ROBERT WALTERS PHILIPPINES
TECH & TRANSFORMATION HIRING TRENDS

COVID-19 HIRING TRENDS: TECH & TRANSFORMATION

While the coronavirus situation has been quite disruptive for a number of businesses in the Philippines, we continue to see steady hiring activities for technology and transformation roles. Businesses have started resuming their interview processes, and are on the lookout for the best talent.

We expect more headcounts to become approved, as businesses resume hiring for key roles across various areas.

APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND IT SECURITY SECTORS

How would you describe the recruitment market for your sectors during the COVID-19 crisis? Are there any changes?

Active and live jobs were stable before the start of Q2. However, hiring slowed to a standstill when the Enhanced Community Quarantine was implemented in the Philippines.

Based on client feedback, this slowdown is mostly due to the uncertain economic situation and necessary cost optimisations. Companies have cut their annual budgets, with some even reducing their budget to 50%. Available budget has been allocated instead to other pressing matters, such as an early release of employees' 13th month pay, and providing financial assistance to lower tier employees.

Clients whose headquarters are in the US are already experiencing recession signs, resulting in slower business activities and numerous IT projects being placed on hold.

Who is hiring and what skills are they looking for?

Despite a slowdown in hiring for some industry sectors, established enterprises such as companies in insurance, FMCG, e-services and modern trade channels, telco, and technology consulting fields are still hiring robustly. Companies are taking a wiser approach; they see the current climate as an opportunity to secure the best talent in the market as their competitors cut back on efforts in talent attraction. For companies that are still hiring, the directive is to be as efficient as possible, which means businesses are exerting efforts in creating more robust recruitment strategies, such as identifying which roles can be closed internally, and which ones should be outsourced to recruitment partners to secure the best available talent in the shortest amount of time.

- In the e-commerce sector, the business focus lies in maintaining the reliability of infrastructure to ensure services are always available for consumers who for example, do most of their essentials purchasing online. DevOps engineers are resultingly in demand, as they maintain and scale this IT environment. Additionally, businesses are enhancing their data strategy, and there is an increased hiring of data analysts, engineers, and scientists, to better position companies for greater market share

- For shared services and BPO sectors, their commitment to service remains valid, and they still need to fulfil their obligations to clients. As functions transit to work-from-home arrangements, numbering in the hundreds to thousands per company, the need to increase efficiency and security has been a focus. Employees' remote signing in to corporate networks and using cloud-based applications pose increased technology and productivity issues, as well as security and cyber risks. Consequently, there has been an increase in hiring infrastructure and software security professionals, such as analysts, managers, and even department heads, who are equipped with well-rounded skills to mitigate cybersecurity risks, as well as handle BCP compliance and implementations

- Hiring in the Financial Services sector remains rather high. For banks, insurance and alternative financial solutions companies, their focus was on continued operations, as well as reaping their investments in digital sales channels. There is increasingly a need to improve the ability of financial services companies in supporting online sales, easing personal account opening, and facilitating new business, be it online or via mobile. In this regard, hiring for software and mobile engineers, solutions architects, and UI/IX engineers are on the rise. This is to address and curb high abandonment rates after registration, increase reliability of online transactions, decrease lag and downtime, and remove user friction to enhance customer experience in using digital banking or insurance applications

Why hire now?

Companies were not adequately prepared for the unexpected COVID-19 situation, and many are still figuring things out in terms of creating plans for business continuity (BCP). Meanwhile, organisations are also transitioning to cloud technology. The current situation is the perfect opportunity to step up transformation processes, as almost all activities are now moving towards being cloud-based.

Some roles that companies should hire for now:

- All facets of roles related to business resiliency and continuity
- All facets of roles that ensure sustainability of remote working
- Transformation team (Cloud Engineers, System Admin, Infra Architects) with background in BCP and cloud technologies

Recruitment Advice

Candidates are currently very wary about job stability. They will not move unless it is a great opportunity; a good role and a good pay. There's a notion that it is safer to move to an enterprise organisation within the financial services industry, like traditional banks or fintech companies, versus non-financial service businesses.

Candidates are now more open to remote onboarding and work from home schemes, since it is important for them to start their jobs right away, without having to compromise on their health. Providing concrete and immediate feedback to new hires is also highly advisable at this time.

On the recruitment side, video calls and online onboarding have been useful. They have resulted in a much faster turnaround time, compared to the traditional face-to-face interview process. Moving forward, candidates have reflected that they prefer interviewing to be done this way.

In the current business critical climate, tech hiring is needed more than ever. Companies are transitioning to operating in a new 'normal',and have resultingly become more tech-dependent. This is the best time to identify key tech people

to join your organisation. As some candidates may have been affected by the COVID-19 crisis, we advise companies to also keep in mind high caliber professionals, who have either lost their jobs, or are looking to move forward with a different firm.

