



edburydale

Experience And Innovation In Recruitment

How Do Recruitment Processes
Impact On The Battle For
Procurement Talent?

Introduction

Edbury Daley have instigated some timely new research on the choice of recruitment and selection methods and the impact of those choices on the success rate of a getting a quality recruit in to the hiring business.

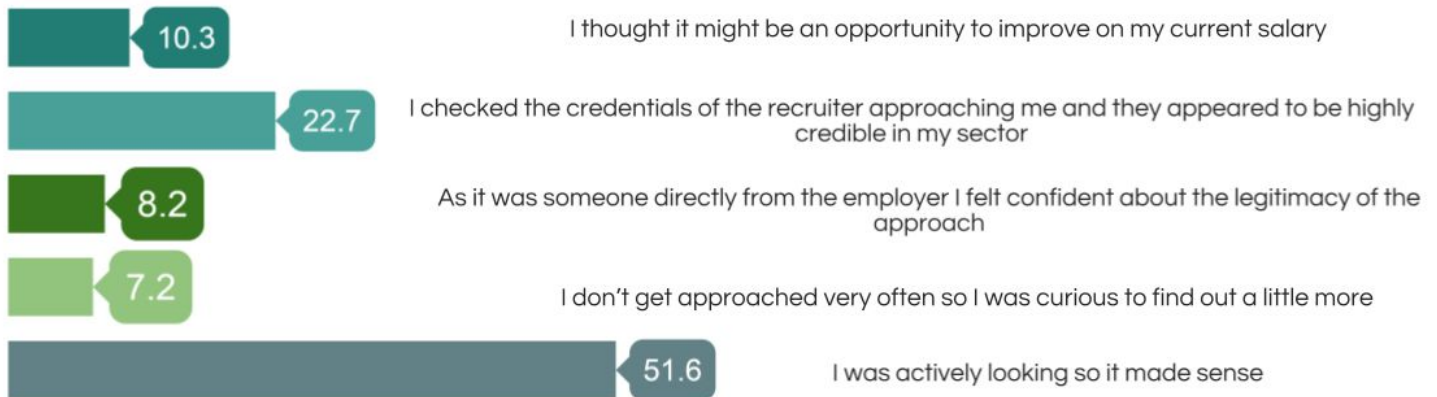
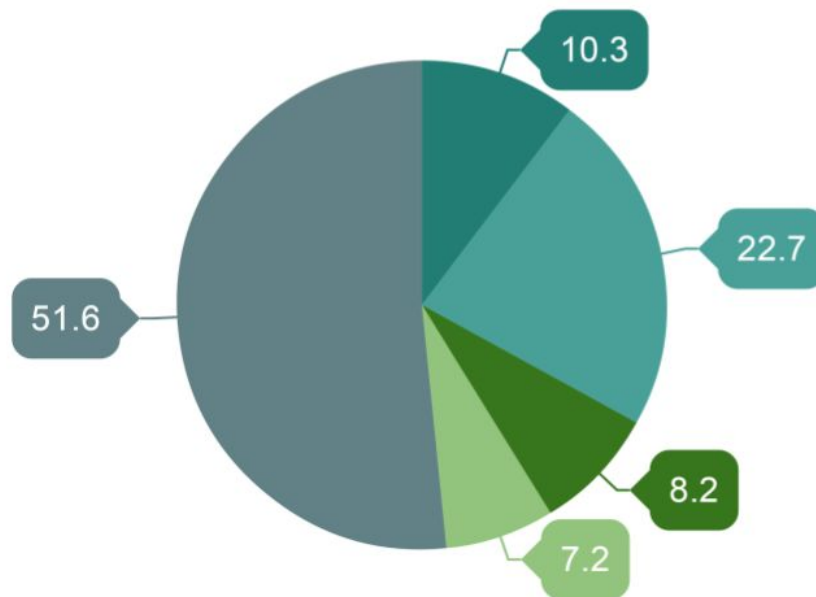
As the global economy recovers many companies are pursuing significant growth plans. Often, the key constraining factor is the ability to hire and retain the skills and expertise needed. Employer Branding and Talent Communities are becoming the new parlance of Human Resource Management as bigger corporations embrace the advent of social media to gain an advantage in finding the people they need. This is covered in some detail in a very interesting [recent study by Deloitte](#).

