



**Wonderful Workplaces**

**EMPLOYER  
BRANDING  
INSIGHTS  
2019**



# WELCOME TO THE 2019 EMPLOYER BRANDING INSIGHTS REPORT

The power of employer branding is continuing to gain pace as more and more employers realise the importance of highlighting their company culture and benefits, in order to cut through the noise and attract top talent. Meanwhile, candidates are placing more importance on employer brand and company reputation when deciding where to work.

Amidst an increasingly candidate-driven market, we surveyed 841 candidates across multiple sectors to uncover key insights about jobs and careers, gauge their perceptions around topical issues such as Brexit and automation, and gain an understanding of what makes a better job search and career experience.

**Our research confirms that an employer's brand is still a key consideration throughout the candidate journey – from applying for a job, through to the interview and beyond. In fact, 94% of respondents said they would consider an employer's brand when applying for jobs, which is up four percentage points from our 2016 survey findings, and 96% said a company's reputation is important to them (also up four percentage points). A large majority (69%) said that they may move jobs in the next 12 months, and 71% would consider applying for a vacancy even if they're not actively looking for a new job, if it's "a unique opportunity".**

The explosion of content and social media has meant that employers have to be ever more creative in how they target prospective employees, whether it be looking outside their sectors or specialisms, or focusing on transferable skills rather than a restrictive person specification. Frustratingly, many companies are still continuing to miss out on attracting the right talent, in many cases, because they're failing to communicate their values effectively. According to 46% of our survey respondents, their employers are not effectively communicating their employer brand.

The recruitment market has changed dramatically over the last decade, largely driven by advancements in technology, and there is now a multitude of ways to reach candidates across a range of mediums. Our report aims to uncover key insights and practical takeaways to equip you with the know-how to improve your recruitment processes and start or advance your employer branding journey.



**Jennifer Jackson**

Senior Careers Content Editor, Wonderful Workplaces

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# CAREER PROFILE / SAMPLE

## KEY DEMOGRAPHICS OF OUR SURVEY RESPONDENTS:

- **Gender:** 54% female; 44% male; 2% other / prefer not to say.
- **Sectors:** Respondents work in (or had their last job in) the following sectors: marketing, advertising, media & events, HR, the third sector / not-for-profit, PR & communications, energy, environment & sustainability, GP & healthcare, town planning, horticulture, procurement and 'other', including retail, manufacturing and professional services.
- **Job functions:** These include a whole spectrum of roles from HR management and consulting, through to sales & marketing, fundraising, town planning and policy.
- **Job seniority:** 40% describe themselves as middle managers, 17% as senior managers, 15% as junior level, 8% director level, 2.5% board level, 5.5% graduate level and 12% 'other'.
- **Salary:** The three most prevalent salary brackets are: £30,000-£39,999 (21%); £40,000-£49,999 (14%); £50,000-£59,999 (10%).
- **Tenure:** 21% have been in their current role for five or more years, 18% for up to two years and 14% for seven to 12 months.
- **Active vs. passive:** A small majority of respondents (51%) are actively looking for a new role; 49% are not actively looking for a new role. A large majority (69%) said they may move jobs in the next 12 months.

## WHAT MAKES PEOPLE MOVE JOBS?

Our respondents' top three deciding factors for leaving their last job were "lack of career progression" (26%), "I moved for better pay" (20%) and "my manager" (17%). The most common response in 'Other' was "redundancy" (8%).

**"WHILST IT'S ENCOURAGING FOR EMPLOYERS TO SEE THAT ONE IN FIVE EMPLOYEES HAVE BEEN IN THEIR CURRENT ROLE FOR OVER FIVE YEARS, THERE IS A NOTICEABLE DROP OFF AT THE 'UP TO THREE YEARS' MARK - THIS INDICATES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EMPLOYERS TO ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES AT THIS CRITICAL STAGE IN THEIR CAREER, WHETHER THAT BE THROUGH CAREER PROGRESSION CONVERSATIONS OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT."**



**Jonathan Whitehead**, Business Development Director,  
Wonderful Workplaces



### Top 3 factors for leaving jobs:

1. "Lack of career progression"
2. "I moved for better pay"
3. "My manager"

# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

Before you start recruiting, put yourself ahead of the game by being informed about jobseekers' behaviour. Where is the talent you're looking for? How and when do they search for jobs? What would put them off applying for your roles and how could you influence them to consider your organisation as an 'employer of choice'?

