



Building the

CONNECTED WORKFORCE

**A Talent Leader's Guide to
Hiring in Up and Down Times**

How to use hiring freezes, furloughs, and disruptions to strengthen culture, deepen connection, and prepare for a high time of hiring.



Now is the time to **care more** and show what you and your company are made of.

– Amy Warner, iCIMS director of talent acquisition

With change comes **opportunity.**

Facing the realities of layoffs or furloughs is difficult for you and your employees. As a talent leader, the expectation is for you to be present, mindful, and transparent with your workforce – employees, contractors, and gig workers.

How can you keep these workers engaged so you can rehire them when you are ready?

During times like these, make sure your employees feel your presence. Communicate often, and with empathy – and do it at scale.

This is your guide to managing your workforce through these challenges.

In the pages that follow, you'll learn:



What your current workforce management challenges are



Best practices you can apply today to build engagement



How your existing tools can support you now and in the future

In our **current hiring climate** there are 4 key areas of priority. Where's your focus today?

Slowing your pace of hiring now but planning for a high volume of hiring in the future



Use time during slow periods to source for future roles

PAGE 5

Making sure furloughed employees know you care



Stay connected to your workforce, as if they were your candidates

PAGE 9

Introducing new skill sets to your workforce



Focus on new, in-demand skills when bringing workers back

PAGE 16

Being ready to navigate how and when to bring workers back



Give a formal welcome to both familiar faces and new employees

PAGE 19



SOURCE TO FILL FUTURE ROLES



Attract today to **prepare** for faster times ahead.

Maintaining connections with interested candidates, even during a hiring freeze, means a full pipeline when requisitions rise again.

Extend your reach

Now isn't the time to go quiet. You can use both email and text to share company news and resources to build confidence for the future.

How are current or partially furloughed workers keeping their heads up? Do you have a story about employees doing good in this time or having fun during a virtual happy hour? Share your example. Using your candidate relationship management (CRM) and text applications helps you reach your target audience quickly and efficiently, with easy opt-ins for displaced workers.

Don't stop sourcing

Even with a consistent communication plan, workers may accept opportunities elsewhere. To avoid a hiring rush that could slow your return to productivity, relevant and targeted career sites can build your talent community and align them to your automated text and CRM campaigns.



You're Hired, Again, And Again. Cedar Fair's Story

Seasonal businesses with a fluctuating workforce pull from the same pool each year and can offer insight into talent engagement and rehiring strategies.

Amusement park operator Cedar Fair **hires 47,000 seasonal employees every year**, often months in advance of their start dates. Cedar Fair's team keeps new hires engaged during the interim through a layered communication strategy. By monitoring the open rates of their emails, recruiters send follow-up texts to those at risk of not showing up on their first day.



Use time during slow periods to source for future roles



JOIN OUR TALENT NETWORK

Stay connected on new jobs and receive company updates.

Select your Country and preferred job type and Sign In.



Explore **unconventional** talent opportunities.

Capitalize on well-trained and reliable talent when you need them.

Freelance or gig workers:

Engaging with freelancers helps you maintain a stable queue of talent for key assignments or short-term projects.

Consider an alumni network:

Build a network of former and furloughed employees who have moved on or retired and may consider rejoining your organization.

Are your job postings Google friendly?

Find out here in the [Definitive Guide to Recruitment Marketing](#)





STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR WORKFORCE

as if they were your candidates



Dial up your communication **strategy.**

During a furlough, your employees are going to feel anxious and overwhelmed – and rightfully so. Engagement, retention, and trust are paramount for your brand at large.

Set the tone on day one

- How your company handles the situation will have a lasting impact on the brand for years. Ask hiring managers to follow up with employees one-on-one to hear their concerns and answer questions.
- Partner with other organizations that have temporary or part-time work that requires a similar skill set.

Consider how to best communicate – and do so frequently

- Organize workers into talent communities and provide helpful information about unemployment and benefits.
- Lean on multiple communication channels, from text message and email to private networking groups.

Feed the culture

- Encourage teams to set up private social network pages, virtual hang-outs, and opportunities to give back to the community to provide a sense of connection and purpose.





There's comfort in **connection.**

What do furloughed employees want to know? Here's an email template to use as your foundation.

Dear Team,

As we enter another week, I hope you and your families are doing well. You can still expect to hear from us regularly through our company-wide updates.