The creation of talent pipelines and new employee engagement techniques are pushing the boundaries of traditional recruitment practice but their success is reliant on the conversion of the initial engagement in to a hire. In other words, they only bring candidates to the start line of the selection process. How a company interacts from this point onwards determines whether the candidate ever crosses the finish line and joins the hiring company. Our survey has been designed to investigate this second stage of the recruitment process.

Candidate facing, the questions were written to test attitudes and experience towards the mechanics of a typical corporate recruitment process. With companies investing heavily in cutting edge talent attraction strategies, this survey is about what happens next; how candidates respond to companies' selection procedures.

The data gathered can be used to formulate a robust framework for a recruitment process which all corporate organisations can use as a benchmark for best practice.

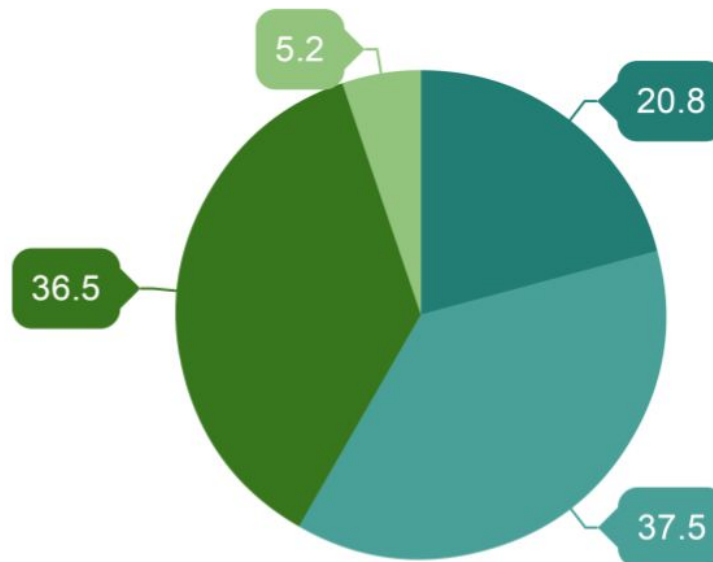
1. When you engaged in an initial discussion with the company or recruiter approaching you which statement best describes your reason for doing so:



The main finding from the responses to the first question is that of those who engaged in a recruitment process half were already in job seeking mode whilst the other half were passive. It is reasonable to conclude that 50% of the candidates would have been willing to engage by any reasonable means whether that was recruitment advertising or responding to a recruiters phone call.

The passive half indicate one of the four remaining alternatives as their reason for expressing interest. Of those four, being approached by a recruiter who is credible and established in the procurement profession is comfortably the prevailing reason. A few minutes online research by a candidate will quickly give an indication if they have been approached by a recruiter with a high quality reputation. For almost 23% of candidates that was the reason they were willing to consider the position being offered.

2. When you chose not to engage with an initial approach which statement best describes your reasoning



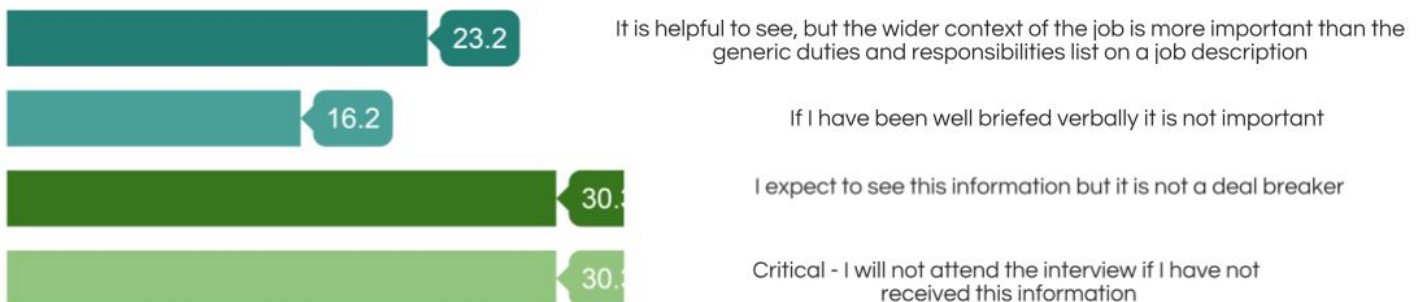
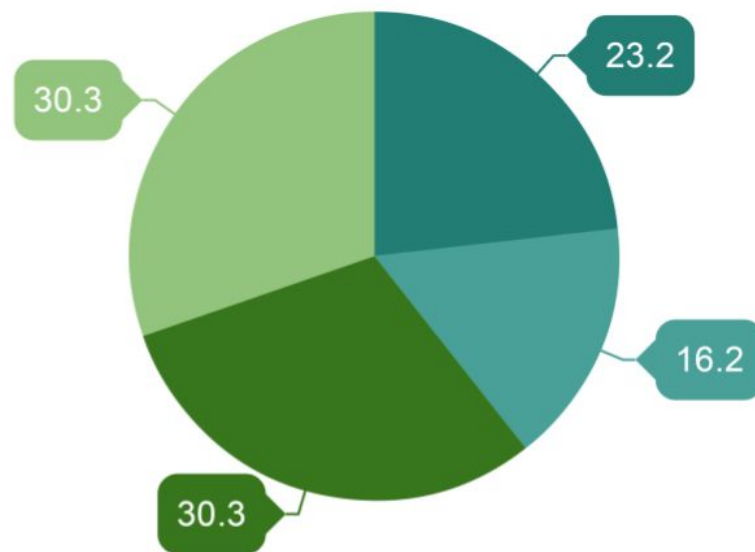
Here we explored the opposing candidate group; those who chose not to engage with a recruitment process. Over 70% of those surveyed were put off by a poor initial interaction with the recruiter. Either the recruiter was unable to offer much detail on the employer and the job opportunity or the candidate simply felt they were being targeted to enhance a candidate database.

