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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MANAGING CANDIDATE FLOW AND EMPLOYEE DATA

(57) Abstract: A system and method for managing candidate flow and employee data. Job orders are requisitioned from prospective employers and candidates are requisitioned for consideration by the prospective employers. The job orders as well as the candidates are tracked during the recruiting process. The candidates hired as employees are also tracked. Users are alerted of events such as the requisition and disposition of job orders and candidates. During the recruitment and the employment, the candidates and employees are continuously managed as a single human resource solution.



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SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MANAGING CANDIDATE FLOW AND EMPLOYEE DATA

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to web-based recruiting and human resource application and, more particularly, relates to workflow features and collaborative hiring between recruiters and hiring managers.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

There is myriad of companies providing each a particular area of specialization via the internet in the recruiting and human resource workflow space. Typically, these companies each provide specific tools, services and resources within the online recruiting marketplace. However, to date, no one company differentiates themselves as a complete solutions provider offering a complete hybrid of online recruiting tools, candidate workflow, candidate and employee data achieving services. For example, one type of company provides an online resume and job board while another type of company provides

management of candidates through the recruiting process. Each of these companies separately acquire information and utilize this information for their individual business purposes.

Because of the proprietary nature of the information collected, separate companies with distinct business models results in redundant advertising and increased time and cost per hire. Overlapping expenses and resources reduce productivity and efficiency. Therefore, because a single company has not provided a full range of integrated human resource solutions, combinations of these companies are necessary to adequately facilitate resource management.

Consequently, there is a need for a cost-effective system and method for companies to manage their candidate flow and employee data all in one system. This new system and method must streamline the workflow of human resource and recruiting departments.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention solves the above-identified problems by providing a highly collaborative enterprise-wide workforce solution for these companies.

Generally described, the present invention acts as a collaborative environment for all HR and recruiting workflow within an organization.

This includes tracking of requisitions or job orders that are traditionally the trigger for companies to begin the external recruiting process. The solution then tracks candidates that are matched to these requisitions throughout the interview cycle of each candidate. Once candidates are hired into these companies, the solution can then track these former candidates who are now employees through their career tenure within these organizations. This is accomplished by maintaining a consistent set of data to be utilized in every aspect of the invention. The solution also enables companies to perform a full suite of reporting on the metrics associated with hiring personnel and tracking employee workflow including all aspects of customized workflow per user, cost per hire and time to fill metrics as well as resource management/source reporting. The basis of our solution is real-time 24/7/365 access into the solution from any remote location with an internet browser and proper hardware per the user.

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, users of the solution are alerted via e-mail to any changes in the system of the tracking of these requisitions or candidates. The solution acts as an enterprise-wide communication tool for the users.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, users are alerted to changes in access privileges.

The foregoing has broadly outlined some of the more pertinent aspects and features of the present invention. These should be construed to be merely illustrative of some of the more prominent features and applications of the invention. Other beneficial results can be obtained by applying the disclosed information in a different manner or by modifying the disclosed embodiments. Accordingly, other aspects and a more comprehensive understanding of the invention may be obtained by referring to the detailed description of the exemplary embodiments taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in addition to the scope of the invention defined by the claims.

BRIEF DISCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of corporate level workflow in the present invention.

Fig. 2 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of agency level workflow in the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present invention provides candidate flow and employee data management workflow features to facilitate collaborative hiring between recruiters and hiring managers. Preferably, the present invention is implemented as a web-based human resource application. Candidate specific data is carried throughout the present invention as described below.

The foregoing exemplary embodiments may be conveniently implemented in one or more program modules as well as hardware components. The present invention may conveniently be implemented in a program language such as "C"; however, no particular programming language has been indicated for carrying out the various tasks described because it is considered that the operation, steps, and procedures described in the specification and illustrated in the accompanying drawings are sufficiently disclosed to permit one of ordinary skill in the art to practice the instant invention. Moreover, in view of the many different types of computers, computer platforms and program modules that can be used to practice the present invention, it is not practical to provide a representative example of a computer program that would be applicable to this system. Each user of a particular platform would be

aware of the language and tools which are more useful for that user's needs and purposes to implement the instant invention.