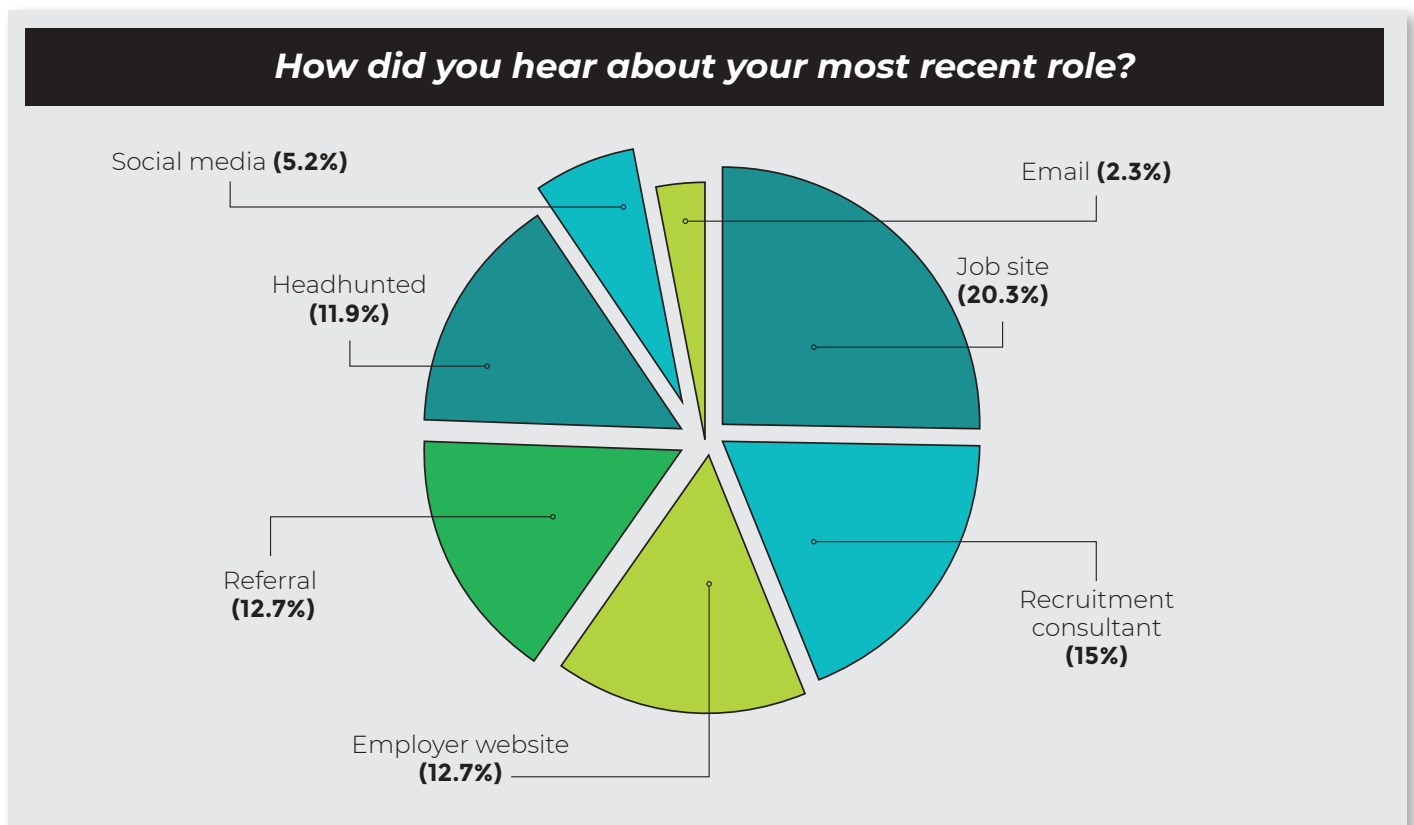
## HOW DO CANDIDATES FIND NEW ROLES?

Interestingly, one in five candidates (20%) use job sites to find new roles. So you should be asking yourself questions such as: Which job site specialises in your sector and vacancies? What can they offer you beyond a standard job ad? Can they guarantee you applications and help you bring your culture to life to your target audience?

A significant percentage (15%) of candidates we surveyed heard about their role through a recruitment consultant. Are you working with the top recruitment consultancies in your sector and are they selling your organisation effectively to the candidates you're looking for? Make sure you work with a reputable recruitment partner that is willing to understand your hiring needs on a long-term basis, rather than an agency that takes a transactional approach.

Your company website is also a crucial platform for communicating your workplace culture and vacancies. Does it clearly explain who you are, what you do and why someone might want to work with you rather than any other organisation? Have you made it easy for people to find out more and apply?

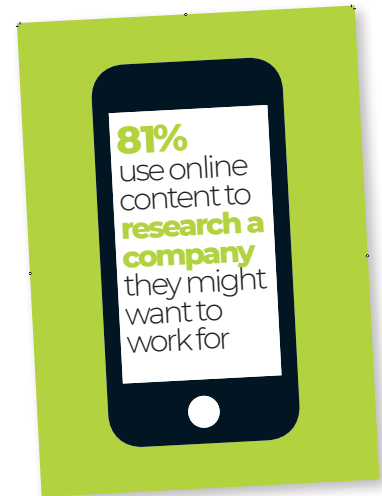
Although only 2.3% of respondents heard about their most recent role via email, 55% would like to hear about a company via email (see page 17).