There are several explanations for a poor brief communicated to the candidate. Often hiring companies have an arm's length relationship with a panel of recruiters. Those recruiters are given a limited or weak brief by an overstretched internal recruitment team. Alternatively, the recruiter hasn't taken the time to ask enough searching questions to the hiring company to compile a strong initial pitch to the candidate. Whatever the explanation, the resulting poor initial approach turned off almost 36% of candidates.

The 37.9% of candidates who were wary of an approach which they suspected was only a CV gathering exercise show the degree of cynicism built up by candidates regarding external recruiters. This may be attributable to unprofessional practices historically utilised by recruiters for their own commercial gain.

Around 26% cited factors which were beyond the influence of the recruiter making the initial approach, primarily that they simply weren't interested in considering another position at the time.

3. Assuming you have been verbally briefed by a recruitment consultant or internal recruiter, how do you regard seeing a written job description prior to first interview:



Here we further explore the pre interview preparation; specifically the role of the job description.

Typically a job description is a list of day to day activities and responsibilities for the job holder. It doesn't contain information on recent performance of the company, future corporate plans, company culture, structure of procurement team, size of spend or reason for hiring. However, despite it's limited value in a candidate's decision to pursue or not pursue a job over 30% insist on seeing it prior to attending interview.

A further 29.6% expect to see a job description leaving just 40% who regard the document as largely peripheral to the hiring process.

4. Assuming you were tentatively interested in the position you have been approached about please rank these selection tools with the one most likely to put you off pursuing the job any further, first.

	Score*	Rank
First interview to comprise of a half day assessment centre during the working week.	289	1
A requirement for psychometric testing to be completed online at home before attending a first interview	239	2
First interview at a remote site, ie not where the job is to be based	174	3
Initial face to face interview with a recruitment consultant is required before an interview with the employer	162	4

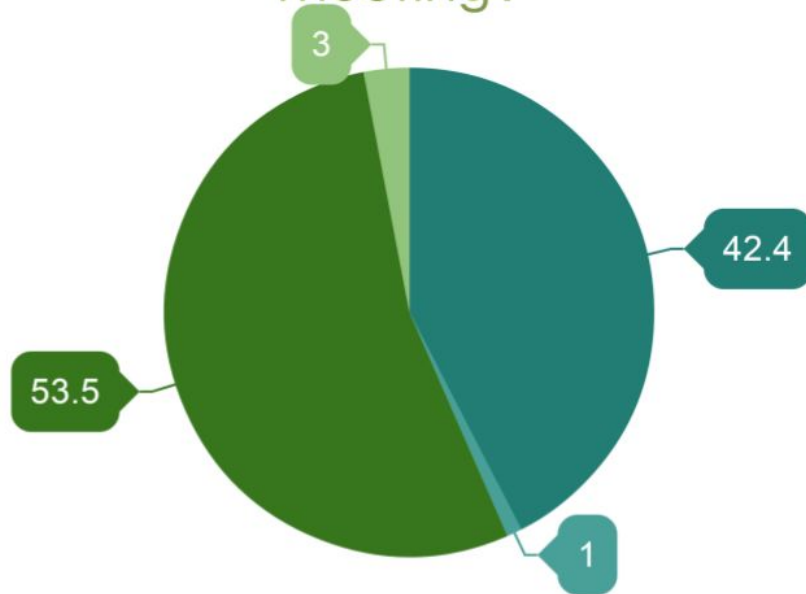
* Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the score is the sum of all weighted * rank counts.