The present invention includes computers connected to each other over a data network. Each computer generally consists of a processing unit which interfaces to a memory storage device, a display device and a user input device. Access to the network is provided through an interface device. The interface device supports at least one access line connecting the computer to the network. The access line may consist of analog or digital interfaces, and supports the process of transmitting and receiving analog or digital data in real-time or otherwise. The method of connectivity is not a vital aspect of the invention.

The memory storage device is operative to store a program module for implementing an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. For example, the present invention implemented as a computer program running on the computer, provides an interface to a user via the display device. The processing unit is responsive to instructions of the program module. In general, the program module can transport data over the access line into the interface device.

The computers are in communication with a coordinating server that is designated for the exchange of information. The network is designed to communicate with computers at different locations that all

read from the common coordinating server. Also, multiple computers could function as the server or, alternatively, several computers could function as back-up servers. Periodic updates are used system-wide to provide current information to all locations on the network and to maintain system integrity. Update frequency is determined based on system demands.

One or more program modules to implement the present invention may be kept on the server. In an exemplary embodiment, the present invention is invoked by accessing the Internet using an existing Internet Service Provider. The computers communicate with one another via the Internet's File Transfer Protocol, commonly referred to as FTP. Alternatively, other technologies such as the HTTP protocol of the Web can be used for uploading and downloading files.

Referring now to the drawings in which like numeral indicate like elements throughout the several views, Figs. 1 and 2 depict exemplary embodiments of the present invention. Fig. 1, in particular, depicts an exemplary embodiment of corporate level workflow of the present invention. This method 100 is invoked by a user logging on to a web site as shown in block 102. The user has the option to proceed to an administrative center 104, a recruiting center 106, or a managing center 108. If the user is a manager, the manager would enter the administrative

center 104 or the managing center 108. If the user is a recruiter, the recruiter would enter the administrative center 104 or the recruiting center 106. To view the files of the present invention, the user utilizes a helper application or a plug-in. The user configures a web browser to launch these helper applications or plug-ins which are then used for performing the various tasks described below.

If the user is entering the system for the first time, the manager or recruiter would proceed to the administrative center 104 where rights or privileges to use the system are provided by the system administrator as shown in process block 110. In block 110, the administrator can also delete managers or recruiters and deny privileges. In such cases, the recruiters and managers may be alerted to changes in their privileges. A message may be automatically sent to the newly created or deleted manager and recruiters for verifying the action. Preferably, the messages are sent via e-mail. From block 110, job orders and candidates may also be added and deleted as depicted in block 112. The steps of submitting and entering new candidates and new job orders are discussed in greater detail below. Additional administrative matters may be addressed as shown in process block 114.

In the recruiting center 106, existing job orders and their status maybe reviewed as depicted in block 210. New candidates may be

reviewed as shown in process block 212 and existing candidates from a candidate database 214 may be reviewed as shown in process block 216. After reviewing candidate specific data for each candidate, the process 100 proceeds to process block 218 depicting selected candidates being submitted for matching with job orders from a job order database 312 based on the candidate specific data. New candidates may be entered into the candidate database 214 by e-mail, facsimile or as shown in blocks 220, 222, and 224, respectively. Process block 226 illustrates the step of entering candidate specific data from the resumes received from new candidates into the candidate database 214. Preferably, when a resume is submitted, a message is automatically generated and sent to managers and recruiters indicating that a new candidate has been entered into the candidate database 214. The message can include at least a portion of candidate specific data. The message may be formatted to be sent to all users or, alternatively, may be filtered so that the message is sent to only a selected group of users. The filtering criteria may be based on educational background, geographic area, salary requirements, etc.

In the managing center 108, the manager is prompted to enter a job order entry 310 describing the hiring criteria of an available position with the manager's company. For example, the job order entry could include a job description, salary range, and educational requirements. The job

order entries 310 entered by all managers subscribing to the system are collected in a job order database 312. In the preferred embodiment, every occurrence of entering a job order substantially results in a message, preferably an e-mail, being sent to interested users such as recruiters. In other words, recruiters are alerted of new job openings. Confirmations may be sent from the users receiving the message verifying its receipt. Alternatively, the job orders 310 may be posted on a website addressable to users of the present invention.