Always communicate with empathy

Supporting you & your families

- Employee Assistance Program
- Healthcare benefits
- Supporting financial challenges

Most important to furloughed workers

Important resources

- Internal resource page that includes all communications
- Employee and gig worker information

Reminder of where all resources are centralized

Pulling together as a community

- Anecdotes from workers
- Community involvement

Maintain a sense of connection and culture for now-remote workers

Please continue to communicate any questions or challenges to your HR contact or to questions@business.com

Designated HR contact



Make it simpler with **focused** career sites.

Offer furloughed employees a career site specific to them. Here are some messaging tips and key information to include:

- Hiring status updates
- Other relevant open roles to consider
- Quick access to employee resources
- A place to enroll in new talent pools
- Health and wellbeing check-ins
- Messages from the executive team
- A chatbot to engage with 24/7





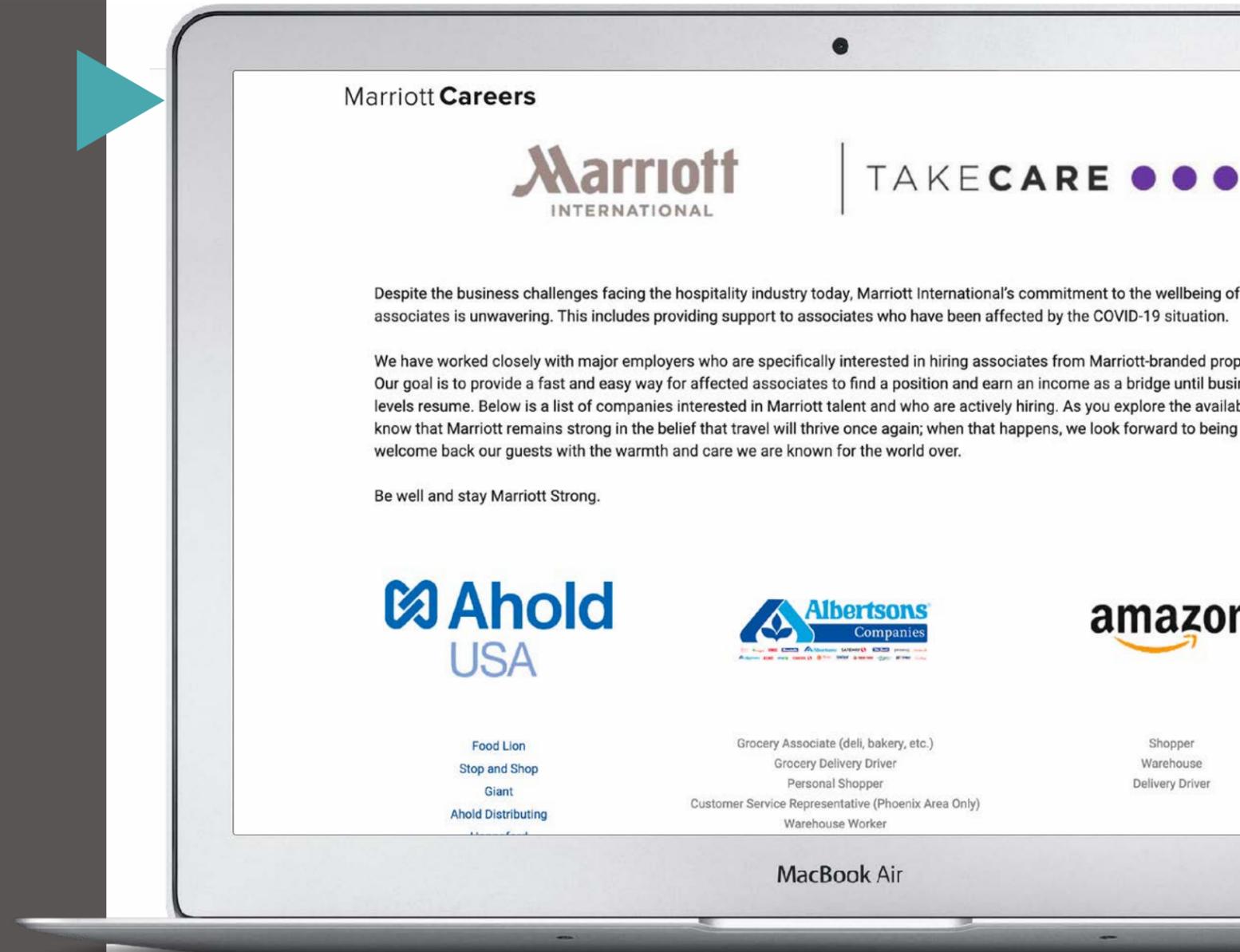
Stay connected to your workforce,
as if they were your candidates

In Crisis, Marriott Leaders Stand By Workers.