Increasingly, companies are using methods to assess candidates in addition to a traditional face to face interview. These often consist of testing the candidates verbal or numerical reasoning or personality profiling to establish prevailing behaviours in the work place. In many cases the test results are very valuable in building a picture of a candidate's strengths and development areas. However, our research shows a downside to their use.

Candidates ranked assessment centres as their number one reason for withdrawing from a hiring process if this was expected before a first interview. This was followed by online psychometric testing at home.

The negative impact on the candidate pool can be reduced by placing testing towards the end of the recruitment process. By this point the candidates feel a greater sense of wanting the job they have been able to discuss in more detail with the hiring manager at interview. They are more willing to invest the time and effort in other forms of assessment.

5. On the understanding that you were approached about the job you are now attending an interview for, which statement best describes your expectations of this first meeting?



42.4

I need to convey my capability and skills to the employer but they need to convince me that their position is more exciting than my current job

1

The employer will ask rigorous demanding questions and I really need to perform well

53.5

I need to give a good account of myself but I am also expecting the employer to give me more detail on the position and the company

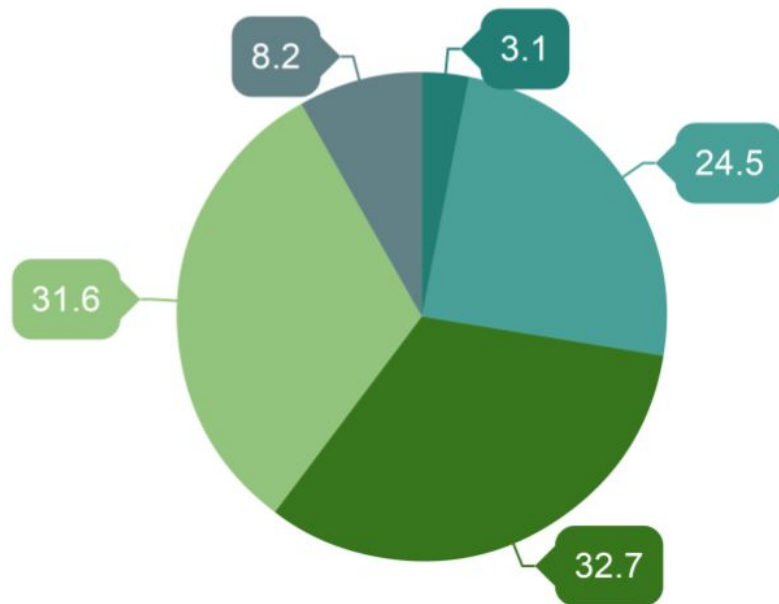
3

I am happy in my current position so it's up to the hiring company to tempt me.

This question was designed to answer the question of "Who is selling to who?" at first interview. Conventional wisdom indicates that the interviewer's role is to put the candidate through their paces at interview with a series of searching and demanding questions about their skills and work experience. Based on the answers the interviewer decides if the candidate progresses to the next stage. This, however, is based on the premise that the candidate is totally committed to pursuing the opportunity and any narrative the interviewer provides on the job and company will have no influence on the candidates willingness to progress.

The data confirms this premise to be false. Over 40% of candidates expect the interviewer to be convincing them that the job on offer is a more enticing than their current position whilst acknowledging the need to sell their own abilities at this first meeting. Just as insightful is that only 1% subscribed to the conventional wisdom of the interviewer being able to simply assess their suitability.

6. Having attended a first interview with a potential employer, how long are you prepared to wait for feedback before you feel disengaged from the process?