The manager also can review currently available candidates from the candidate database 214 described above. Process block 322 illustrates the step of the manager reviewing eligible candidates. From process block 322, the manager decides whether the candidate should be interviewed as shown in process blocks 324 and 326. If the manager has no interest in interviewing the candidate as depicted in process block 324, the manager can either terminate the program or return to block 322 to review additional candidates. Alternatively, if the manager is interested in the candidate as depicted in process block 326, an interview may be scheduled by a recruiter as depicted in process block 328. The interview may be scheduled by automatically creating a message, such as e-mail, to attendees of the interview. Confirmations may also be sent.

Also, the user's interest in a candidate may be posted automatically via electronic messaging.

Upon entering the managing center as shown in block 108, the managers can also proceed directly to a previously scheduled interview as shown in process block 330. The scheduled interview in block 330 was scheduled by the recruiter as depicted in block 328. Depending on the outcome of the interview, the candidate may be extended an offer as shown in block 332 or rejected as shown in block 334. The offer may be extended via electronic messaging.

From block 332, the recruiter extends an offer as shown in block 336. The offer contains at least a portion of the candidate specific data entered and stored in the candidate database. The candidate can accept the offer or reject the offer as depicted in blocks 340 and 342, respectively. The candidate's response to the offer may be sent automatically to the recruiter. Once the candidate accepts the offer, the recruiter marks the profile of the candidate as hired as shown in process block 344 and the candidate is moved to an employee database 350, as shown in process block 346.

Process block 352 illustrates the new employee's start papers being generated which are then sent to the new employee. The start papers typically include, but is not limited to, compensation documentation such

as salary and bonuses, and benefits documentation such as health insurance and 401K eligibility requirements. The information in the start papers originates from the data stored in the databases 214, 312 and 404 described above. The databases include information originally entered when receiving a new candidate, a new job order, or a new client. Moreover, exit papers may be sent. As shown in process block 354, the start or exit documents may be sent via the web as an e-mail or facsimile. Alternatively, the start or exit papers may be sent directly to a printer for printing out a hard copy for mailing. In any case, confirmation messages may be sent automatically between the manager and the new employee. Blocks 356, 358, and 360 illustrate each of these three methods of sending the papers to the new employee.

The present invention also includes reporting capabilities as depicted in process block 370. The information reported includes, but is not limited to, compilations of data taken from each of the three databases; the candidate database 214, the job order database 312, and the employee database 350. The reports should at least include a portion of the candidate specific data originally entered for each candidate. For example, the disposition of certain candidates or job orders may be obtained. Also, the number of filled job orders or the number resumes submitted over a period of time may be obtained. However, the reporting

capability is probably best suited for determining the cost associated for obtaining each new employee and for generating reports verifying equal opportunity employer status.

Fig. 2 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of agency level workflow of the present invention. For example, Fig. 2 illustrates the workflow of candidates hired as employees of a placement agency that work at a client's location. The client hires the agency's employees and the client is subsequently billed by the employment agency for the employees' work. The billing is, at least in part, based upon the candidate specific data previously originating from the candidate database. The exemplary embodiment illustrated in Fig. 2 is distinguishable from the exemplary embodiment illustrated in Fig. 1. The manager center 108 described above is now referred to as a sales center 402 because the method 400 deals with sales personnel rather than managers. Also, the method 400 illustrated in Fig. 2 includes a client database 404. The client database 404 includes a record of each client and each record includes a plurality of fields indicating information of interest such as the name, address, and phone number of each client.

Still referring to Fig. 2, the method 400 further includes billing services as depicted in process block 406. The clients to be billed and the amount to be billed are determined from the client database 404 and

the employee database 350. In process block 410, agency employees hired to work at a client's location as new employees submit the amount of hours they worked for each client. If the client approves an employee's hours as depicted in process block 412, the employee is paid, as shown in block 420, and the client is billed for the amount which the employee is paid as shown in block 406. In this case, an employee is matched with a client to initiate the billing and payroll process. Once a candidate is placed as an employee, the client may also be billed based, at least in part, on the originally collected candidate specific data. Preferably, the employee's submission of hours and the client's approval of the hours results in automatic messaging between the employee and the client confirming the occurrence of these events. Moreover, billing is tracked and confirmed automatically by sending messages, preferably by e-mail.