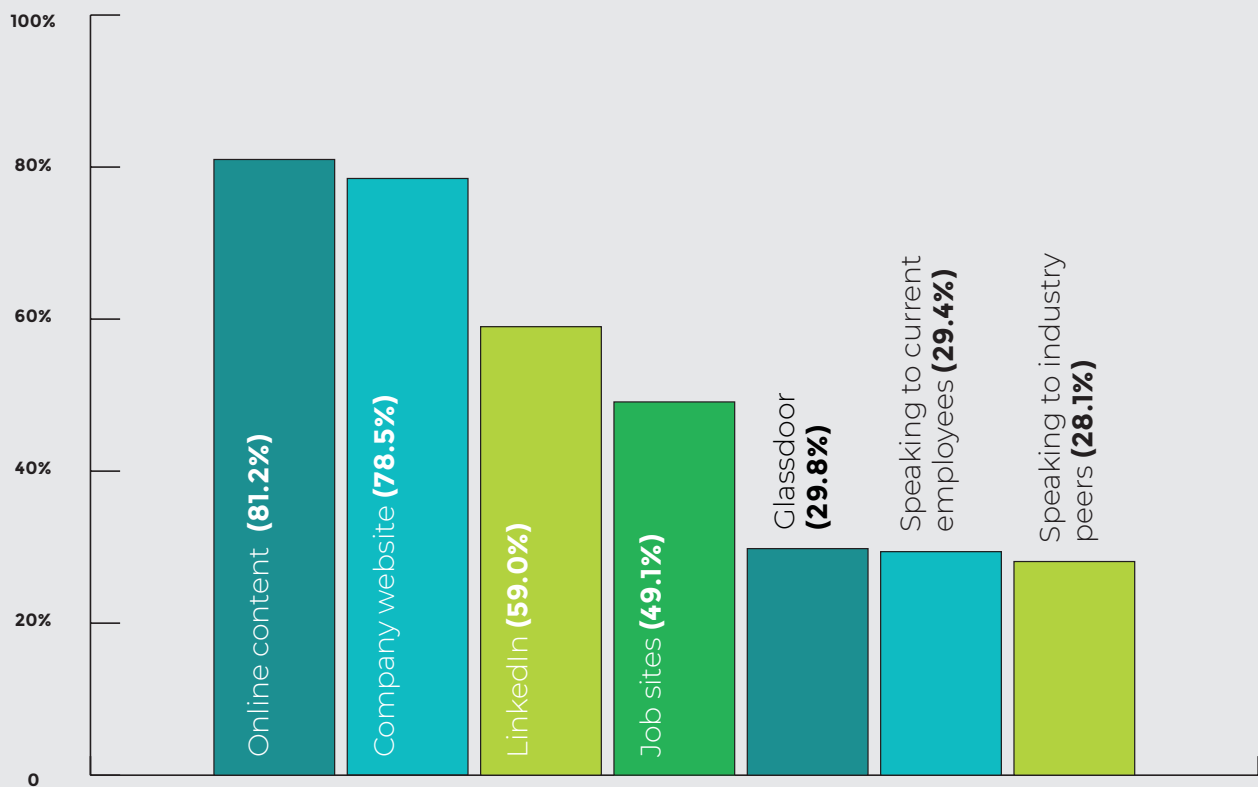
# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

## HOW DO CANDIDATES RESEARCH EMPLOYERS?

We asked candidates how they go about researching a company they might want to work for. Online content (81%) and company website (79%) are clearly the top two methods, so it's crucial you have an online presence communicating your mission, vision, culture and values - both on your website and through other online channels, such as your sector publications and blog sites.



**How do you research a company you might want to work for?**



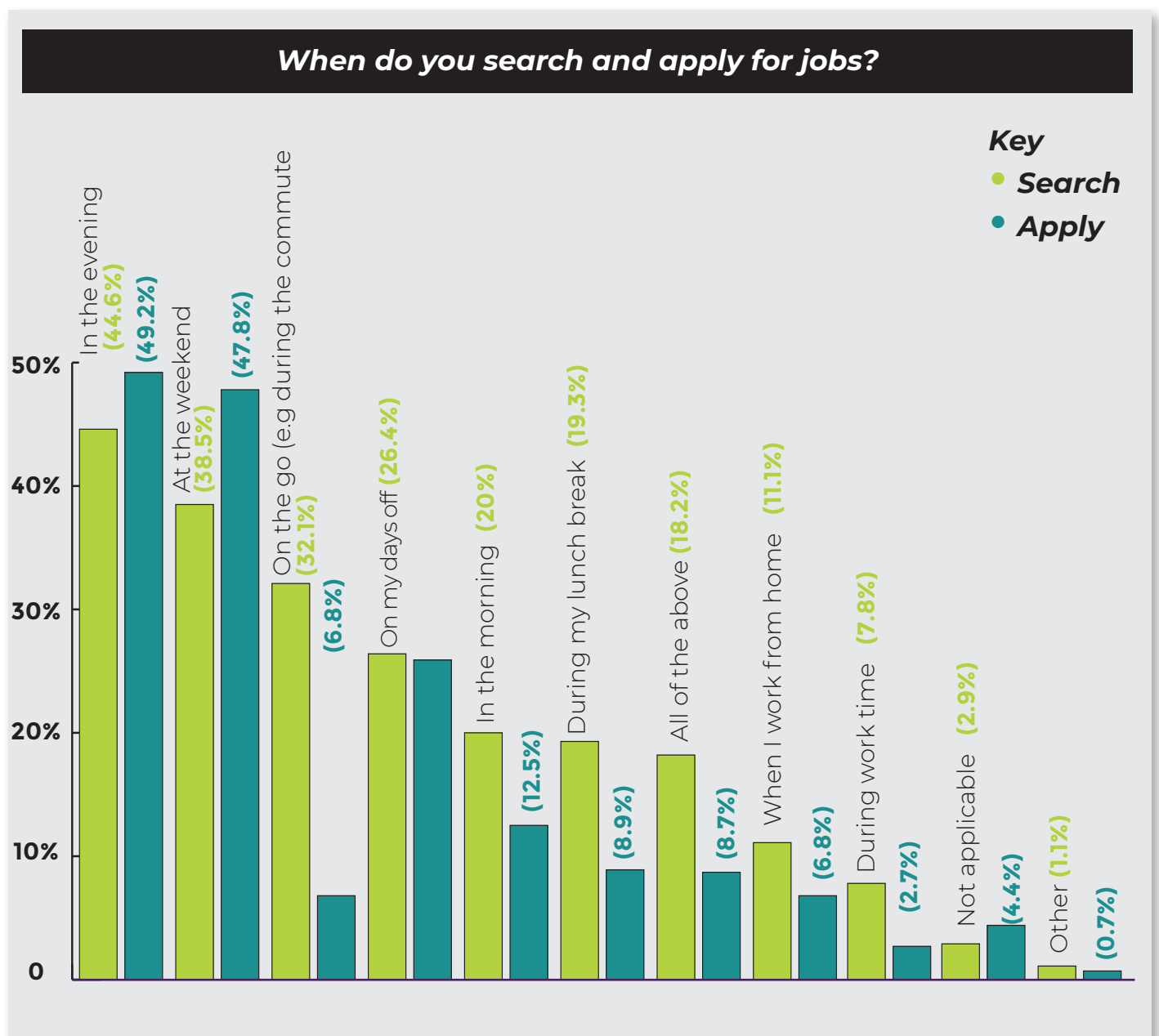
\*Candidates were allowed to select more than one answer, hence the total equalling more than 100%

# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

## WHEN DO PEOPLE SEARCH AND APPLY FOR JOBS?

The majority (83%) search for jobs in the evenings or at weekends. Around one in three (32%) search for jobs on the go, and around one in four (26%) on their days off. Only one in 10 (11%) search for jobs when they work from home and only 8% while they're at work, indicating employers can trust their employees not to be using working hours to search for alternative opportunities.

Interestingly, only 7% apply for jobs on the go, even though 32% search on the go, suggesting that people spend time on their commute browsing and researching but wait until the evening or weekend to actually apply, when they have more space to focus on the application.

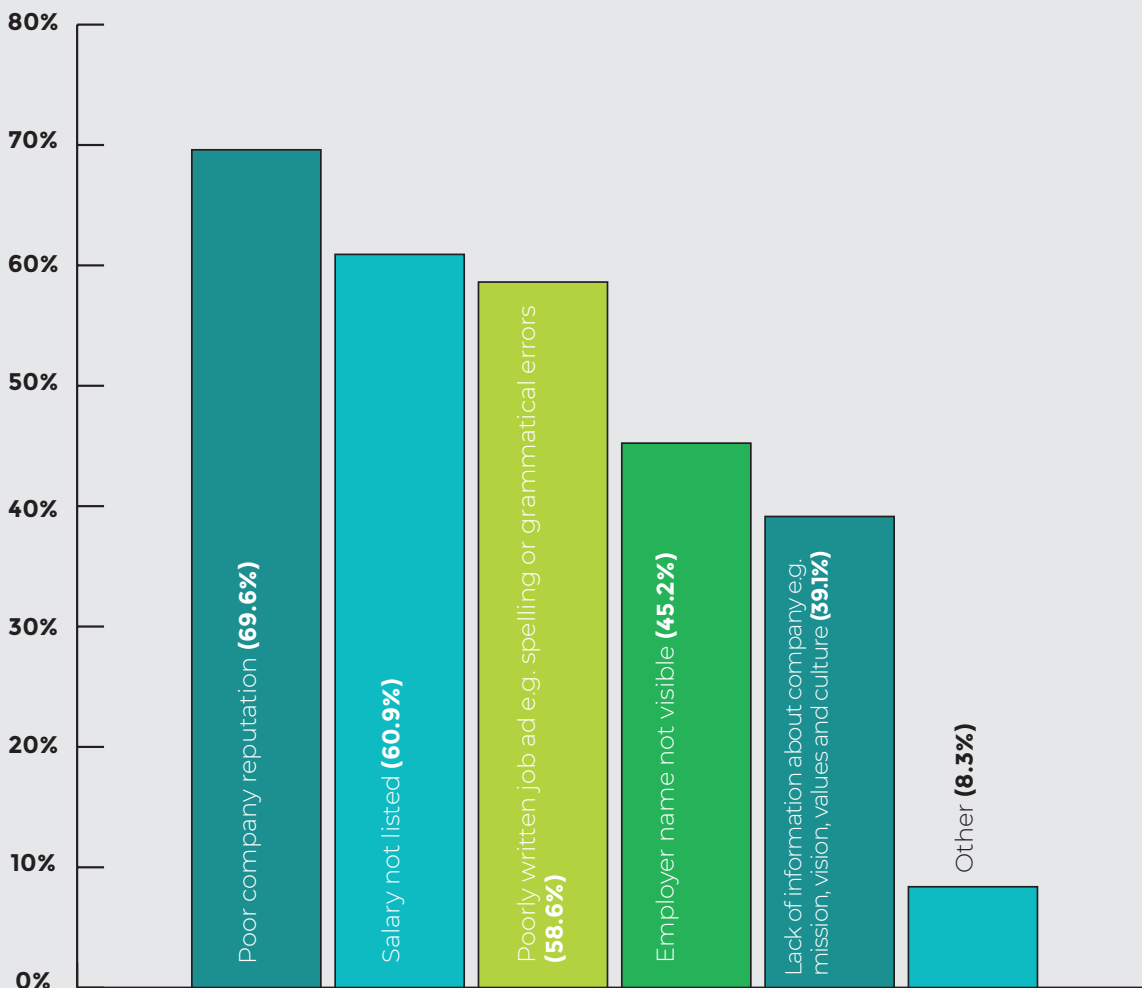


# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

We asked candidates to disclose what would stop them from applying for a job role they've seen advertised online. The majority stated "poor company reputation" (70%), "salary not listed" (61%) and a "poorly written job ad" (59%). These are all things that could be addressed relatively easily, given the right tools and insights.



