

# CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE DIAGNOSTIC FOR NEWTON





# THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE LANDSCAPE

Our modern world is one of instant gratification and convenience, we ask Alexa to turn on our favourite playlist, receive suggestions for movies we'll like based on our viewing history, make in-app purchases of things we've seen on our social feeds, and skip the queue at our favourite coffee place using an app to order whilst we are on the move.

As consumers, our expectations have been driven higher than ever. We demand that brands deliver seamless, intuitive and personalised experiences, to keep us engaged.

In the war for talent, the same rules apply.

The current strength of the labour market and increasing demand for both diverse talent and digital skill sets, means that coveted candidates are able to exercise choice and seek employers who engage and inspire them during the recruitment experience.

As an employer, you need to look at attracting and retaining candidates through the same lens as customers. Applying engagement strategies that utilise technology and UX design principles to create a seamless candidate journey. Clearly communicating why you should be first choice for your desired talent.

Despite mounting candidate expectations, PeopleScout research revealed only a meagre 5% of recent candidates would rate their recent recruitment experience as excellent.

There is clearly a significant disparity in the way that employers and candidates are perceiving candidate journeys - we believe the employers willing and able to bridge the gap, will have a clear advantage in today's job market.

## THE ECONOMICS OF EXPERIENCE

- In 2016 Virgin Media found poor candidate experience was costing them £4.4million a year in cancelled subscriptions
- 52% of organisations that prioritise candidate experience see an increase in revenue of over 10%<sup>1</sup>
- Organisations that invest in a strong candidate experience improve the quality of hires by 70%<sup>1</sup>

# HOW TO USE THIS DIAGNOSTIC

Our candidate experience diagnostic looks at your recruitment experience through the lens of a candidate up until the point of submitting an initial application\*. We score your candidate experience by looking for evidence of 40 key experience indicators. To enable you to pinpoint and prioritise areas for improvement, we've split the candidate journey into 6 stages, with a score for each.

Drawing on our years' of experience in developing best practice recruitment processes for employers, our experience indicators model has also been informed by PeopleScout's proprietary research with over 1,750 recent candidates. This ensures the diagnostic is founded in real insight, giving a voice to the true expectations and preferences of candidates, and provides a gold standard against which employers can optimise their own practices when taking steps toward candidate experience excellence.

## 3 critical issues need your attention

A number of the experience indicators we assess for are deemed to be critical. They are the foundational 'must-haves' that should appear in every candidate journey to enable candidates to progress through and successfully submit an application. When these factors are missing, they could have a seriously detrimental effect on an organisations' ability to attract talent – we recommend you address these as a matter of urgency.



\*This diagnostic of candidate experience goes as far as submitting an initial application, and offers a limited snapshot into your overall candidate journey. For an end-to-end overview of your experience through to hire and on-boarding, with detailed recommendations and support - please speak to us about conducting a full audit.

## IS RECRUITMENT CONTENT RELEVANT AND EASILY AVAILABLE?

Businesses like Amazon and Netflix have built their whole business model around optimising user experience, utilising artificial intelligence to present consumers with content tailored to their apparent preferences, and influence spending or viewing decisions.

In the recruitment world this type of thinking should be applied to create streamlined and relevant job searches. This means not only that your careers site appears at the top of search

engine results when your potential candidates are looking for opportunities, but that candidates can navigate quickly and easily to the types of roles that interest them when they do arrive on your page.

We look for 5 experience indicators in the search stage, to answer the question: is recruitment content relevant and easily available?

### KILLER STATS

- The average consumer is exposed to between 4,000 and 10,000 brand messages a day<sup>2</sup>
- 70% of career searches start on Google<sup>3</sup>
- 89% of jobseekers say that their mobile device is an important tool for job searching<sup>3</sup>

### SEARCH SCORE



### CRITICAL FACTORS

0

## WHY SHOULD I WORK HERE?

Changing jobs is a significant life event for any of us, resulting in a complex and highly emotional decision process. More than ever, candidates are searching for an employer that exhibits a shared set of values and work they find meaningful – factors that are especially influential for the Millennial and Gen Z workforce.

In pursuit of a role that ticks all the boxes, candidates are becoming increasingly forensic in their investigation of job opportunities, evaluating an organisation at every stage of the recruitment process and trawling careers and corporate pages – until they find the perfect fit. Having a clear and consistently communicated employer brand helps your potential candidates answer the question

“why should I work here?”. Purpose communicated via corporate mission, and a well articulated employer value proposition, can provoke an emotive response from candidates, give them a first glimpse into your company culture, and differentiate you from competitor brands.