Each database 214, 312, 350 and 404 of the present invention is a collection of structured data organized in a disciplined fashion so that quick access is provided to information of interest. Moreover, the databases 214, 312, 350 and 404 are not merely separate databases, but are databases related to each other by a management system such as a database server utilizing software to create, store, retrieve, change, manipulate, sort, format and print the information from any database. In

such case, the database server may be the coordinating server as described above. Because the databases of the present invention are linked together in a seamless manner, the data entered into one database may be transferred to a subsequent database without having to reenter the same data. In other words, the same data may be transferred between each database for use in each step of the recruiting and management system.

In the present invention, each step along the methods 100 and 200 is date and time stamped. Because each status change along the way is date and time stamped, each job order, candidate and employee may be tracked along each step of the process. Consequently, the disposition of all the job orders, candidates, and employees are tracked by a single management application. Preferably, critical events such as the submission of job orders 310, the input of resumes 226, and the hiring of an employee, as described above, result in automatic messaging between interested users. The automatic messaging is commonly referred to as alerts.

The tracking and managing of the events and people in the present invention is best made possible by transmitting relevant data from one database to another. For example, the candidate specific data from the resume submitted at process block 226 and stored in the candidate

database 216 is transferred to the employee database 350 where the start papers may be generated when the candidate is hired. Also, the interviews scheduled at block 330 may be scheduled based on candidate specific data from the candidate database 214 via the process block 218, the information from the job order database 312, and the information from the client database 404. Information is carried throughout the entire system implementing either of the methods 100 or 400 to ensure the fast and accurate tracking and management of candidates, clients, employees and events.

The present invention has been illustrated in relation to particular embodiments which are intended in all respects to be illustrative rather than restrictive. Those skilled in the art will recognize that the present invention is capable of many modifications and variations without departing from the scope of the invention. Accordingly, the scope of the present invention is described by the claims appended hereto and supported by the foregoing.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for managing candidate flow and employee data, said system comprising:

means for requisitioning one or more job orders, and for requisitioning one or more candidates having candidate specific data for consideration by at least one prospective employer; and

means for tracking the disposition of said job order, tracking the disposition of said candidate requisitioned for consideration by said prospective employer, and for tracking said candidate hired as an employee by said prospective employer, said tracking means utilizing said candidate specific data.

2. The system of Claim 1 further comprising means for alerting users of said system to the requisition and disposition of said job order and said candidate.

3. The system of Claim 2 wherein said user is alerted by receiving an electronic message.

4. The system of Claim 1 wherein said system is utilized by said employer.

5. The system of Claim 1 wherein said system is utilized by an agency on behalf of said employer.

6. The system of Claim 1 wherein said requisitioning means comprises a job order database of prospective jobs of said prospective employer.

7. The system of Claim 1 wherein said requisitioning means comprises a client database.

8. The system of Claim 1 wherein said requisitioning means comprises a candidate database.

9. The system of Claim 1 comprising an employee database of said candidates having accepted employment from said employer, said employee database comprising at least a portion of said candidate specific data.

10. The system of Claim 1 wherein said tracking means is operative to time stamp events in the workflow of said system.

11. The system of Claim 1 wherein correspondence containing at least a portion of said candidate specific data is transmitted to said employee in response to said candidate becoming said employee of said employer.

12. The system of Claim 11 wherein said correspondence is transmitted via the Internet.

13. The system of Claim 12 wherein said correspondence includes documentation evidencing employment of said employee by said employer.

14. The system of Claim 1 wherein said requisition means is operative to permit input of resumes containing said candidate specific data via email or facsimile.

15. The system of Claim 1 wherein said requisition means is operative to permit input of resumes containing said candidate specific data via a web site of said employer.

16. The system of Claim 1 comprising an administrative center operative to add and delete managers and recruiters and add and delete jobs and candidates.

