



— The State of the —

CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

This study provides insight into applicant preferences and employer practices shaping candidate experience standards and its impact on talent attraction, acquisition, and branding.

Introduction

With the labor market growing more competitive, and a global skills shortage looming ahead, Candidate Experience is, and will continue to be, a key battleground for top talent.

For the past decade, social media and employer review sites have granted the workforce unprecedented influence in shaping employment brand, with the ability to change brand sentiment in real-time. As the labor market tightened, employer reputation became more critical to recruiting and retaining the best employees, and naturally the Candidate Experience companies delivered had come under more scrutiny from discerning applicants.

However, when the topic of Candidate Experience is raised today, the focus usually falls on improving the experience for the few individuals who advance farthest in the interview stage. We suspected that the real employer brand risk, and opportunity, lay in the often overlooked, but vocal, majority--the candidates you didn't hire.

At CareerArc, we help attract and transition today's talent, as well as help that talent find their next job, faster. We conducted this study to learn more about the current state and standards of the Candidate Experience and set out to answer three main questions:

How do Job Seekers view their Candidate Experience?

How do Employers view the Candidate Experience they deliver?

What improvements can Employers make that will create the most positive impact?

So we asked 826 Job Seekers and 374 HR Professionals their thoughts on the State of the Candidate Experience, focusing on each stage - from the application, notification, and beyond.

The results of the Candidate Experience Study, conducted in partnership with research firm Future Workplace, were collected between April 11 - 29, 2016.

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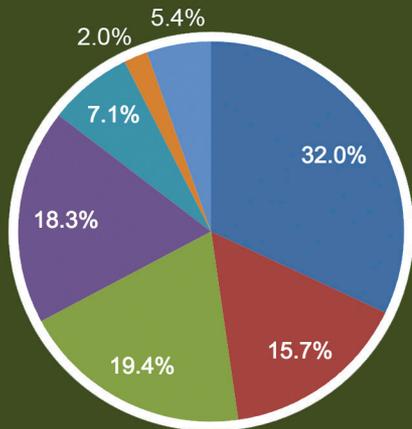


Nearly 60% of Candidates have had a poor experience.

60%

Nearly 60% of Employers have read online negative feedback about their process.

Employer Breakdown

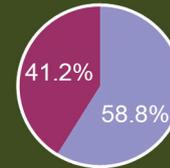


Company Size

- Fewer than 500 employees
- 501 - 1000 employees
- 1,001 - 2,500 employees
- 2,501 - 10,000 employees
- 10,001 - 30,000 employees
- 30,001 - 50,000 employees
- 50,001 or more employees

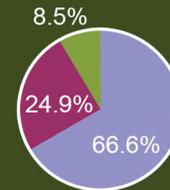
Candidate Breakdown

Currently Employed?



- Yes (58.8%)
- No (41.2%)

Actively looking for a new job?



- Yes, actively (66.6%)
- No, passively looking though (24.9%)
- No, not looking (8.5%)

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The Application



The typical **Candidate** spends **3-4 hours** preparing and submitting one job application.

3-4 hours



72% of Employers spend less than

15 min.
reviewing one application.

Employers underestimate the amount of time it takes to submit one job application.

70% of Employers believe Candidates spend only 1 hour or less in researching, preparing for, and submitting their job application.

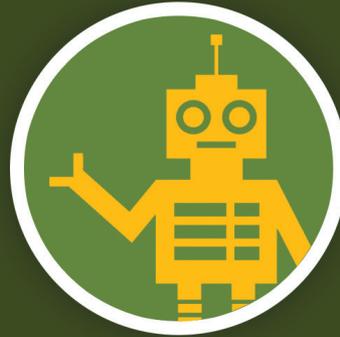
But nearly 60% of Job Seekers already spend at least 1 hour on researching the opportunity and preparing their resume before even starting the online submission process.

For every minute the typical Employer spends on reviewing the application, the typical Candidate spends about 14 minutes preparing and submitting their application.

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The Notification



65%

of Candidates say they never, or rarely, receive notice about their application.

When they don't hear back, **85%** doubt that a human being ever reviewed their application.

Of those that do receive notification,

51%

say it takes 1 month or more.

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The Notification



Nearly 40% of Employers rely on technology that pre-screens and/or pre-selects Candidates based on the data they've submitted.



62%

of Employers who use this software admit that **some qualified Candidates are likely being filtered out** of the vetting process by mistake.

When they don't hear back from Employers, 85% of Candidates doubt that a human being has even reviewed their application - and with good reason: The majority of Employers who use an applicant screening tool admit having doubts about its accuracy. Talent is likely slipping through the cracks of automation.