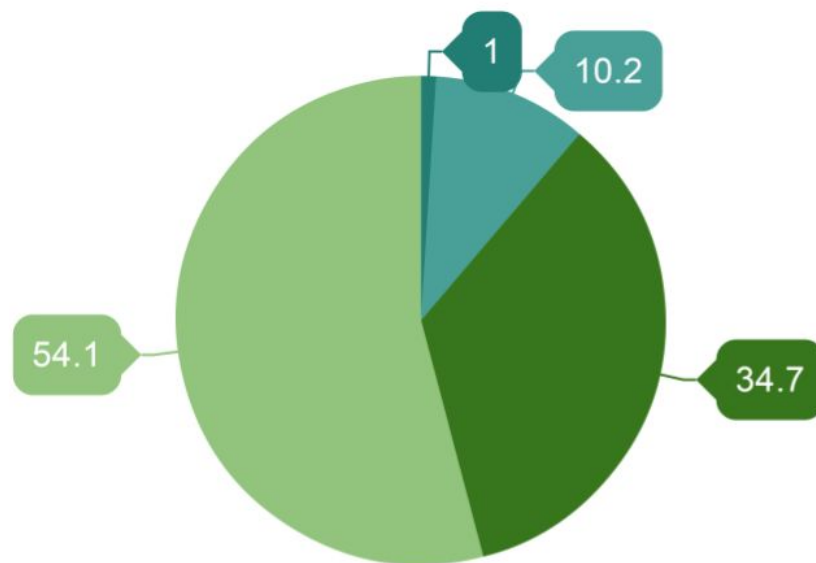


In recruitment 'no news is bad news', but at which point in time after interview? This question explores candidates tolerances to delays in providing feedback on their interview performance.

The data here is largely self explanatory, however, the headline is that after one week with with no interview feedback 88% of candidates disengage from the recruitment process. Even beyond a couple of days a quarter of candidates interest is negatively impacted.

Hiring managers who don't prioritise providing feedback among the competing demands of their day to day work risk losing candidates who were hard to find and whom the company has already invested time in to. Or to use the data, after two weeks with no feedback only 11% of candidates are still interested in pursuing the job on offer.

7. Assuming you received feedback quickly from your first interview and were invited back for a second interview how long would you regard as an acceptable time frame between the two interviews?

