eastern Wisconsin's only academic medical center, five hospitals, nearly 2,000 physicians, and more than 40 health centers and clinics. The organization employs 13,500 people. Mark Farrell, Executive Director of Talent Delivery at Froedtert Health oversees about 3,000 hires a year.

Increased competition for healthcare talent has driven Froedtert Health to become more agile in recent years, turning to technology and increasing leader education and expectations to achieve its hiring goals.

"We need to continue to quickly move appropriate candidates to interviews and to shorten the timeframe from interview to offer. The speed at which you need to make decisions has become so critical," said Mark. "Candidates have many opportunities in front of them and expect us to move fast and keep them informed of where they are in the selection process."

At the front end of the selection process, Froedtert Health adopted a mobile-enabled voice interview screening tool for entry-level positions. Use of the tool was subsequently expanded to registered nurse positions.


While interviews are still reviewed by a recruiter, the tool cuts down on time spent managing schedules and offers candidates the convenience of after-hours interviewing. "Fifty percent of candidates choose to complete the interviews during the hours when we typically are not in the office," Mark said.

Froedtert Health takes a multi-pronged approach to making better selections. For culture fit, Froedtert Health's initial screening questions cover company values such as dignity and respect. For interviewing, leaders receive unconscious bias training and are encouraged to take behavioral interview training. Finally, Froedtert Health offers "job shadows." During the interview process, leaders walk around the facility with candidates and show them where they'll be working and what their days might look like. "Job shadowing gives the leader an idea of how the candidate might interact with patients," said Mark. "It also gives a realistic job preview to the candidate."

Leaders across the company are empowered to make on-the-spot offers which is facilitated by an environment of trust. "A high-functioning recruiter-manager relationship drives down that interview-to-offer ratio," said Mark. "The recruiter knows what the manager is looking for and is able to put the right candidate in front of them."

In 2019, Froedtert opened a new addition to its largest hospital which required the hiring of 250 registered nurses. Mark's team worked closely with leaders to discuss the tactics needed to do such high-volume recruiting, including the importance of hiring quickly and making offers on the spot. "We needed leaders to understand the urgency of making decisions," he said, "And we crushed our goal." But maintaining that momentum proved to be harder. Froedtert Health experienced a dip in hiring numbers and an increase in vacancy rates following the initial hiring initiative. Mark's team went back to managers with data and reinforced the need for accelerated hiring processes. Leaders quickly understood "the why" and adopted the processes as the new norm.

Froedtert Health knows the importance of providing a competitive total compensation package in sealing the deal with the potential new hires. Like all organizations, it stays current on salary trends regionally and nationally through participating in salary surveys. To make sure the total package meets the needs of employees, Froedtert Health did an extensive survey of staff to find out what benefits are most important to them. Survey results led to adding more options to the medical and dental plans, adding an emergency backup child- and elder-care program, and expanding an existing health club utilization reimbursement program.



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*- Mark Farrell
Executive Director of Talent Delivery, Froedtert Health*