

**MAKE SURE
YOU'RE GIVING
THE NEW BREED OF
CANDIDATES WHAT
THEY WANT.**

CONTENTS

- 04** Are you missing out on the best talent?
- 05** Are you being pipped at the post?
- 06** The ideal jobseeker journey
- 08** Engaging with a new generation
- 09** The recession effect
- 10** Interview etiquette: don't let the grass grow
- 12** Recruiting in a volatile market
- 13** It pays to consider every obstacle
- 14** Recruiting talent when candidates call the shots

ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON THE BEST TALENT?

Developing first-rate attraction techniques is great for getting your brand noticed (and for drawing top industry talent to your door), but if your recruitment process leaves a lot to be desired, your chances of securing the market's most in-demand people to join your team is going to be slim.

Financial recovery may have boosted the UK's economy, but for businesses with their sights set on growth, there's a pressing need to raise their game. In a candidate-led market, those who fail to move with the times are struggling to secure the staff they want — and in a booming economy, who can afford an empty seat?

To find out more, we recently surveyed over 500 hiring managers in companies with under 250 employees, and over 1000 office professionals who've changed jobs within the last two years. Our findings suggest that while the UK jobs market grows in confidence, employer trepidation is costing businesses across the board.

Adapting hiring processes to ever changing market conditions will set your business up for success.



ARE YOU BEING PIPPED AT THE POST?

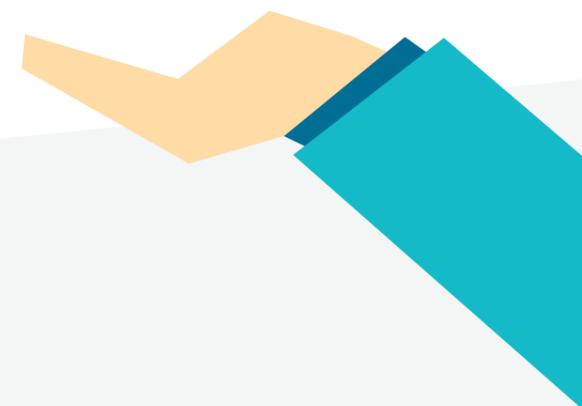
It stands to reason that if a strong candidate is interviewing with you, they're also checking out (and wanted by) your competitors — and if the rival recruitment process is faster and sleeker, you're going to find yourself on the losing side of what's becoming an increasingly common hiring battle. Savvy employers are responding by making their offers quickly in a bid to snap up the best people for their business — leading to 60% of SME hiring managers having job offers rejected because a competitor has already bagged their first choice candidate.

Nearly half of the professionals that we surveyed reported receiving multiple job offers during their search — a figure that rises to 75% as seniority of role increases. Those in the IT, HR, and accountancy and finance sectors received the most offers, highlighting the importance of acting quickly where in-demand skills are concerned.

Clearly then, candidates value speed and efficiency — and yet, according to Glassdoor Economic Research, the average hiring time in the UK has doubled from 14 to 28.6 days since 2010. And it's likely to cost you.



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THE IDEAL JOBSEEKER JOURNEY

You may think you're guarding yourself against recruitment blunders, but making applicants jump through hoops is unlikely to win you any points in the race for talent.

Almost all jobseekers long for a simple application process (95%), a transparent recruitment process from the very beginning (97%), and a detailed job description (96%); without these, over 80% said they'd be less likely to apply for a role. Being transparent and keeping things as simple as possible could make the difference between bagging your chosen hire, and missing out to a rival offer.

In fact, a clearly defined recruitment process was found to be more important than meeting a potential boss (29%), understanding company culture (28%), having ample opportunity to ask questions at interview (26%), or learning about the company (22%). Similarly, almost a quarter of candidates (24%) thought that having just one interview was important, and one in five (20%) believed there should be no more than two. If your processes are complex, you may want to consider a new approach — before you're blacklisted by frustrated jobseekers the country over.

And it appears that younger applicants are the least likely to put up with bad recruitment processes — so if you're focusing on the next generation of promising professionals, it's time to up your game.

Reduce, combine or drop unnecessary stages or lengthy delays in your hiring process to make your business more attractive to today's jobseeker.



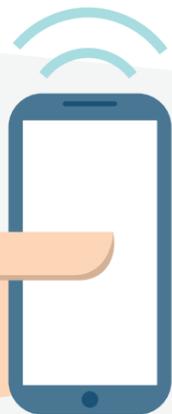
ENGAGING WITH A NEW GENERATION

With the arrival of smartphones and social media, the up-and-coming generations have wildly different experience of, and expectations about, communication.