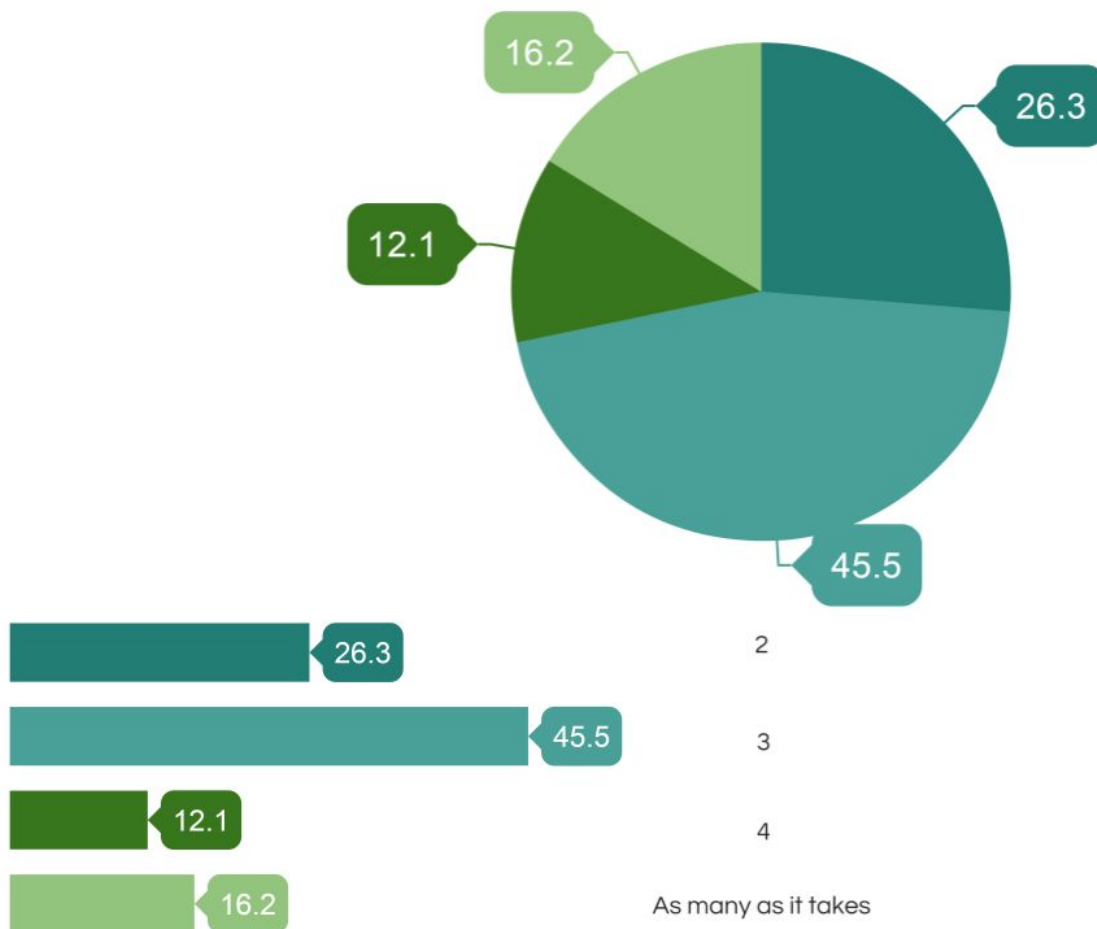


The hypothesis behind this question is that a recruitment process which loses momentum rarely results in a successful hire. The data supports this notion strongly with candidates showing a limited tolerance to delays between interviews.

Specifically, only 11% think a gap of more than three weeks between first and second interview is acceptable.

Scheduling of interviewing can be logistically difficult with senior managers commitments to their clients and internal business management. However, candidates perceive the job they are pursuing as being unimportant if the senior manager cannot make time in the diary for several weeks to conduct the next interview. Just as negatively, they may simply conclude that the company is poorly organised and doesn't value it's own hiring process.

8. If you are pursuing a management level position what is the maximum number of interviews you believe is acceptable before a job offer is made.

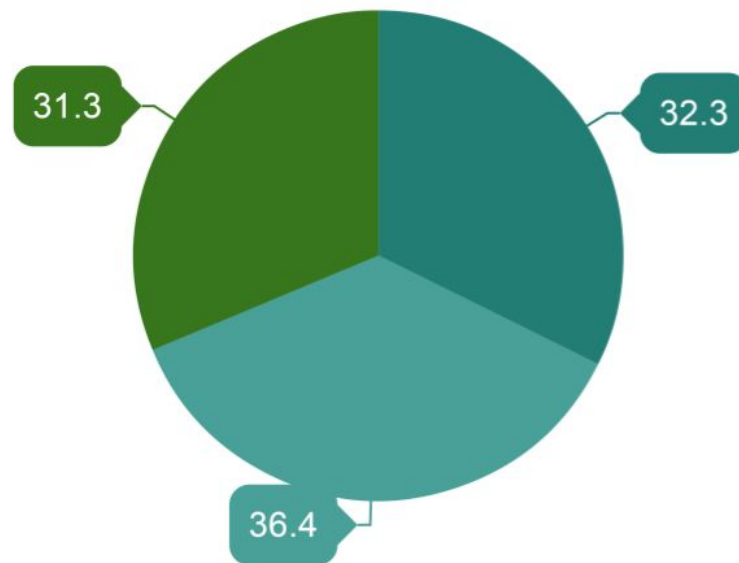


A thorough interview process is important. A hiring mistake is very costly in management time and restarting the recruitment process. Usually a hiring manager wants the opinion of valued team members or a peer in another department. To achieve this and deepen the discussion around the job requirements and the candidates suitability takes more than one meeting.

However, attending interviews can be inconvenient, costly and stressful to candidates who have no guarantee of a job offer at the end of the process. So how much time and effort are they willing to invest at their own risk? The data indicates that 70% of candidates will not tolerate more than three interviews for a management grade position.

Being clear from the outset with candidates on your intended interview process helps to limit candidate's interview fatigue. It also avoids the difficult conversation where the candidate is hoping your phone call is to make them an offer only to hear "....there's just one more person we'd like you to meet.."