We look for 5 experience indicators in the awareness stage, to answer the question: why should I work here?

### KILLER STATS

- Companies that don't have a strong employer brand are overpaying on salaries by 10%<sup>4</sup>
- 74% of Glassdoor users are more likely to apply for a job if the employer actively manages its employer brand<sup>3</sup>
- Organisations that invest in employer branding are three times more likely to make a quality hire<sup>1</sup>

## AWARENESS SCORE



## CRITICAL FACTORS

0

# WHAT DOES IT REALLY FEEL LIKE TO WORK AT YOUR ORGANISATION?

When considering whether to apply for a role, candidates will be evaluating the authenticity of your brand claims and rightly or wrongly develop perceptions of what it's really like to work for you.

We all know that seeing is believing. So, when it comes to communicating your employee experience, including benefits or inclusive policies - are you showing your candidates why they would want to work for you, or simply telling them?

Illustrating your unique offering and company culture with imagery and video content of existing employees will authenticate the claims of your employee value proposition. And can also help to set realistic expectations for candidates, reducing their anxiety throughout the recruitment process.

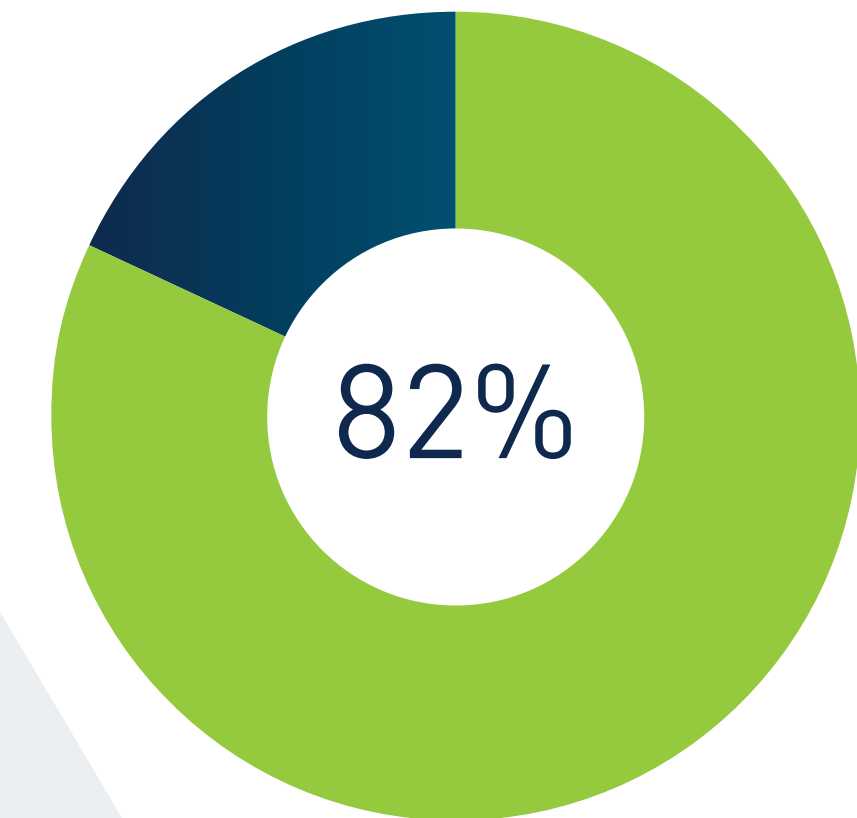
Candidates will find the voice of your average employee more credible than the words of your CEO<sup>5</sup>, so ensuring their stories and experiences are visible throughout the candidate experience and echo your brand messages is a tested way to engage candidates on an emotional level, building authenticity and brand trust.

We look for 10 experience indicators in the consideration stage, to answer the question: what does it really feel like to work at your organisation?

## KILLER STATS

- #1 obstacle to candidates in the application process is not knowing what it is like to work at an organisation<sup>6</sup>
- 87% of candidates want to know more about flexible working and health benefits before applying, but only 47% of companies are communicating this information pre-application<sup>7</sup>
- Employers receive a 34% greater candidate application rate when they add video to their job postings<sup>8</sup>

## CONSIDERATION SCORE



## CRITICAL FACTORS

1

CONSIDERATION



## CAN I FIND THE RIGHT JOB IN THE FUTURE? WHAT WILL THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS BE LIKE?

In consumer marketing we are used to signing up for offers and news from our favourite brands and editing our marketing preferences to suit our interests and preferred method of contact. Cultivating subscription lists and sharing tailored content via marketing automation tools is a simple and yet incredibly effective way of building engagement with prospective customers who may not want to buy now, but may later. Despite this, very few organisations are utilising the same tools in their recruitment marketing efforts.