According to the REC's report, *'The candidate strikes back'*, the jobseeker journey is more complex than ever before: today's candidates can engage with employers speedily, and with minimal commitment and effort, through every avenue imaginable — setting hiring managers the tough challenge of attracting candidates who are 'time poor'.

Candidates are also far more creative in terms of how they hunt down their next career opportunity, and it's given them a greater grasp of what a 'good' recruitment process actually looks like; meaning that for employers, there's nowhere to hide. There's also the added challenge posed by a jobseeker's sphere of influence: candidates (particularly younger ones) are largely swayed by the views of their peers. With the advent of review sites, such as Glassdoor, employers should be worried that their secrets will be revealed online; and in today's world of share and share alike, a bad review spreads like wildfire.

Every step of the recruitment process will shape the impression that a potential employee has of your organisation; influencing them to either accept or reject a job offer.



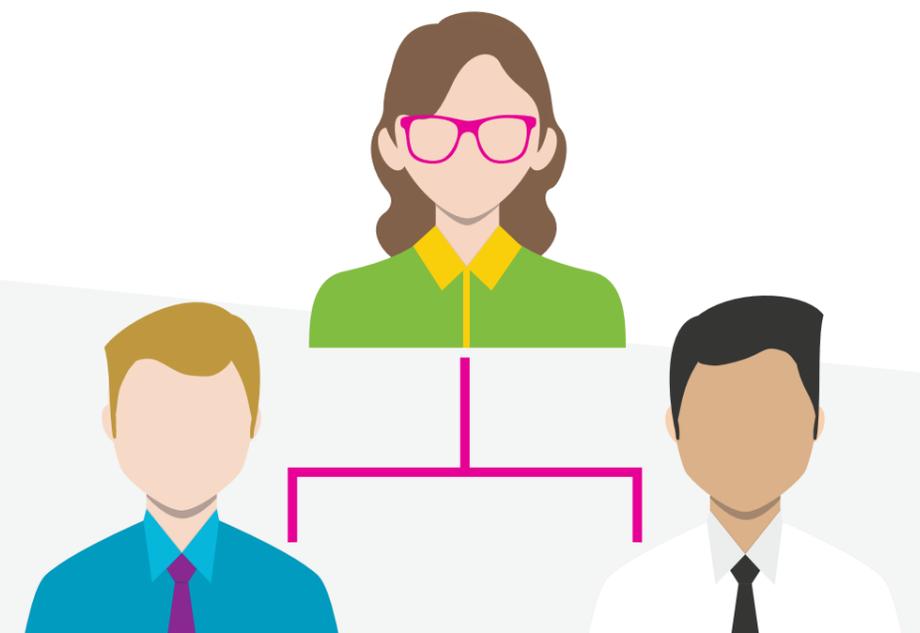
THE RECESSION EFFECT

The changing landscape of employment is also impacting the aggressiveness of the process: one in five hiring managers are losing candidates to rival offers far more frequently in recent times than five years ago. But why?

Five years ago, processes slowed to allow for the sheer volume of jobseekers; there was simply no need to speed up the recruitment process, meaning that you were less likely to be pipped to the post by an eager hiring manager. However, the competition for new hires is intensified in a market where unemployment is at its lowest point in seven years, and job creation has maintained a steady pace since the recession ended. Many employers are still, however, cautious.

Hiring managers are (understandably) averse to recruiting the wrong person, knowing full well that a mistake can prove detrimental to team morale, whilst costing the company time and money — but so can being unable to secure the best people by moving too slowly. For a modern day jobseeker, it's not uncommon to have multiple options, and a slow, lengthy or overly complicated hiring process from one employer could point them towards another.

As job vacancies increase and unemployment declines, talented people are less available, and businesses need to change their processes to reflect that today's climate demands decisiveness.



INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE: DON'T LET THE GRASS GROW

Your recruitment process determines your success, and how quickly you follow up on an interview is a big part of that: 40% of the professionals that we surveyed expect to be contacted within one to two days of their job interview; 80% expect to be contacted within four days, and virtually no one expects to hear back after one working week. So if you want to stay in with a chance, communication is key.