9. When you receive a verbal job offer which of these statements best describes your reaction:



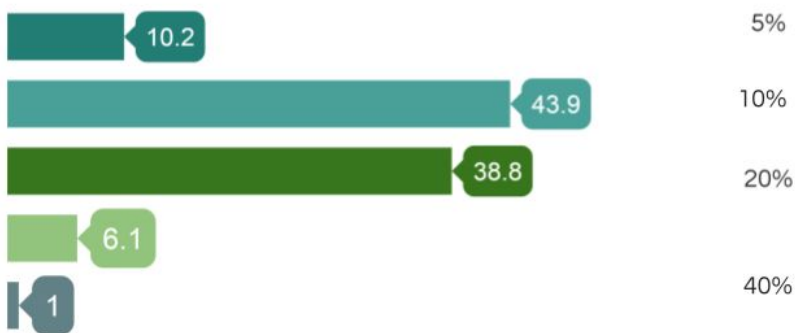
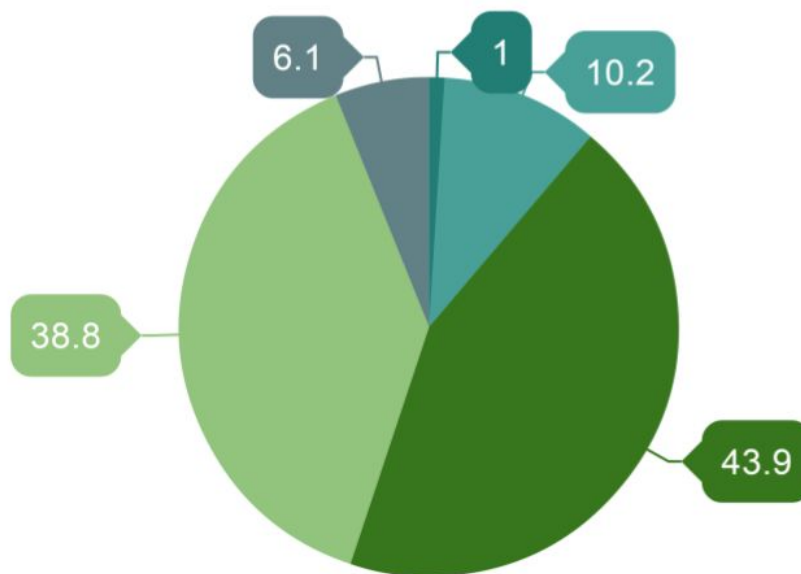
Pitching a job offer to a candidate can be like walking a tight rope. A range of figures will probably have been discussed during the initial approach and the interview process. In most cases the candidate is focused on the highest figure whilst the hiring manager is thinking about the budget and what he or she might get the candidate for ie a lower figure. Both parties have invested a lot of time to get to a job offer stage and no-one wants to walk away empty handed.

The data shows a fairly even distribution of thinking amongst candidates in receipt of an offer. Exactly the same proportion of candidates take the diametrically opposite view on negotiation. That is to say one group assumes that the first offer is the best offer and therefore they accept or decline on that basis. The opposite group will try to negotiate the salary upwards regardless of how attractive the first offer is to them.

The remaining group, also of similar size have a salary in mind and will negotiate if the offer falls short.

There seems to be no prevailing message here although it is worth keeping in mind that almost a third of candidates will be turned off if you low ball the first offer regardless of your intention to improve it.

10. Assuming the non monetary aspects of the job such as distance from home, working hours etc. were similar to your current position how much of an increase in basic salary would you require as a minimum to commit to a move:

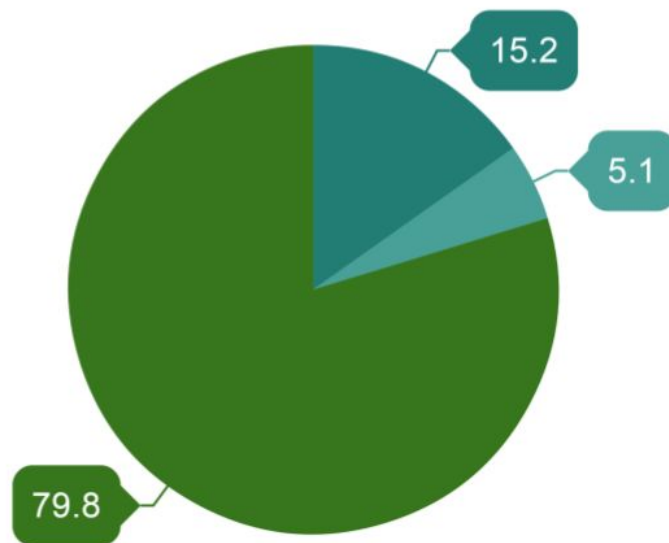


How much of an increase a candidate expects to move jobs will incorporate many variables including desire to leave present employer, attractiveness of new employer, distance from home, fringe benefits such as holidays, pension and so on. However, with many corporate packages at management grade containing similar components the basic salary remains the main driver of overall value. Hence, we have isolated this factor to focus our attention on.

The respondents tell us that almost 90% of candidates are expecting at least a 10% increase in basic salary to move jobs, if all other factors are similar. Half of that group, around 45%, would seek at least a 20% increment.

In summary there needs to be between a 10% and 20% improvement for your job offer not to be rejected on the grounds of salary. Only a handful of the world's most desirable employers such as Google and Apple can use their company reputation as substitute for a material increase in remuneration.