## What puts candidates off?



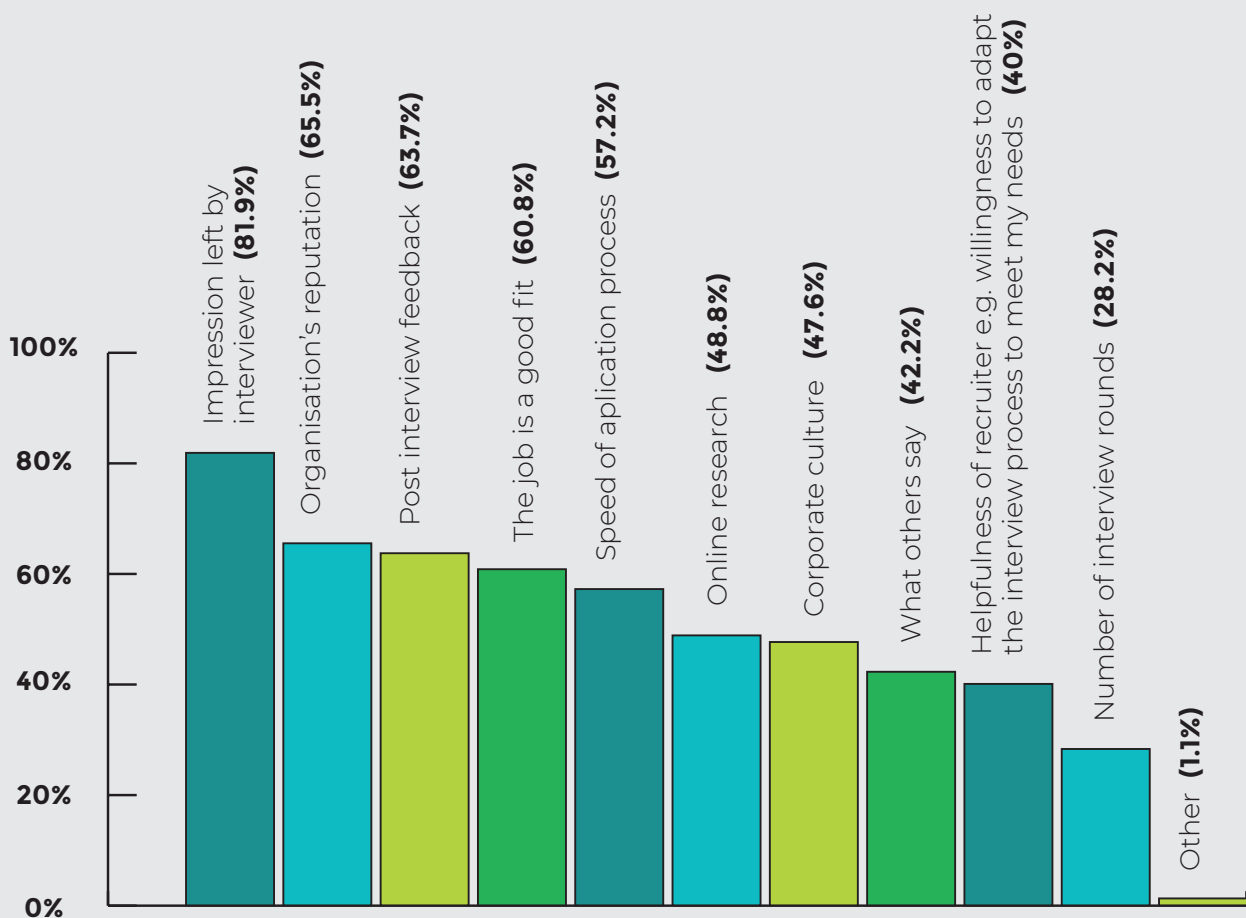
# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

## HOW CAN YOU INFLUENCE CANDIDATES' OPINIONS OF YOUR ORGANISATION AS AN EMPLOYER?

The job interview experience that you deliver to candidates can make a big impression on them and determine whether or not they choose to work for your organisation. In our survey, 82% said the impression left by the interviewer influences their opinions of an employer. And 89% also told us they would turn down a job based on a bad interview experience. The organisation's reputation and post-interview feedback are also hugely important, as well as the job being a good fit and the application process being quick and easy.



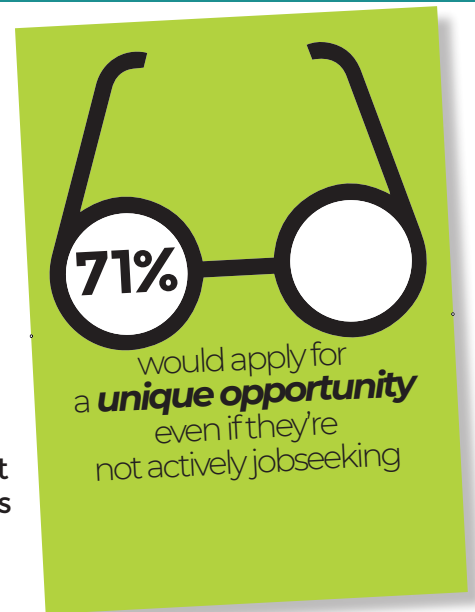
**What factors influence your opinion of an employer?**