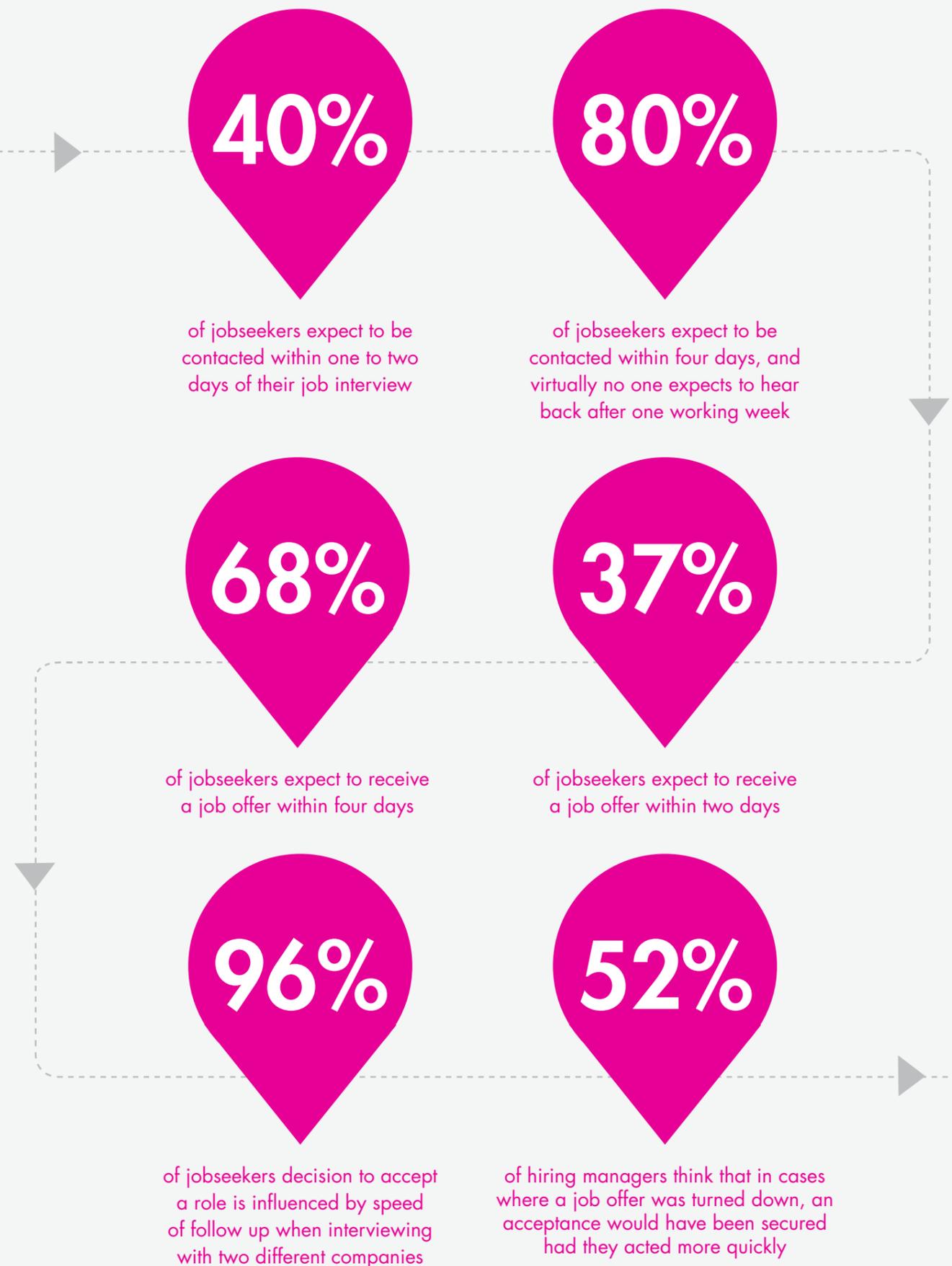
Similarly, two in five (37%) expect to receive a job offer within two days, and almost three in five (68%) within four days; after this time, if a rival employer swoops in with an offer, you're likely to lose out. Don't believe us? You might when you consider that, when interviewing with two different companies, 96% of jobseekers are influenced by speed of follow up. You might have the greatest talent attraction campaign in the world, a killer benefits scheme, and a salary scale to be proud of, but if you drag your feet when it matters the most, much of that could go to waste.

And despite their relative tardiness in many cases, it seems that employers are fully aware of it.

Over half (52%) of hiring managers think that in cases where a job offer was turned down, an acceptance would have been secured had they acted more quickly; this belief is even more prevalent in the HR (70%), IT (69%), and finance and accounting (57%) industry. So if employers know that lengthy hiring processes could cost them valuable talent, why aren't they moving faster?



Some jobseekers would prefer to have an opportunity that is certain, than have one that may come to nothing.



RECRUITING IN A VOLATILE MARKET

When we talk about the 'recruitment lifecycle', it's not just to throw some jargon around: the process really does have to be thought out and followed through, from beginning to end. If any part of the 'lifecycle' is slack, underwhelming or frustrating, you risk leaving yourself open to talent fallout.

To limit this, promote the benefits of working for your company from the very beginning. Take your star candidate on a tour of the office so they can experience the culture first-hand, invite them to meet the team and consider how you plan to stay in contact until their start date. Whilst the speed of hire is important, gaining interest from the interviewee is key.