As with many within the hospitality industry, COVID-19 put a strain on Marriott International's business – a strain that was worse than the 2008 financial crisis and 9/11 combined. But leadership wasn't going to leave workers displaced and looking for answers.

Marriott worked quickly with iCIMS to connect their associates with new job opportunities and companies that were actively hiring.

The career portal was available to fully and partially furloughed workers as part of leadership's numerous and publicly praised efforts to take care of its Marriott family.





Even the smallest teams can communicate at **scale.**

Enhance what you have:

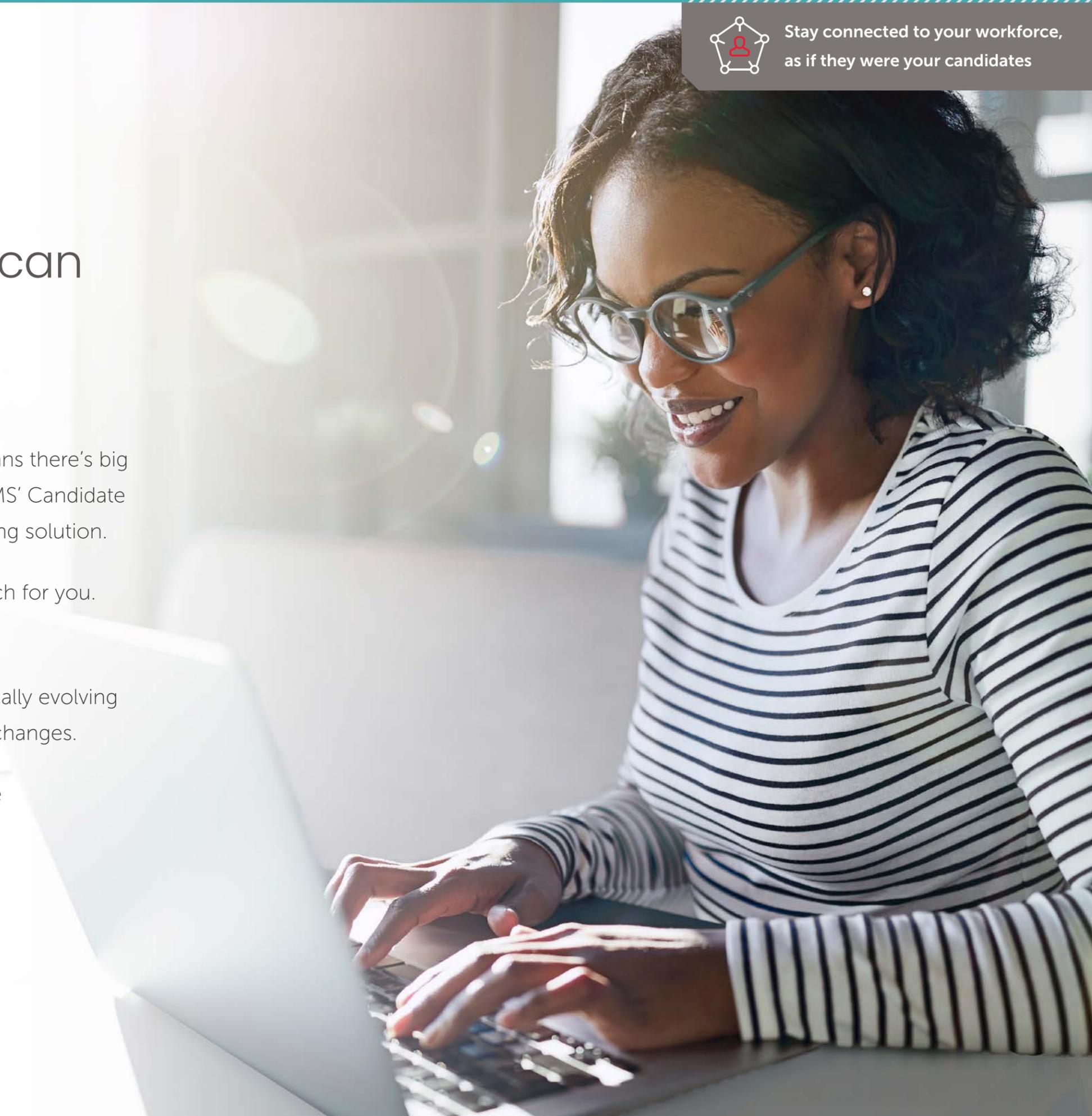
Automation works best when data is consistent. That means there's big opportunity to integrate iCIMS' Text Engagement and iCIMS' Candidate Relationship Management solutions into your existing hiring solution.