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How Candidates Respond

3.5x

Candidates who are NOT informed about their application are **3.5 times less likely to re-apply to that company.**



Among the Candidates who have had a poor experience, **72% have shared that negative experience online or with someone directly.**

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How Candidates Respond

We asked Candidates to rate their latest Candidate Experience, and Employers to grade the Candidate Experience they generally delivered, on a scale from 1-10. Surprisingly, they arrived at around the same average rating:

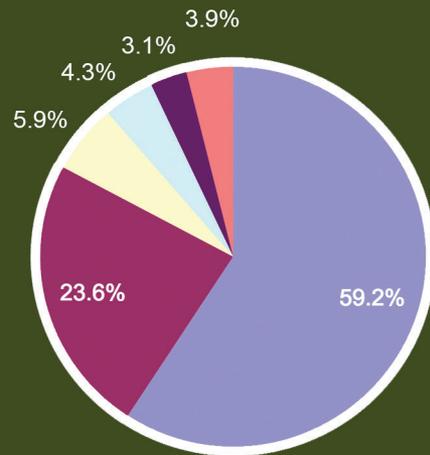
Candidates rated their last experience a 6.5 out of 10.

Employers graded the Candidate Experience they deliver a 6.8 out of 10.

C-

We asked Candidates:

In general, what is the one area you would advise companies to focus on that would improve that rating the most?



Candidates Responded:

-  Better communication with candidates throughout and after the applicant process
-  Improving the online application interface and user experience
-  Training managers on interviewing skills
-  Decreasing the number of interview rounds
-  None
-  Other

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How Candidates Respond



Nearly 60% of Employers have read online negative feedback about their applicant process.



While 12% have searched and never found negative reviews,



the remaining 28% have never checked.



Only 1 out of 4 Employers regularly request feedback directly from Candidates on their experience.

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What Should Employers Improve Most?

Candidates rated **“Timely Follow Up on Application Status”** more important than a **“Well-Designed Career Site”** and a **“Mobile-Supported Online Experience.”**

60%

of Candidates say **“Better communication throughout and after the applicant process,”** would make the most positive impact.

55%

All the while, 55% of Employers think **Candidates want a better online application or interview process.**

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What Should Employers Improve Most?

The majority of Employers are not re-engaging declined Candidates back into their talent pipeline and/or community, even though 98% of Employers believe it would make an impact.

42%

Only **42%** of Employers reach out and re-engage declined Candidates with information on future job opportunities.

45% of Employers say they don't re-engage declined Candidates.

The remaining **13%** say they don't know if they re-engage them or not.

98%

believe re-engaging declined Candidates will be impactful to building their talent community.

98%

believe it would be impactful to protecting their employer brand.

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How Employers Improve & Invest In Candidate Experience

46% Only **46%** of Employers report making regular improvements (at least once every six months) to the recruitment processes that affect Candidate Experience. (Improvements include refreshing technology, enhancing branding, decreasing/increasing steps in candidate process, etc.)

72% of Employers have invested, or plan to invest, more resources to improving the Candidate Experience in the next year.

99% of Employers believe enhancing the Candidate Experience – for those they hire and decline – could help enhance and protect their employer brand, with 80% of Employers believing it would be Very or Extremely Impactful.

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The Bottom Line

“ This survey reveals a critical blind spot employers have when it comes to candidate experience, and that is the experience of the declined candidate. In this tightening labor market, companies can no longer afford to overlook this vocal majority of applicants who didn't get the job, but simply expect to be acknowledged. This presents a tremendous opportunity for employers who recognize the need to reframe the rejection process, improve on candidate care, and prioritize the needs of all applicants today so they return to reapply tomorrow. ”

- **Robin D. Richards, Chairman and CEO, CareerArc**

It's Time to Reframe Rejection: It's interesting to think that while talent acquisition processes have evolved dramatically in just the past decade, the way in which employers reject job applicants has remained fundamentally unchanged. However, companies that are making an effort to improve that experience for all candidates - such as by offering them career assistance like CareerArc Candidate Care - recognize the labor market has changed and will only grow more competitive, and the talent, more scarce.

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Employer Takeaways

According to this study, the solution is deceptively simple: Listen and communicate with your candidates better. Job seekers want this more than an enhanced career site and more than an improved online application process. Focus on what matters.

3 Steps to Delivering a Better Candidate Experience:

- **Acknowledge each person behind the application by letting them know your decision.** For larger companies, notification systems should be automated, but make sure the rejection notice is not robotic. Craft a message that reflects your brand values.
- **Give them more than a Thank You note.** Re-engage them with future job opportunities that help keep them in your talent pipeline and community.
- **Give them career assistance support, like CareerArc Candidate Care,** that will help them find their next job, faster, even if it's not immediately with your company.

Nearly 3 out of 4 Candidates said a product offer like **CareerArc Candidate Care** - a platform which assists applicants in their continued job search - would make a positive impact on their perception of an Employer that had declined their application.

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CareerArc is the leading HR technology company helping business leaders recruit and transition the modern workforce. Our social recruiting and modern outplacement solutions help thousands of organizations, including many of the Fortune 500, solve critical business issues with 21st century tools and technology. By leveraging the cloud, running on world-class infrastructure, and combining web, mobile and social media applications, we help companies gain a competitive edge in recruitment, employment branding, and benefits.

Learn more about CareerArc's enterprise solutions at www.careerarc.com.

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