Talent pools give you a 'commitment free' way to show

passive candidates what they are missing by sending them your most enticing employer brand content, and keeping them 'warm' until the right job becomes available. They should go beyond the standard job updates and market your employer brand in the same way you would your consumer brand. When executed correctly, talent pools can offer a rich pipeline of qualified candidates that should be a first port of call when filling new roles.

When a candidate is interested in applying for a live role, setting expectations and giving advice on the recruitment process is an often-overlooked way of improving the number and quality of

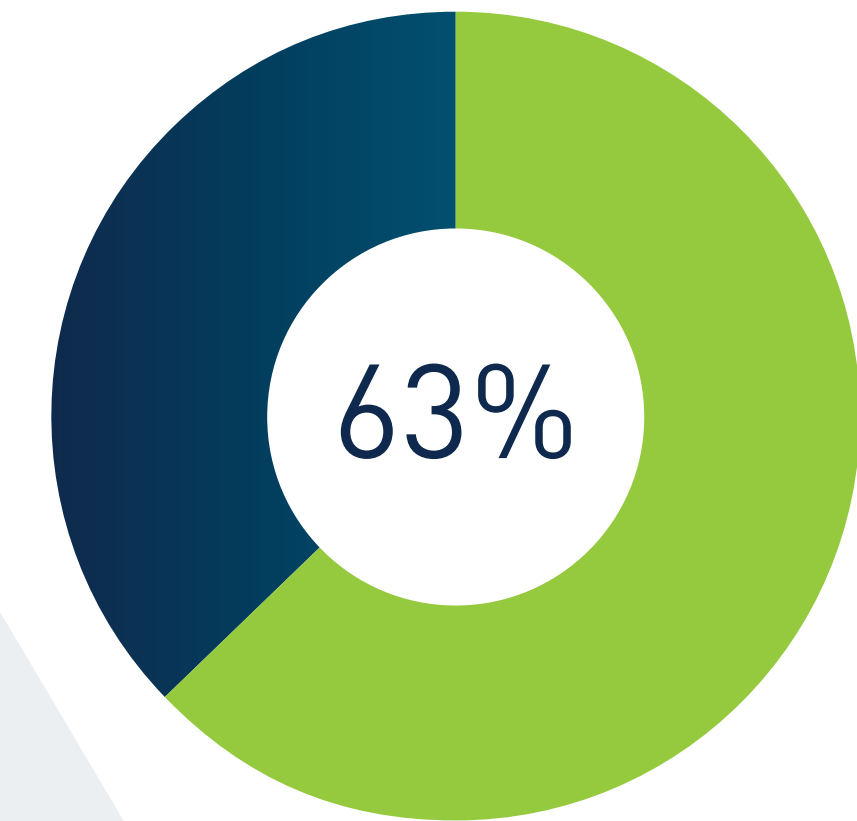
applications you receive. Perhaps of more importance is that it can make your recruitment process more accessible to harder to reach talent groups and support your brands commitment to diversity and inclusion. Unless you interrogate your processes to uncover unconscious bias and provide reasonable adjustments where needed, you could be unknowingly turning away a number of talented candidates.

We look for 8 experience indicators in the interest stage, to answer the questions: can I find the right job in the future, and what will the recruitment process be like?

### KILLER STATS

- 1 in 2 candidates expect a company to set out clear expectations of the recruitment process for them so that they could prepare well<sup>3</sup>
- 70% of the global workforce are passive candidates<sup>6</sup>
- 83% of candidates say it would greatly improve the overall experience if employers provided a clear timeline of the hiring process<sup>8</sup>

## INTEREST SCORE



## CRITICAL FACTORS

# 1

## HOW FAST, AND EASY IS IT TO APPLY?

The consumer lens is particularly useful when considering best practice for application processes.

Consumer purchase journeys have been utterly transformed in recent years. We can make in-app purchases of items spotted on Instagram and Facebook, brands save our account information such as payment and personal details so we only ever need enter it once and we are often shown progress trackers to manage our expectations and ensure we don't abandon our virtual shopping carts. Amazon even offer one-

click purchases, the ultimate in frictionless consumer experience. To some extent, brands are able to create the same experience for job applicants. Many organisations are realising that making it possible for talent to apply via new channels like social media can increase the simplicity and convenience of applications even further.