You keep your workflow, and automation deploys outreach for you.

Avoid inaccuracy and compliance risks:

You're no stranger to forms and contracts, but in dynamically evolving hiring situations there's a heightened need to document changes.

For everything from temporary work agreements to rehire contracts, our automated offer management software iCIMS' Offer Management facilitates the process quickly.





Let automation take the **pressure** off your team.

If you've never used AI for hiring, the current climate offers a great opportunity to support your team to do more with less.

If your HR department is flooded with questions from furloughed employees, placing a chatbot on focused career sites can answer any FAQs with predetermined responses.

If you need to deliver mass communications on benefits, rehire times, or employee assistance programs, prescheduled text campaigns let you deploy messages right from your recruitment platform.

If you have openings that are great fits for furloughed employees, AI-powered job matching can present them relevant opportunities automatically every time they visit that dedicated career site.

With the automation and AI features built into these recruitment tools, the way recruiters carry out their roles and spend their time is changing dramatically.

– Gartner



FOCUS ON NEW, IN-DEMAND SKILLS

when bringing workers back



As your business evolves during furlough, focus on the skill sets that match your **new business needs.**

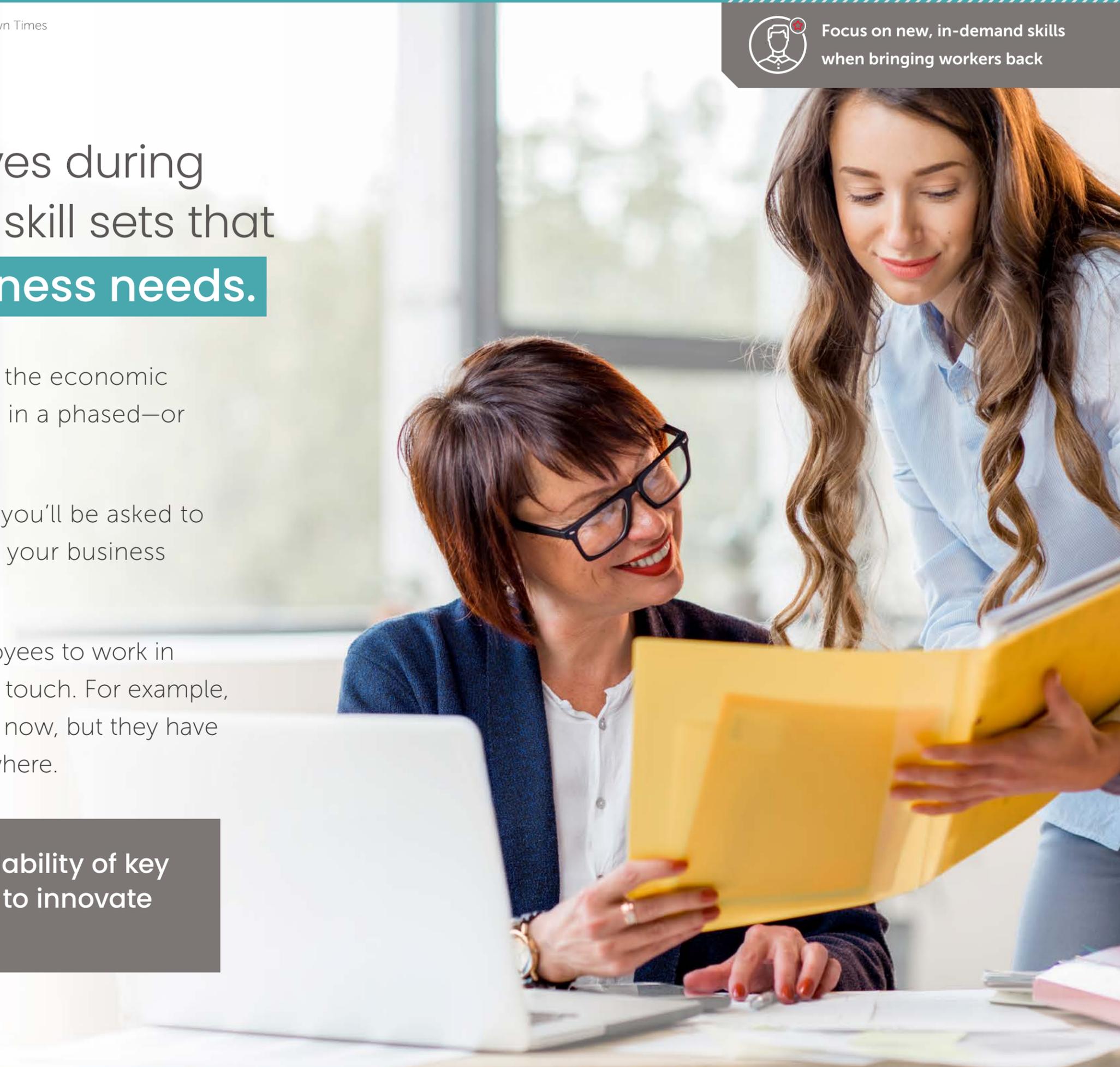
Depending on health considerations and the economic recovery, you may bring back employees in a phased—or tiered—approach.