PROJECT AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT, ENTERPRISE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS AND TECHNOLOGY SALES SECTORS

How would you describe the recruitment market for your sectors during the COVID-19 crisis? Are there any changes?

The COVID-19 situation has similarly affected the commercial side of the technology market. As businesses shifts from face-to-face to virtual engagements - technology selling, project implementation and support have adapted to this change as well. In this situation, there are three recruitment hiring aspects that we can look into:

- Backfill positions. Hiring continues, as someone in the firm is doing the job(s) intended for another person
- New headcounts. Clients are interviewing and hiring for urgent or business critical roles
- For new headcounts for non-urgent positions, hiring is mostly postponed

Who is hiring and what skills are they looking for?

IT Services and IT Consulting industries are still hiring. These businesses rely heavily on their end client projects, which are mostly still on-going. Projects in these segments are often done in phases, with timelines set in place as part of service delivery agreements. In addition, enterprise organisations in the Telco industry and medium-sized Software Solutions and E-Commerce industries, with pending technology project implementations and ERP rollouts, are still hiring within the bounds of their long-term technology roadmaps.

Why hire now?

New Business Development Professionals

Business development professionals are tasked with creating business from scratch, and have the capabilities to create new market segments, or product offerings that are related to current product lines.

Companies can hire for candidates to support the global business in developing cyber security practices (e.g. SOC development, cyber security maturity assessment). The new business can be for instance, to go beyond DDOS, and be a complete cybersecurity firm under the Transformational Alliance Partner (TAP) programme.

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Product Manager

Product managers own the development of new product offerings for IT Services and Software Companies. These professionals have both logical and solutioning expertise to help businesses survive in all market condition – by creating product offerings tailored fit to the current market situation. Companies should take advantage of this quarantine period to enhance and build new features for their products.

ERP Techno-Functional Consultant

Technical and Functional Consultants ensure technologies acquired by companies are in good conditions, and employees are well-equipped to make full use of them. As organisations shift to work from home arrangements, it has become a foremost priority in every organisation that everyone can leverage the technology investment.

Recruitment Advice

Tech companies must continue to hire IT Sales and Account Managers as these professionals generate revenue for the business. In addition, critical technology project implementations have never been this important, so hiring for Project Managers and Product Managers, as well as ERP Functional Consultants, should not be halted. Companies can leverage the current lockdown situation to successfully onboard their sales employees, so they are "ready for battle" once the situation is normalised.

While it's true that the situation right now is challenging, good talent are also exploring suitable opportunities amid an uncertain market.

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PHILIPPINES

ROLE	PERMANENT SALARY PER ANNUM PHP (₱)	
	2019	2020
Management		
Chief Digital Officer	6.5 - 12.0m	**7.0 - 14.0m**
Chief Technology Officer	6.0 - 11.0m	**6.0 - 11.0m**
Chief Information Officer	6.0 - 11.0m	**6.0 - 11.0m**
IT Director	4.5 - 6.5m	**4.5 - 6.5m**
Projects		
Program Manager	2.6 - 5.2m	**3.0 - 6.0m**
Project Manager	1.7 - 3.7m	**2.0 - 4.0m**
Business Analyst	1.4 - 2.6m	**1.5 - 3.0m**
Scrum Master	1.4 - 2.6m	**1.4 - 2.6m**
Agile Coach	2.3 - 4.0m	**2.3 - 4.0m**
Service Delivery Manager	2.6 - 4.0m	**2.6 - 4.0m**
Development		
Development Manager	3.0 - 4.6m	**3.0 - 4.6m**
Test Manager	3.0 - 4.6m	**3.0 - 4.6m**
Architect	2.6 - 5.8m	**3.0 - 6.5m**
Web Developer	1.1 - 2.9m	**1.3 - 3.0m**
Mobile Application Developer	1.1 - 2.9m	**1.3 - 3.0m**
Test Analyst	1.0 - 1.9m	
ERP Technical Consultant	1.5 - 2.6m	**1.5 - 2.5m**
Systems Administrator	1.3 - 2.8m	**1.3 - 2.8m**
Network Engineer	1.0 - 2.6m	**1.0 - 2.6m**
Security Specialist	1.3 - 3.0m	**1.3 - 3.0m**
Infrastructure Manager	2.6 - 4.0m	**2.6 - 4.0m**
Analytics		
Data Scientist	1.5 - 2.9m	**1.5 - 2.9m**
Data Analytics Manager	3.2 - 4.5m	**3.2 - 4.5m**
Business Intelligence Manager	3.9 - 5.5m	**3.9 - 5.5m**

NB: Figures are basic salaries exclusive of benefits/bonuses unless otherwise specified

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