



Golden standard recruitment processes in a candidate short market



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Introduction

Why are we talking about golden standard recruitment practices now you may ask. Shouldn't all hiring processes established be according to a golden standard already? Unfortunately, that's not always the case. Most importantly, as time goes on and technology, people and the landscape of work are ever evolving, the expectations of the hiring process are also expanding and reaching new heights.

First, let's discuss the current state of the market: it's what we call 'candidate short'.

What does it mean for employers when there is a candidate short market?

Economically speaking, it is when the work demand outweighs the supply of candidates.

More simply, it means that there are more roles and work required than there are qualified and relevant candidates. This means it is more difficult for employers to find the right candidate for their organisation in the current market, especially as candidates have more options to choose from.

So, what are the consequences of a candidate short market for employers?

Firstly, the hiring landscape has become more difficult to navigate. In summary, the main obstacles employers are currently facing include:

- Candidates choosing other opportunities after being offered positions
- Competitive salaries across competing organisations
- Difficulty retaining top talent
- Difficulty hiring 'good' or 'quality' candidates for the organisation
- A sea of options for candidates to select from, creating an overall more competitive hiring environment for employers

This means that employers have to change the way they are hiring and adapt to the competitive market.

Chandler Macleod and Peoplebank have realised the huge impact this current market has on both employers and candidates. In this report, we will look at some pertinent results from a survey of approximately 180 candidates and establish discussion about what improvements can be made to current hiring processes to ensure that candidates have a more positive experience, therefore leading employers to reduce the struggle of hiring in their organisation. In this report you can expect to learn about:

- What is important to quality candidates
- Hiring mistakes you could be making and how to avoid them
- Hiring processes to remove, and what to implement instead
- How to appeal to and win over quality candidates
- How to retain your top talent

What is important to candidates during the hiring process?

73% of survey respondents felt that the hiring process seriously affects their desire to work for an organisation.

We have simplified the below data, combining what was important and very important to candidates during their hiring experiences.

Hiring experiences	How many respondents considered these experiences important or very important
A face-to-face interview (online or in person)	77%
Prompt response times	93%
Clear job descriptions	94%
Advertised salary/rates	87%
Personable interactions throughout	89%
Receiving feedback from the potential employer	93%
A great onboarding experience	92%

When asked about positive hiring experiences, interviewed candidates valued 'straight forward hiring processes' that involved 'feeling heard and listened to', 'personal interaction and encouragement', as well as receiving prompt 'feedback on different steps.'

Candidate Interviews

My experience was very positive, the person who interviewed me made me feel at ease and respected.

Feedback is key during the hiring/on-boarding process.

Prompt feedback and scheduling of interviews is important!

A welcome/introduction email before your first day to let you know what to expect when you start, who to meet, and where is helpful.

Whilst all the above hiring experiences are clearly considered important by candidates, there was some extra feedback which gave us insight into what most potential employees truly value the most during the hiring process, and what they largely want to see improvement around.

Common hiring mistakes and how to avoid them

According to our research, as well as multiple channels of feedback from not just job seekers but also our recruitment consultants and colleagues within the industry we were able to narrow down the biggest mistakes and therefore the greatest opportunities for improvement that organisations (and even some agencies) can make during the hiring process.

The experience	How many respondents considered these experiences relevant to their own journeys
Desire to hear back from potential employers faster	76%
Wanting more information about advertised roles	75%
Difficulty understanding employee benefits	41%
Wanting better communication/feedback	52%
Too many steps in the hiring process	37%

*These responses agreed or strongly agreed to experiencing the aforementioned hiring issues.

Employers mostly need to have faster response times and more accurate job descriptions

The above data sitting at 76% clearly indicates that slow response times are far too common. When an employer is too slow to reply, candidates are given little option but to continue applying for other roles and/or to accept offers that have already been made to them. If an employer is too slow to respond, they will miss out on quality candidates to organisations with better, more efficient hiring processes and decision making.