Thirty-four percent of people actually admit to changing their mind about a job after saying yes; so just because someone has accepted doesn't mean you're out of the water just yet. The whole process needs to be tight until the contract is signed (and long after, if you want to hold onto them).

Jobseekers within the legal, IT and HR sectors are the most likely to change their mind and those in a more senior position are more likely to accept a job offer, only to decline it again.

But what influences their decision in the first place?

Your star interviewee may have caught the attention of more than one employer, so grab theirs early on in the process.



34%

of people actually admit to changing their mind about a job after saying yes

20%

of people who elected to withdraw did so because the process took too long

43%

of employers have counter offered at resignation in a bid to keep hold of their workers

50%

of people surveyed had been counter offered in the last 24 months at the time of resignation

IT PAYS TO CONSIDER EVERY OBSTACLE

The job itself (48%) and the salary on offer (45%) were the most influential factors for jobseekers when considering a job offer (as we would have expected), but for one in five people, it's the recruitment experience (20%) that makes all the difference. In fact, the REC's report *'The candidate strikes back'* found that 20% of people who elected to withdraw from the recruitment process did so because the process took too long. But it's not just personal procrastination that can occasion a change of heart: employers the country over could be missing out due to the increasing occurrence of counter offers.

According to our research, 43% of employers have counter offered at resignation in a bid to keep hold of their workers; this figure rises in line with company size, presumably due to the freedom afforded by more flexible budgets. In terms of industry, employers in finance and accounting, HR and IT were more likely to counter offer; perhaps due to skills shortages in these areas. These figures also tally with our candidate findings: half of all of the employees that we surveyed had been counter offered in the last 24 months at the time of resignation — a figure that rises to 64% amongst 16-24 year olds.

It stands to reason that in the midst of a highly competitive marketplace, employers will do everything in their power to hold on to their best performers; when you're embarking on your next hiring journey then, it pays to consider every obstacle.

RECRUITING TALENT WHEN CANDIDATES CALL THE SHOTS

A slow response from a potential employer would put 39% of people off a role, closely followed by a lack of information about the role itself (38%), and awkward interview scheduling (25%) — reiterating just how important the application and interview experience is for talent attraction. You want people to feel drawn to your brand, but you also want to leave them eager to work with you and enthusiastic about spreading the good word.

Often fielding multiple offers, candidates want a fast, flexible, fulfilling route to their next role, and demand more than drawn-out, drag-your-heels hiring practices.



So, what can you do to ensure a sleek recruitment process?

- 1 From creating a clear, killer job advert to setting out a straightforward interview process, you need to create a recruitment experience that reflects your brand in an accurate and positive light, and in turn attracts and engages the right people.
- 2 Nothing leaves a jobseeker feeling frustrated like awkward interview arrangements, so schedule times that are reasonable; disappearing from work for a number of hours can be a tough thing to explain.
- 3 Make your job easier by interviewing shortlisted candidates as close together as possible; that way, making a comparison — and most importantly, a decision — will be far more achievable in a much shorter timeframe.
- 4 Make allowances for jobseekers' individual needs: will they require extra company information upfront? Have you allowed enough time for questions? If the process is not clear and information not made available, you risk missing out.
- 5 Always keep in mind that while scrutinising an applicant's skills, they're sizing up your brand, benefits and business — so sell your brand and be vocal about everything that makes you stand out from your competitors.
- 6 To help you reach a quick decision, ask similar interview questions for each candidate where possible, but try to be flexible so you can explore any areas of concern if they crop up.
- 7 Kick off recruitment when you know things can move along quickly (avoiding times when decision makers are on holiday), schedule interviews well in advance with everyone who needs to be there and have HR primed and ready to go with a contract for your first choice candidate.
- 8 No employer wants to make a decision, only to have their offer turned down, so always endeavour to give interview feedback within two days — and certainly no later than four; you need to keep your candidates in the loop.

Speed is vital: dragging your feet through the hiring process is incredibly off-putting — and realistically, quite harmful to your business. Be transparent about your recruitment methods, act with speed, and keep communication clear and constant. Then all that's left is to keep hold of them — and we have plenty of ways to help you with that.

ABOUT US

Office Angels has sourced office professionals from a 77 strong branch network since 1986. Our team of recruitment consultants cater for every skill set to support your business' current and future objectives.

At Office Angels, we know how important having the right team is. We are committed to finding the right people – with the right capabilities and cultural fit – to help your business achieve its goals. The roles we typically recruit include:

- ✓ EA, PA and secretarial
- ✓ Office managers
- ✓ Office support
- ✓ Sales and marketing
- ✓ Finance and accounting
- ✓ Customer service
- ✓ IT
- ✓ HR

CONTACT US

For more information, get in touch with your local Office Angels
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HAPPY RECRUITING