Keeping things quick and streamlined should be a general rule, and whilst some recruiters sing the praises of a multi-stage recruitment process for their ability to filter out candidates that

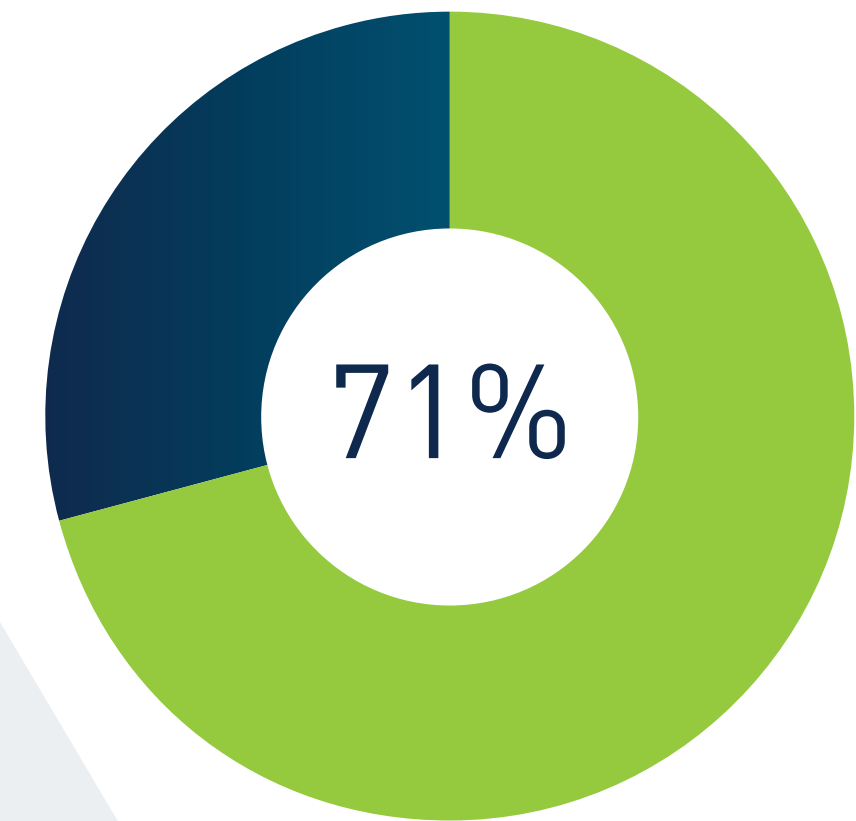
don't meet requirements, the truth is that the longer the process, the more danger there is that your perfect candidate will get snapped up by another employer.

We look for 6 experience indicators in the application stage, to answer the question: how fast and easy is it to apply?

### KILLER STATS

- 60% of job seekers report they have quit an application due to it's length or complexity<sup>8</sup>
- 65% of job seekers say that they rarely or never receive notice that their application has been declined<sup>9</sup>
- The biggest frustration for candidates during applications is a lengthy form followed by having to duplicate information<sup>10</sup>

## APPLICATION SCORE



## CRITICAL FACTORS

0



# WHAT COMMUNICATION DO I RECEIVE AFTER MY APPLICATION?

In the dating world being ghosted by someone (messaging or dating someone who suddenly cuts all ties and communication) can cause a lot of upset and anger. Society doesn't tend to look favourably on the 'ghosters' either. Yet, ghosting is incredibly common in the recruitment world - brands court potential employees with a slick careers site, convince them to invest time and emotion in crafting and submitting an application and then.... Nothing.

Unsurprisingly this can have pretty damaging consequences

for how the brand is perceived, not just by the scorned candidate but by their network of colleagues and friends - 81% of candidates will share their poor recruitment experiences with others via social media or word of mouth.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, these organisations are passing on a valuable source of insight on the effectiveness of their recruitment efforts. Asking candidates for feedback on your process will trump any guesswork about ways to improve your candidate experience.