If you find a quality candidate that ticks almost all your boxes, don't 'um and ah', act quickly, offer them the role.

Additionally, more accurate job descriptions are important to 75% of candidates. More information from both agencies and employers would help candidates better understand how to best apply and interview for the role, as well as help them decide about whether they want the role. Transparent, honest and detailed job ads are more appealing to quality candidates and will likely get more engagement and applications overall.

There were also several experiences brought to our attention where the job description changed after starting within the role, causing confusion and leaving new employees in the lurch with a job they didn't originally agree to. This is something that can strongly affect employee turnover as it causes a culture of distrust and can bring about frustration and disengagement in employees.

Always ensure your job descriptions are clear, detailed, and accurate to attract the best quality candidates that will stay with your organisation.

Ideally, there should be better communication and feedback throughout the hiring process.



Over half (52%) of the candidates who responded to our survey, considered little to no communication as something they often encounter. This is especially true for candidates who reach the interview stage and do not hear back. They are left to assume they have been unsuccessful. This shows lack of respect for that person's time and gives them no indication of how they might be able to improve or be successful in the future. Several instances were mentioned where businesses could not provide any helpful feedback, and even more instances were mentioned where no feedback was given at all and the individuals who had attended interviews were 'ghosted' or ignored.

This kind of behaviour from large, well-respected organisations can come across as uncaring, unempathetic and disrespectful. Not only is it unkind to show no response to those who have reached the interview stage, but it is dangerous to the employers who conduct business this way. It can leave a bad taste for many individuals who discuss their experience with family, friends, and colleagues. Additionally, there is the possibility that disgruntled candidates could leave negative reviews for your business via Google or other online sites. These reviews are permanent and can be seen by anyone who does a quick search for your business. If a culture of no response becomes the norm, a business will become known for this, making them an unappealing prospect for many candidates.

Prioritise feedback as part of your hiring process, build it into your culture and habits rather than seeing it as something that you don't have time for.

Whilst difficulty understanding employee benefits and a lengthy hiring process were not deemed as relevant, there is still room for improvement in these areas.



Considering many of our respondents work within a contractor capacity, hiring processes are usually shorter and more to the point. Additionally, contractor benefits are frequently communicated, if not via the organisation themselves, by the agency who helped to employ them.

However, this is not always the same case for candidates searching for full-time positions. Hiring processes for full-time positions are often dragged out, with the most common complaint being slow or no responses (even after reaching interview stages). Employee benefits also differ for these roles and are not always communicated in the same way therefore the company can appear more elusive and less transparent. This can encourage potential employees to question what the benefits would be for working with an organisation who cannot advertise what they give back to their employees, overall making them a less appealing option to the candidate.

What hiring processes are wanted, and what isn't?

To summarise, it is clear that potential employees want:

- Efficient response times and job offers
- Transparent, clear and accurate job descriptions
- Interview feedback whether positive or negative

Given that interview feedback evoked several strong responses, we wanted to delve deeper into how organisations fair during this specific stage of hiring. Interviews are an important part of the impact an organisation leaves on potential employees and it would be great to ensure this part of the process is positive for all parties.



How well are organisations performing interviews?

The interview experience	How many respondents experienced these challenges in their own journeys
Unclear or non-transparent interviewer	24%
Preference of face-to-face interview than a pre-recorded video interview	67%
No better understanding of the role after the interview	21%
Negative demeanour from the interviewer	16%
Unclear understanding of company culture	25%
Unsure what the next steps were	24%

*These responses agreed or strongly agreed to experiencing the aforementioned interview scenarios.

These results show that overall, most organisations aren't doing too badly when it comes to interviews, with very few people having negative interview experiences.

However, there is some room for improvement.

There is a dislike towards pre-recorded or one way video interviews

Several candidates have mentioned their inability to build rapport and feeling like 'just another number' when it comes to having to pre-record video interviews, despite their understanding that businesses are trying to save time.