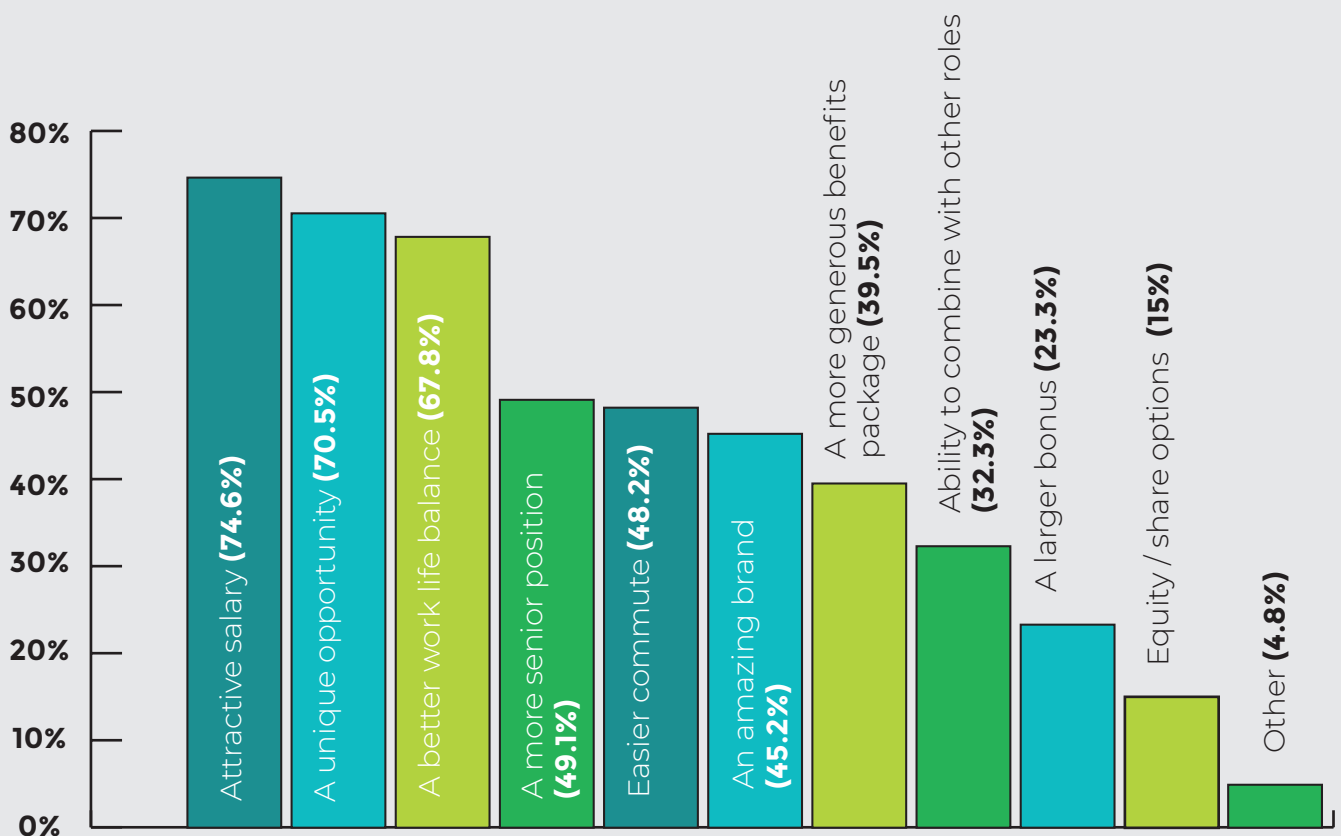
# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

## WHAT WOULD MAKE SOMEONE APPLY EVEN IF THEY'RE NOT ACTIVELY JOB-SEEKING?

In all likelihood, the majority of the best talent are in high demand and are quite happy in their roles as they're being rewarded well for their efforts. 49% of our survey respondents said they're not currently actively looking for a job, so, you need to ensure you're actively reaching out to passive candidates. But how can you stand out and persuade them to come and work for you? After salary, 71% said "a unique opportunity" and 68% said "a better work-life balance" would make them consider applying for a vacancy, even if they're not actively looking for a new job. Therefore, your communications to passive candidates should incorporate these topics.



### What features of a job would make you consider applying for a vacancy, even if you're not actively looking for a new job?



# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

## WHAT ARE CANDIDATES REALLY LOOKING FOR?

We asked candidates what they're looking for in their next role. Here's a snapshot of what they told us:

- The top flexible working options candidates are looking for are:

- **Working from home (63%).** Town planning professionals are particularly keen on this (78%) as are PR professionals (76%) and energy & environment professionals (75%). It's most popular with middle management (69%) and senior management (69%) and less popular with graduates (55%) and board level (52%).

- **Alternative working hours to suit their needs (58%).** Again, town planning professionals are particularly keen on this (63%), followed by energy & environment professionals (62%) and PR professionals (61%). Despite "working from home" not being a massive priority for graduates, 60% of graduates would like alternative working hours.

- **Ability to work from different locations (38%).** 46% of director level candidates would like this.



- One in four (25%) are looking for **part-time work**

- One in five (20%) would be interested in **relocating** from one part of the UK to another, with the South West appealing the most (37%), followed by South East (35%) and Greater London (29%). Nearly one in four (24%) would relocate to Scotland and 21% to North West England.

- 31% are interested in international job opportunities - with the USA and Ireland being cited as the locations that appeal the most, followed by Canada and Australia.

- **Salaries:** The majority are looking for salaries in the range of £30,000 to £59,999.

- **Benefits:** The three most important benefits, ranked in order of importance are 1. flexible working; 2. pension and 3. medical/dental allowance.

- **Working hours:** The majority are looking for full-time (78%), although one in four (25%) are looking for part-time, and one in 10 (10%) for freelance roles.

# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

**?** How can you create a great workplace that attracts and retains the best staff?

We regularly ask our candidates and clients: “What makes a wonderful workplace for you?” By listening to the voices of candidates and organisations that already believe they’re shaping “wonderful workplaces” you can build a picture of what “great” looks like.

Despite candidates placing huge importance on employer brand, our research shows that nearly half of employers (46%) are not doing enough to communicate their employer brand effectively. In fact, more than one in five employers (22%) are communicating it “badly”, “very badly” or “not at all”.

Here’s what candidates told us makes a great workplace:



# JOBSEEKER BEHAVIOUR

## ? Are candidates' needs ahead of employer behaviour?

Flexible working, strong leadership and good communication regularly feature highly on the list of what makes a great workplace, but the list goes on. As an employer, you can't possibly offer everything to everyone but you can use these insights as a benchmark and prioritise the things that matter most to your organisation and employees, ensuring what you offer is aligned to both the business' and employees' needs.

**“WHILST THE INSIGHTS FROM OUR SURVEY WILL GIVE YOU A FLAVOUR OF CANDIDATES' NEEDS - AND THERE'S CLEARLY MORE WORK TO BE DONE BY EMPLOYERS - IN ORDER TO TRULY UNDERSTAND WHAT WILL MAKE YOUR WORKPLACE UNIQUELY BRILLIANT, YOU NEED TO ASK YOUR CURRENT, PAST AND POTENTIAL FUTURE EMPLOYEES HOW THEY PERCEIVE YOUR ORGANISATION AS A PLACE TO WORK AND WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU STAND OUT TO THEM.**

**“AN EMPLOYER BRANDING SURVEY IS A GOOD PLACE TO START TO GAIN THESE SPECIFIC INSIGHTS.”**

**Sean Connell**, Account Director, Wonderful Workplaces



**46%** said their most recent employer **does not** effectively communicate their employer brand.

# JOBSEEKER SENTIMENT

We asked candidates for their views on the key topical issues of automation and Brexit, as these are currently factors affecting jobseeker behaviour and recruitment.

## AUTOMATION

Automation looks set to be one of the biggest fields of the future as its business value impact grows. But many people are reportedly feeling threatened by the uncertainty around whether robots will take their jobs, or indeed topple the human race!

According to the CIPD's report: "People and machines: from hype to reality", artificial intelligence (AI) and automation are sweeping through the world of work. Nearly one-third (32%) of UK organisations have invested in it and half (52%) of employers who have done so have seen an improvement in the quality of their goods and/or services. More than one in three (37%) have reduced costs and one in three (34%) increased revenue. Among employers that have introduced AI and automation in the last five years, more than two-fifths (43%) report job creation and slightly fewer (40%) report job destruction.

**"AI and automation are not simply another technological innovation, but stand to quite radically change the shape of work tasks and jobs."**

CIPD report: "People and machines: from hype to reality"

With that in mind, we asked candidates how they feel automation will impact on their career and it's promising to see that around one in three (32%) feel optimistic, or very optimistic, and the majority (60%) feel neutral.

- 32% feel optimistic, or very optimistic, about the effect automation will have on their career. Sectors that are more optimistic than average are HR (45%), energy & environment (39%) and marketing, advertising, media & events (38%). And senior management (39%) are the most optimistic level of seniority, while graduates (19%) are the least optimistic.
- 60% feel neutral about it. Sectors that are more neutral than average include town planning (75%) and horticulture (65%). Graduates are the most neutral (75%), whereas director-level professionals are the least neutral (54%)
- Only 8% feel pessimistic, or very pessimistic, which could be because so many don't know enough about it to have a firm opinion. The procurement sector is most pessimistic (25%), followed by the GP sector (14%) and marketing, advertising, media & events (10%). The most pessimistic are those at director level (13%), compared with only 5% of senior management and 6% of graduates.

**"WE'RE NOW IN AN EXCITING PLACE WHERE AI IS LIVING UP TO THE HYPE THAT EVERYONE THOUGHT IT COULD DO. WE'RE SEEING MASSIVE BUSINESS VALUE AND IT'S ONLY GOING TO GET HIGHER AS AI TECHNIQUES BECOME MORE ADVANCED."**

Alex Allan, CTO and co-founder, Kortical – as featured on [Campaignlive.co.uk](https://www.campaignlive.co.uk)

# JOBSEEKER SENTIMENT

## BREXIT

### Around one in three worried about the impact of Brexit

Uncertainty is something that employers and employees alike have become used to for many years. And with Brexit overshadowing us, it's important to understand how your employees, and potential future hires, are feeling about it so you can consider strategies to create and maintain positivity in the workplace.

- One in three (34%) feel very, or quite, pessimistic about the impact Brexit will have on their careers. The town planning sector (55%), third sector (42%) and horticulture sector (41%) are the most pessimistic. Director-level are the most pessimistic (43%), followed by graduates (38%).
- Nearly one in 10 (9%) said Brexit has made them consider relocating abroad for work, with Ireland, Canada and Australia among the places they would relocate to. The majority of these are from the town planning and energy & environment sectors.
- Half of the respondents (50%) feel neutral about the impact Brexit will have on their careers.
- 16% feel very, or quite, optimistic about the impact Brexit will have on their careers.

According to the CIPD's guide "Preparing for Brexit through workforce planning", employers should be transparent in their communications and offer genuine opportunities for questions and input, providing the support and training necessary to line managers to enable conversations with their staff to address any concerns.