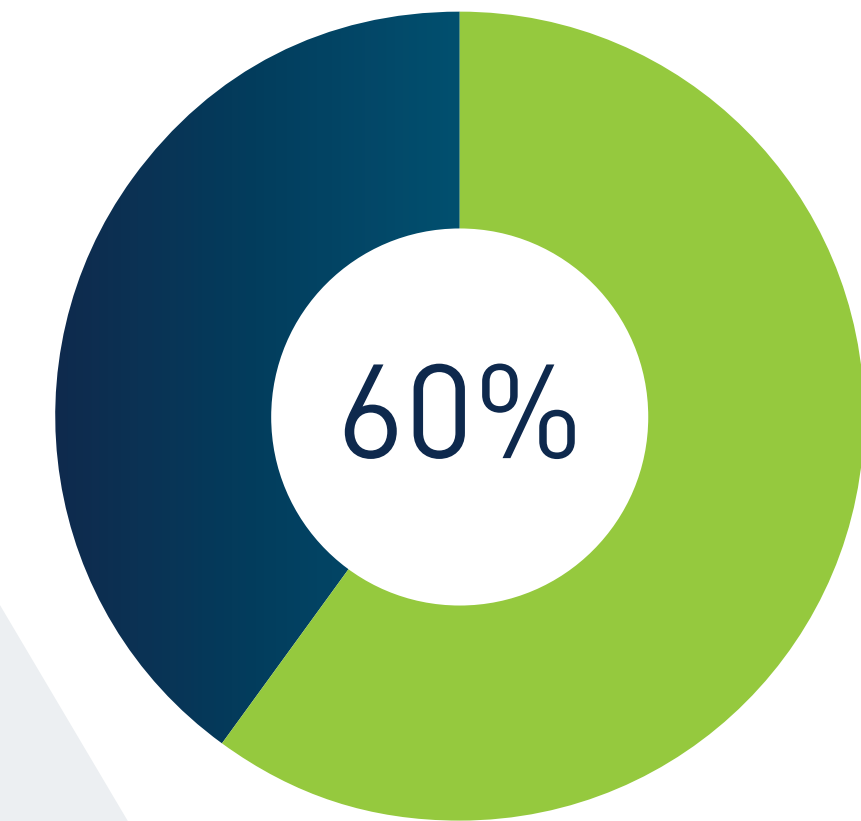
Inevitably not all candidates can be successful, but ensuring your communications are quick and empathetic to the individual's feelings, can actually create a positive brand experience out of an unpleasant situation. And remember, candidates are also potential customers too.

We look for 5 experience indicators in the follow-up stage, to answer the question: what communication do I receive after submitting an application?

## KILLER STATS

- 46% of candidates want a response to applications within a week<sup>10</sup>
- 95% of candidates agree that not receiving an acknowledgment of their application impacts their view of an organisation negatively<sup>10</sup>
- 54% of candidates state that being asked for feedback from employers makes them feel that the company values its candidates, and 34% state it makes them feel positive about the organisation<sup>10</sup>

## FOLLOW-UP SCORE



## CRITICAL FACTORS

1

FOLLOW-UP

# YOUR SCORE: WHAT'S NEXT?

Your score is highlighting a number of positives and suggests you've spent time previously mapping and improving your candidate journey. However, there are a number of areas where we've found opportunities to simplify the experience for candidates and better manage

their expectations throughout. Think about how you infuse your brand messages throughout your candidate journey to create a consistent and joined up process that leaves a lasting impact on talent, and keeps them engaged.

No matter where you are currently on the scale of candidate experience excellence, it's important to understand that the process of optimising and personalising your experience is not a static one. Candidates' needs are in constant flux, and the way that brands can meet and exceed expectations is being influenced and shaped by rapid developments in technology.

The employee experience starts from initial search and awareness of your brand but it doesn't end when a job offer is extended. With a complex multitude of touchpoints throughout an employee's lifecycle to consider, knowing where to start is often the biggest barrier to change.

This report is not a definitive or exhaustive examination of your candidate experience, but it is intended to give you an insight into your current state and to inspire further investigation. If you'd like to explore the findings in more detail and understand how they can be developed into a roadmap for improving your candidate journey and recruitment effectiveness, please get in touch.

**Rowena Bach**  
Entry Level Talent Director  
[Rowena.bach@peoplescout.co.uk](mailto:Rowena.bach@peoplescout.co.uk)  
07929 519215

**YOUR CANDIDATE  
EXPERIENCE SCORE IS**

**79%**



# READ OUR BEST PRACTICE INSIGHTS

**The AA:  
Recruitment Chatbot**  
Case Study

**How to embrace AI to modernise  
your recruitment process**  
Webinar

**Building an employer value  
proposition and employer brand  
for the future**  
Whitepaper

**5 things waitressing taught me  
about candidate care**  
Blog

**Virgin Money: “The World’s most  
creative job interview”**  
Case Study

Sources:  
1 Brandon Hall  
2 Forbes  
3 Glassdoor  
4 Harvard Business Review  
5 Edelman  
6 LinkedIn  
7 Gartner  
8 CareerBuilder  
9 Workplace Trends  
10 PeopleScout