However, there is a time and place for one way video interviews such as in volume recruitment where there is a mass scale of applicants and organisations would like to hear from as many people as possible. In this case, candidates may be able to understand that a pre-recorded interview is ideal in order to give them the opportunity to be heard rather than discarded from a shortlist based on their resume alone.

If you are not conducting recruitment on a large scale, we recommend to opt for face-to-face video interviews instead of pre-recorded interviews. As mentioned earlier, candidates want to feel heard, respected and experience personal interaction.

Additionally, a quarter of respondents did feel like more clarity could be communicated during interviews surrounding both the role they were interviewing for, what the next steps would be, and the organisational culture.

Whilst this is not an overwhelming response from candidates, it is something worth noting to be aware of when conducting your interviews.

So, what can companies do to appeal to great candidates, and keep them?



Appealing to quality talent



Improve ad clarity and information



Be clear and loud about your company culture



Improve response times when dealing with candidates



Promote how your teams work together



Give feedback to unsuccessful applicants



Communicate your company purpose



Share and promote your employee benefits

Keeping your top talent

First impressions count!

72% of respondents agreed that the onboarding process largely affects their desire to remain working for a company. This is further indication that employee retention begins from the hiring processes and not only once an employee is established in your company.

Some feedback on what makes an onboarding process positive include clear and helpful training, transparent communication, proper guidance, and being made to feel welcomed and included.

Popular workplace benefits prove to all be highly important

How many respondents considered these benefits important or very important

Workplace Benefits

Flexible work	84%
A competitive salary	90%
Career progression	80%
Positive work culture	92%
Working as part of a good team	93%

As you can see in the above table, there are several workplace benefits that all businesses need to be offering. Without just one of these elements, employees can become disengaged and look to leave your organisation.

With positive work culture and working as part of a good team being of the utmost importance to all those we surveyed, we received many more comments on how important the work environment was on an individual's desire to remain working for an organisation. Ideally then, building a positive work culture with teams that work cohesively and happily together should be the highest priority in your talent retention strategies.

Second to this was offering a competitive salary, which should not go ignored. Given the recent cost of living and economic circumstances, all quality candidates will look to be fairly compensated and may choose higher paying roles, even if they feel other workplace benefits are not as strong. In saying this, when weighing all options, a toxic work culture is a definite red flag for many candidates and is still likely to deter quality talent from higher paying positions as quality of life is becoming increasingly important for employees also.

Additional tips and recommendations (must read!)

The below recommendations are items that were frequently mentioned which are likely to have a wonderful impact on your employee engagement and retention. There are no items on this list that shouldn't be considered, especially within the current climate of the working world.

Many of these items are currently in action at Chandler Macleod and Peoplebank internally, which is likely linked to much of our long leadership tenure and high employee engagement.

- Rewards and recognition programs
- Positive feedback and encouragement
- Realistic feedback for improvement
- Working with great people
- Inclusion for all with sincere focus on diversity
- Workplace flexibility
- Career development and potential for growth
- Transparent communication from top down
- Friendly leaders and colleagues
- Personable, respectful, and caring culture
- Accountability, doing what you say you will do
- Clear communication of company goals and direction
- No workplace politics or drama
- Meaningful or purpose-led work or initiatives
- Established and efficient processes

Improving any business process is not always an easy task to take on, however, most worthwhile actions aren't. The positive impact on transforming your hiring process flows on to not only effect the people you deal with during hiring interactions, but it will also lead to improvement of your company culture, your business processes, your employee engagement, ultimately helping you to build a workforce who is proud to work for you for the long haul.

You may not need to change much to allow this impact on your business, or you may be doing everything right already, and this report was simply a great reassurance of what to keep doing. Perhaps you need a total overhaul of your hiring process, or you need further help deciphering what to do and what not to do. We hope this report was able to give you some true insight into what achievable changes can be made within the current market to help organisations feel more confident about hiring quality talent and keeping them onboard.

If you would like to chat about any of the results and advice in this report, or how we could help you enhance your hiring process.

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