### Top tips to help you maintain positivity in the workplace through uncertain times:

- Be open and transparent in your communications
- Offer opportunities for questions and input
- Make sure line managers are supported and trained to deal with conversations about Brexit
- Conduct employee surveys and focus groups to gauge sentiment and help give you an indication of the likely rate of turnover in your company
- Make workforce planning a top priority for your business
- Assess the opportunities and risks Brexit might pose to your workforce

**"BREXIT UNCERTAINTY LOOKS SET TO CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME INTO THE FUTURE, AND EVEN WITHOUT BREXIT, AN ENVIRONMENT OF CONSTANT CHANGE IS NOTHING NEW. HAVING A STRONG EMPLOYER BRAND CAN HELP BUILD YOUR ORGANISATION'S RESILIENCE, WHICH BECOMES AN EVER MORE CRUCIAL TOOL IN YOUR ARMOURY TO HELP RIDE WHATEVER STORM COMES YOUR WAY."**



**Vicky Quinn**, Head of Recruitment, Haymarket Media Group

# RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

“Attracting the RIGHT people is a challenge”

“As HRs, the onus is on us too much... it should be on the hiring manager and senior stakeholders, too”

“Recruiting for specialist niche roles is a big challenge for us”

**What employers have told us...**

“How do we differentiate against competitors in such a candidate-driven market?”

“We have to be more creative to target potential employees”

“How can we drive people to our content?”

“How do we localise our smaller brands within our global brand?”

“We have great things to say but no one ever hears it”

- Is your organisation or team doing lots of great things but not communicating it enough?
- Do you know how candidates perceive your organisation as a place to work?
- Do you want to know how to position your organisation as an exciting place to work?

Get in touch for a free consultation: [wonderfulworkplaces@haymarket.com](mailto:wonderfulworkplaces@haymarket.com)

\*Anonymous comments sourced at a breakfast meeting with recruitment managers in 2017, hosted by recruitment firm the Recruitment Events Co, and Campaign Jobs.

# BUILD YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

Competition for talent is fierce in our candidate-driven jobs market. Develop a strong brand and message to cut through the competition and attract and retain the talent you need to make your organisation and teams flourish.

## THE POWER OF EMPLOYER BRANDING: THE CANDIDATE VIEW

- 94% would consider an employer's brand when applying for jobs
- 96% said a company's reputation is important to them
- 89% would turn down a job based on a bad interview experience
- 86% said a bad interview experience would put them off applying to the company again in future
- BUT 46% said their most recent employer does not effectively communicate their employer brand



## ATTRACTING PASSIVE JOBSEEKERS

Features of a job that would make people consider applying for a vacancy even if they're not actively looking are:

- Attractive salary (75%)
- A unique opportunity (71%)
- A better work/life balance (68%)
- A more senior position (49%)
- An easier commute (48%)
- An amazing brand (45%)



## WHAT MAKES A "WONDERFUL WORKPLACE"?

- The people (88%)
- Interesting work (84%)
- Nice working environment (80%)
- Excellent leadership (74%)
- Flexible working culture (71%)



## HOW DO CANDIDATES WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU?

- Email bulletins (55%)
- LinkedIn (53%)
- Articles (43%)
- Industry reports (30%)

# TOP TIPS

## Top tips to going the extra mile to attract top talent:

- ✓ **Be creative:** The importance of a strong brand in hiring talent is underlined by our research which found 94% would take an employer's brand into consideration when applying for jobs. The explosion of content, social media and email marketing has meant that employers are being ever more creative in how they're targeting prospective employees. Gone are the days when slapping a job description up on a job board would be enough to find the perfect candidate.
- ✓ **Make the candidate journey easier:** In a candidate-driven market, if you're not making it easy, many of your competitors probably will be and are, therefore, more likely to attract top talent. Can you shorten the application process? Have you made it easy for candidates to find out about your company culture and vacancies?
- ✓ **Harness the power of content and social media:** Candidates engage with content across a variety of platforms – you need to ensure your message reaches your perfect candidate at the right time, through the right channel. Use content to communicate the culture of your organisation. Salary is not always the biggest driver for candidate attraction. Meaning and purpose, work/life balance and location are equally, if not more, important.
- ✓ **Think “What does the candidate want to know?”:** In all your recruitment activity, think about the value for the candidate – what do they want to know about your organisation in order to be convinced it's where they want to work? If you can't answer this, then make it a priority to find out.
- ✓ **Adopt a marketing mindset:** Employer branding is where recruitment and marketing meet and, in our increasingly candidate-driven market, you need to adopt a marketing mindset in order to attract the right talent. HR and marketing teams should collaborate to create a valuable EVP content strategy. If you don't have a marketing team, then consider outsourcing.

**“EMPLOYER BRANDING IS A USEFUL TOOL TO HELP ORGANISATIONS DIFFERENTIATE WHAT THEY OFFER IN THE LABOUR MARKET, AND RECRUIT, RETAIN AND ENGAGE THE PEOPLE THEY NEED TO SUCCEED.”**

**CIPD**

# EMPLOYER BRANDING INSIGHTS 2019

- **ABOUT THE SURVEY**  
The survey was compiled by Wonderful Workplaces, part of Haymarket Media Group, using data collected from 841 candidates, analysed by Wonderful Workplaces and combined with additional recruitment experts' insights (18 March-15 April 2019)
- To discuss your employer branding or recruitment marketing requirements, call us on 020 8267 5461 or email [wonderfulworkplaces@haymarket.com](mailto:wonderfulworkplaces@haymarket.com) [www.wonderfulworkplaces.co.uk](http://www.wonderfulworkplaces.co.uk)