



CASE STUDY:

central

Revitalising recruitment through transformation.



Central England Co-op (CEC) has made steps to revitalise its recruitment experience as part of a large-scale transformation programme bringing a wide range of benefits to colleagues, candidates and the Society as a whole.

The Society is one of the UK's largest and most successful independent co-operative societies and co-operative colleagues are the key to its success, which is why they want the very best people to join their team of around 8,000 employees. It has been making progress for the future through a large-scale transformation programme. The HR and Project Team undertook a full review of every recruitment process and experience to identify all areas for improvement.

Recruitment Challenges

Central England Co-op wanted to replace a slow and traditional way of working. The incumbent ATS had no agility to support changing requirements. In addition, user experiences were inconsistent, and the lack of recruitment analytics meant there was no data available to make informed decisions.

The onboarding process was entirely manual, from contract creation to inputting into the HR & Payroll system, with delays that resulted in losing candidates. The team wanted a consistent journey from the initial website visit to the interview and onboarding into the business. Hiring manager experience was also a significant consideration in the change process.



“The flexibility to configure Eploy has enabled custom application journeys and candidate screening to ensure candidates are selected on merit.”

*- Helen Stone
Project Transformation*



Central England Co-op empowers all line managers to recruit for themselves with no independent recruitment function, making suitable systems and processes to support this essential.

Objectives

The transformation programme encompassed:

- **A new Central England Co-op purpose**, ‘Creating a sustainable Society for all’ and consistency of brand messaging
- **Enhanced Employee Value Proposition (EVP)** with aligned behaviours, vision and purpose
- **A proactive approach to recruitment and candidate experience** with the implementation of a complete Applicant Tracking platform (ATS) that supports the full recruitment journey and agility to respond to the market
- **A new careers website** to demonstrate the culture across the organisation and to support bringing candidates into the Society quicker
- **Connected technology systems and processes** to remove manual intervention and remove any risk of errors
- **Clearer data insight** to support decision making

Approach to implementation

Central England Co-op created a steering committee of executive and sponsor support that included hiring managers to deliver change with them.

Having field-based managers involved would deliver a clear vision of requirements.

The steering committee engaged with 14 different workstreams, including the funeral business, retail, distribution, comms team and HR services and took each of the voices from the streams to form a 360 view across the business for buy-in and co-creation of scope to represent the project.

The Society selected Eploy as their preferred partner because of the product’s capabilities, the partnership approach between the teams, and their aligned values. Eploy provides the hub of the recruitment journey and a complete ATS to improve how Central England Co-op attracts, engages, and nurtures talent.

The hiring manager experience was a key consideration throughout the transformation. A critical factor in the selection process of Eploy was that the recruitment platform could bring hiring managers into the process. Eploy’s Hiring Manager Portal would address the sheer volume of applications that managers were reviewing manually, sifting through each application and help managers locally deliver a consistent and open recruitment process.

Eploy built the CEC careers site using the implementation methodology – Discover, Define, Design, Develop and Deploy.

The careers site design has CEC’s purpose and brand at the core to bring the identity, vision and values to



“Eploy is fundamental in providing a complete ATS that supports the full recruitment journey. The Eploy team understood our business and worked in partnership with us, providing a platform for future scope and to support the future vision.”

- Hannah Huxley Greene
Project & Change Manager



Contracts are issued instantly instead of previously waiting 5-7 days.



Data from Eploy fed into HR & Payroll provides clear diversity data.



Hiring manager hours saved each day through application automation, across 260 stores, significantly impacts efficiency.



Smart automation of customisable dashboards empowers hiring managers and frees up time to focus on other work.

life to attract the right prospective talent and reflect the organisation's culture and values.

Eploy integrates with iTRENT, the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) and Payroll solution in place at CEC. This uses Eploy's Application Programming Interface (API) to move new starters into iTRENT and update the Company Structure in Eploy, removing the need for any manual data entry.

The candidate journey has been improved to create an engaging experience by using the Eploy Candidate Portal. An effortless registration process is seamlessly integrated into the careers site and uses social network profiles to reduce rekeying. In addition, Eploy enables recruitment workflows tailored for specific audiences. For example, for colleagues, vacancies will not be advertised externally for one week, allowing internal talent to apply first for roles which is faster and easier than ever before with a quicker way to apply via a QR code and dedicated area of the careers site.