11. If after accepting a verbal job offer you had not received a written confirmation within two weeks and had no further communication from the employer which course of action are you most likely to take?



15.2

Consider other jobs you may have been approached about

5.1

Assume that the employer was no longer able to make you a job offer

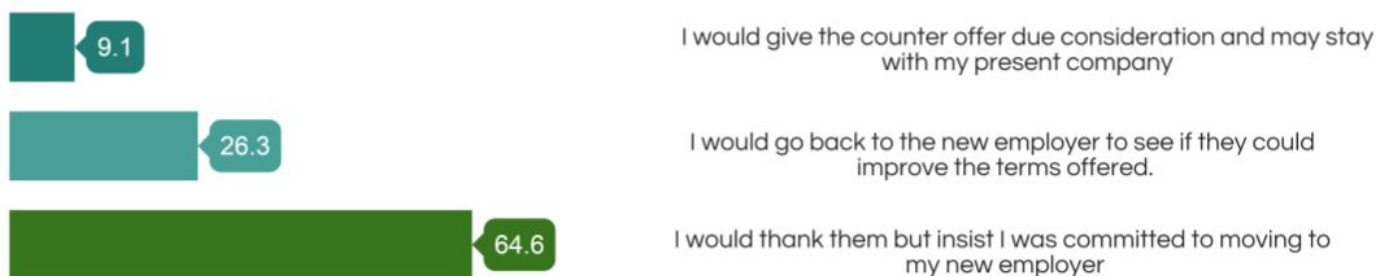
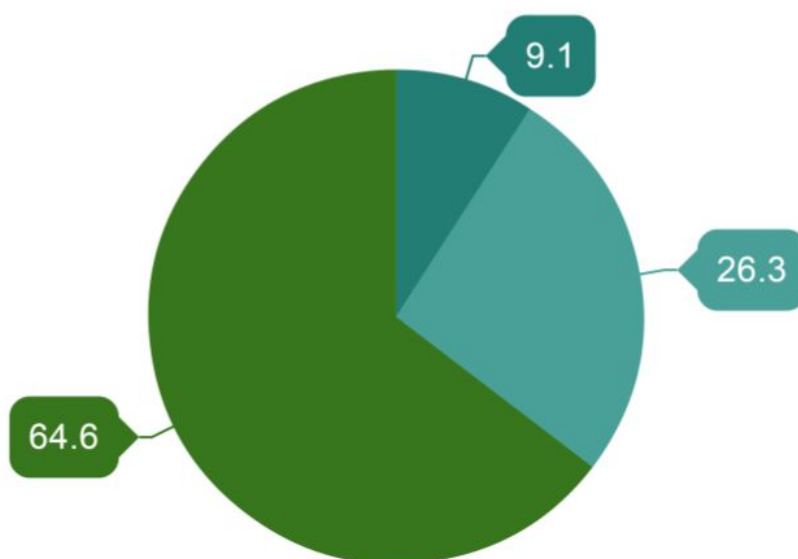
79.8

Contact the employer directly to chase up

Receiving a signed acceptance letter back from the preferred candidate is always a source of relief to a hiring manager. The process has often run in to months by this time and the prospect of starting a fresh search for candidates is a daunting one. Despite this, many firms get caught up in the bureaucracy of generating and sending out an offer of employment. Sometimes requiring approval from different managers or departments before final sign off can delay the process.

Our question here was intended to find out what candidates do when having verbally agreed to accept a job and there is nothing in writing from the employer. 80% would follow up directly to find out why there is a delay and when they will receive written confirmation. Surprisingly, this number is not higher. Our data shows that a fifth of candidates will allow their attention to be diverted either on to other jobs or simply to assume there has been a change of decision and a job offer is no longer forthcoming.

12. If on resignation your present employer offered to match the terms and conditions of your new job which would best describe your reaction?



High performing employees are the lifeblood of every company. Every firm wants to employ them, no business wants to lose them. So what happens when the present employer makes a last ditch attempt to keep their employee from leaving the business for better terms and conditions?

Counter offers are particularly common place where candidates with very specific niche experience are in short supply. Employers know that replacing them will be difficult and expensive. Offering them a financial incentive to stay may well be the cheapest option, if it's not too late!

The data shows that there is some success in this method with a quarter saying they would at least consider a counter offer from their current employer. How many ultimately accept the counter offer or how long those people remain at the company before looking again is not assessed here.

For 65% of the candidates the decision to move on is final. They would not entertain a negotiation to stay.



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