What does that mean for you? Likely, you'll be asked to bring back employees based on the skills your business needs most.

You may also bring back furloughed employees to work in areas of the business they previously didn't touch. For example, events specialists may not be needed right now, but they have transferable skills that can be applied elsewhere.

55% of CEOs feel the lack of availability of key talent has impacted their ability to innovate effectively*

* 22nd Annual CEO Survey and PwC's HR Technology Survey 2020





Focus on skills when rehiring begins.

Re-screen:

Things change, so create customized assessments to clearly highlight which candidates best align with your business's current trajectory.

Seek out hidden soft skills:

Use methods like texting and more casual outreach to learn about your current workforce's applicable experience in areas where teams need support.

Embrace training opportunities:

Present furloughed employees with learning resources within their dedicated career sites to facilitate growth in areas that match business needs.



GIVE A FORMAL WELCOME

to both familiar faces and new employees



Reintroduce employees to your business.

Onboarding isn't just for new hires. What employers may not realize is that giving rehires a period to adjust back into the business will restore productivity much sooner.

That's true of everyone, including freelancers, seasonal workers, alumni rehires, and furloughed employees.





Help readjustment with **personalized** welcome portals.

Personalized rehire portals work best during the preboarding phase – that critical time between rehire and an employee's first day.

Start by providing your rehired employees with:

- **Important company news:** Share what they may have missed on both a company and department level
- **Updated job descriptions:** Outline any changes by position type so your employees know what to expect
- **Organizational chart:** When so much changes, something as simple as an updated org chart allows employees to understand who to go to for what
- **Employment forms:** Get paperwork out of the way by including documents such as I-9s and W-4s right in the portal
- **Logistics:** Provide a place to update contact information and benefits as well as to request parking and building access

Looking for more info on all things onboarding?

[Check out our Definitive Guide to Onboarding](#)



Give a formal welcome to both familiar faces and new employees

How Novant Health Went **Digital.**

One of the largest U.S.-based healthcare providers, Novant Health hires up to 7,000 employees a year. They decided to go digital with a switch from their legacy ATS to iCIMS' Applicant Tracking.

The previous onboarding process was entirely manual and paper-intensive. It involved seven individual forms to be scanned, indexed, and printed – per candidate.

The move to iCIMS' Onboarding meant candidates could complete admin tasks within minutes instead of hours. Novant Health cut onboarding time by 9%, equating to about \$300,000 in annual savings.

Read the rest of their story [here](#).



A **toolkit** for hiring during times of disruption

Your complete strategy should check all the boxes:

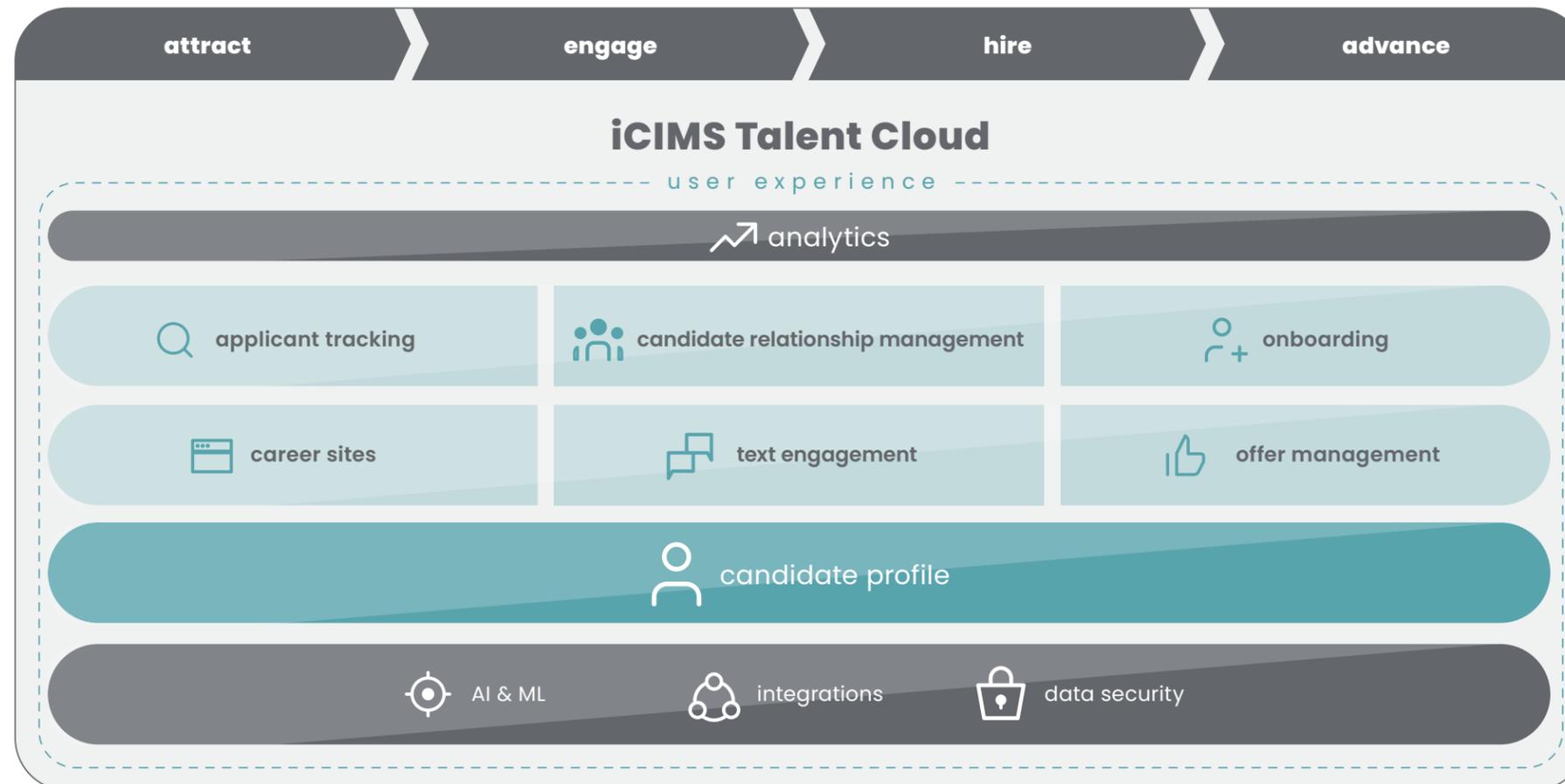
Candidate relationship management

Dedicated career sites

Compliant and centralized text engagement

Automated offer management

Virtual portals for returning workers



iCIMS clients benefit from a platform that flexes to incorporate evolving hiring priorities, with tools that are built to **work together** and in sync with your existing workflow.

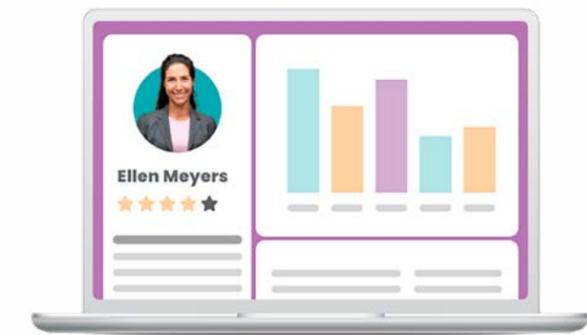
Learn how Southeastern Grocers uses text and chat to keep its 50,000 employees engaged during seasons of disruption.



[WATCH THE 30-MINUTE WEBINAR](#)



icims[®]
The Talent Cloud



Talent Powers Transformation

iCIMS is the talent cloud company that empowers organizations to attract, engage, hire, and advance the right talent that builds a diverse, winning workforce. iCIMS accelerates transformation for a community of more than 4,000 customers, including a third of the Fortune 100, that employ more than 30 million people worldwide.

See it in action www.icims.com/see-it-in-action