The candidate experience continues through the offers and onboarding process, which is now automated with Eploy's Onboarding module to bring new colleagues onboard seamlessly. Not only has this automated a manual process, but it is improving engagement with new hires, accelerating the onboarding process and managing offer acceptance online.

The Agency Portal is reducing duplicate candidates and providing visibility of candidate sources. Vacancy requisitions pass through an approval process within the portal, and submitted candidates are automatically available for hiring managers to review.

Results

CEC moved from a traditional, slow recruitment process to a relevant, digital, automated, fast candidate experience that promotes the employer brand and purpose and the co-operative values and principles.

“This whole project was delivered 100% digitally and remotely through the pandemic that required collaborative team work to overcome the challenges that way of working presented. Eploy treated us like one of them, as did we, to develop a true partnership with openness and honesty to overcome challenges right to the end where we celebrated what we've achieved together as a partnership. The scale of change was not just a system swap out but a transformation and we felt supported by Eploy throughout”.

Hannah Huxley Greene, Project & Change Manager.

The flexibility to configure Eploy has enabled custom application journeys and candidate screening to ensure candidates are selected on merit.

Automated scoring using Eploy allows hiring managers to review the top-scoring candidates first, speeding up the process of getting talent to interview, saving hours screening each applicant. Hiring managers are now very much part of the process as they need to work collaboratively with the right tools. Their time is now freed up on the manual and administrative work previously encountered. For example, if hiring managers save 2 hours each day by not having to sift through applications through automation, multiplying that across 260 stores significantly impacts efficiency.

CEC is seeing an increase in people visiting the careers site, and feedback from hiring managers is that previously hard to fill roles for some positions are now receiving multiple quality candidate applications. There has been a positive impact on the direct sourcing for certain roles that agencies previously handled.

Using Eploy's onboarding module has automated the onboarding journey for new hires and the transfer of core data to HR & payroll, reducing time spent by HR Shared Services. In addition, contracts are issued instantly instead of previously waiting 5-7 days.

Soon after go-live, the team received positive feedback from hiring managers and new colleagues about their experiences reflecting the consistent best candidate journey in class. The process designed for today is fully flexible and fit for the future. Eploy dashboards are providing incredible data with visualisations that track recruitment performance, focus on KPIs and progress towards targets.

“To create a future-focused candidate journey for all levels of recruitment that brings our identity, vision and values to life and enhances our agility and reach to candidates by maximising social media platforms to underpin our Employee Value Proposition. This will enable us to attract the best talent and strengthen the Performance Culture within our Society”.

Data from Eploy feeds into HR & Payroll to provide clear diversity data. This smart automation of customisable dashboards empowers hiring managers and frees up time to focus on other work.

“The benefits of the recruitment transformation project are apparent to colleagues, external candidates and the business as a whole. This vision has been achieved through working in partnership with colleagues across the business and our partner, Eploy. We are delivering an improved journey for all and have dashboards to enable us to plan, measure, monitor and improve our recruiting continually.”

Jen Chance - Head of Talent and Project Sponsor,
Central England Co-op

About Eploy

Eploy is the complete cloud-based recruitment platform for modern in-house recruitment teams. Eploy combines Applicant Tracking, Recruitment CRM, Talent Pools and Analytics into a unified web-based platform integrated seamlessly with your website to provide an excellent candidate experience.

Finding and recruiting candidates who are the perfect fit for your roles is always challenging. Fortunately Eploy's world-class recruitment software makes it much, much easier.

We've been helping leading companies move to the cloud and recruit faster and smarter since 1998.

Eploy is precision-engineered to work on every platform and add value to every stage of the recruitment journey. Eploy automates and simplifies recruitment processes to help you attract, engage, recruit and onboard candidates quickly. As Eploy is also your full talent engagement platform you can manage your relationships with candidates, departments and hiring managers better. With a high degree of measurability, you can track and analyse your recruitment performance, quality, costs and timescales accurately.

Our cloud-based recruitment platform is reinforced with market-leading mentoring and cross-sector expertise so you get the training and support you need to achieve a powerful commercial advantage.



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