17. The system of Claim 1 wherein said requisition means comprises a recruiting center and a candidate database, said recruiting center operative to review job orders from a job order database, review said candidate specific data from said candidate database, and submit at least one of said candidates from said candidate database to said job order database based upon at least a portion of said candidate specific data.

18. The system of Claim 1 wherein said requisition means comprises a manager center operative to review said candidate specific data of said candidate database and job orders from a job order database to schedule interviews between at least one of said candidates and one of said prospective employers.

19. The system of Claim 1 utilized by said employer and said system comprising a candidate database and an employee database utilizing said candidate specific data.

20. The system of Claim 19 wherein data entered from said job order into said job order database and said candidate specific data entered into said candidate database is transmitted to said employee database.

21. The system of Claim 1 utilized by an agent of said employer and said system comprising a candidate database, an employee database, and a client database utilizing said candidate specific data, and said employer being identified in said client database as a client of said agent.

22. The system of Claim 21 wherein data in said job order, candidate, and client databases is transferred to said employee database.

23. A method for managing candidate flow and employee data, said method comprising the steps of:

- requisitioning one or more job orders from at least one prospective employer;
- requisitioning one or more candidates having candidate specific data for consideration by said prospective employer;
- tracking said job orders; and
- tracking said candidates requisitioned for consideration by said prospective employer and tracking said candidates becoming employees of said prospective employer as a result of being hired by said prospective employer by utilizing said candidate specific data.

24. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of alerting users of said method to the requisition and disposition of said job orders and said candidates.

25. The method of Claim 24 wherein said alerting step comprises sending an electronic message.

26. The method of Claim 23 wherein said tracking step comprises the step of time stamping events in the workflow of said method.

27. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of transmitting correspondence having at least a portion of said candidate specific data to said employee in response to becoming an employee of said employer.

28. The method of Claim 27 wherein said correspondence is transmitted via the Internet.

29. The method of Claim 23 wherein said step of requisitioning candidates comprises the step of inputting resumes containing said candidate specific data received via email or facsimile.

30. The method of Claim 23 wherein said step of requisitioning candidates comprises the step of inputting resumes containing said candidate specific data received via a web site of said employer.

31. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of a recruiting center reviewing job orders from a job order database and reviewing said candidate specific data from a candidate database and submitting at least a portion of said candidate specific data from said candidate database to said job order database.

32. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of a manager center reviewing said candidate specific data of a candidate database and job orders from a job order database to schedule interviews between at least one of said candidates and one of said prospective employers.

33. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of generating reports containing at least a portion of said candidate specific data from said job order database and said candidate database.

34. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of at least one of said prospective employers interviewing at least one of said candidates.

35. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of at least one of said prospective employers extending an offer to one of said candidates.

36. The method of Claim 35 further comprising the step of said candidate accepting employment with said prospective employer.

37. The method of Claim 35 further comprising the step of said candidate rejecting employment with said prospective employer.

38. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of identifying candidates having accepted offers of employment as an employee of said employer.

39. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of transmitting start papers via e-mail, fax or print, said start papers including at least a portion of said candidate specific data.

40. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of managing an employee database comprising at least a portion of said candidate specific data.

41. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of managing a client database wherein said employer is identified in said client database as a client of an agent utilizing said system.

42. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of managing a job order database.

43. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of managing a candidate database comprising at least a portion of said candidate specific data.

44. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of generating reports containing at least a portion of said candidate specific data based upon said employer and candidate databases.

45. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of billing said employer for services rendered by employee for said employer.

46. The method of Claim 23 further comprising the step of performing payroll duties on behalf of said employer based upon at least a portion of said candidate specific data.

47. A computer-readable medium on which is stored a computer program for managing candidate flow and employee data, when executed by a computer, performs the steps of:

requisitioning one or more job orders from at least one prospective employer;

requisitioning one or more candidates having candidate specific data for consideration by said prospective employer;

tracking said job order; and

tracking said candidates requisitioned for consideration by said prospective employer and tracking said candidates becoming employees of said prospective employer as a result of being hired by said prospective employer by utilizing said candidate specific data.

48. The method of Claim 47 further comprising the step of alerting users of said program to the requisition and disposition of said job order and said candidates.



