

# Five Data-Driven Strategies to Improve the Candidate Experience



## The Dynamic Hiring Environment

The current job market has left companies scrambling for quality employees to fill a growing number of open positions. Employees are searching for better opportunities with other companies that pay more, offer flexible remote work, and are a better cultural fit. Talent teams looking to stand out to job seekers are focused on improving their recruiting programs to find qualified candidates and win them over from competitors by providing a world-class candidate experience.



**45%** of job seekers are actively looking for a new role.



**54%** have not looked internally for a new position.

As companies seek to differentiate themselves from competitors to attract top talent, they need to continuously focus on improving and building a positive candidate experience. But as research by [Talent Board](#) reveals, only one in four job seekers rate their candidate experience as having been “great.”

The candidate experience includes all the feelings, impressions, interactions, and activities a job seeker encounters and considers along their candidate journey. It's how a job seeker feels they've been treated throughout the recruitment process, and how that treatment makes them feel about the employer.

Any interaction that a candidate has with your employer brand during the recruiting process is part of their overall candidate experience, and it informs their opinion of your organization, whether or not they are selected for the role. In this eBook, let's dive into five data-driven strategies that employers are using to improve their recruiting programs and enhance the candidate experience.

## Adopting Recruiting Automation to Streamline Hiring and Enhance Candidate Experiences

With [millions of available jobs](#) in the U.S. alone, and [candidates firmly in control](#) of the labor market, organizations are under enormous pressure to fill open roles as quickly as possible. Resources are being stretched thin, and talent teams everywhere are searching for ways to save time, increase efficiency, and streamline processes.

Recruiting automation streamlines the recruiting process, taking tedious tasks away from recruiters and freeing them up to do more important tasks like nurturing relationships, promoting the company's employer brand, and developing more strategic recruiting strategies, including diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

### The Manual Burden of Recruiting

Considering that recruiters and hiring managers spend an average of 23 hours sorting through resumes per hire, and that up to 88 percent of applicants are [unqualified for the job](#), the smartest recruiting teams are incorporating automated recruitment tools into their everyday processes.

The [recruitment automation](#) solutions available today — like automated job posting and messaging, resume screening, interview scheduling and more — can improve recruiting efficiency without sacrificing hiring quality or the candidate experience.

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No matter how large or small your recruiting team may be, automation lets you turn repetitive, manual tasks into a more manageable workload that can easily scale up or down along with your hiring needs. And recruitment automation offers a number of benefits over traditional, manual processes.

Automation and AI have changed the game in recruiting. Things like scheduling interviews, screening candidates, and even inviting contacts to apply for openings can all be done with intelligent software — often with better results than manual efforts. These tools help shorten communication loops between candidates and hiring teams, reducing instances of recruiters ghosting candidates or losing them to slow response times.

When talent is tight, keeping candidates engaged is critical — and communication is one of the key elements of a great candidate experience. Recruiting automation can help to ensure that every candidate receives consistent, timely communication that puts your employer brand front-and-center. Remember, automation won't remove the “human” element from your hiring process; instead, it can actually create a more personalized, engaging experience for your candidates.



## Using Talent Acquisition Technology to Better Engage Candidates & Recruiters

The rapid changes in the job market of the last two years have dramatically shifted priorities for companies and talent teams everywhere. Technology has become a high priority for job seekers that are looking for new opportunities, and they're using the candidate experience to gauge just how successful (and happy) they could be at your company. The [2022 Job Seeker Nation Report](#) indicates that more than half of candidates are looking for an easy to schedule interview process and easy application process during their talent journey.

The stress of the talent shortage and great reshuffle has pointed out areas that recruiting teams need to improve in order to compete in today's job market. [According to Lighthouse Research & Advisory](#), 75% of employers reported exposed critical gaps in their recruiting technology in the last two years alone. Some areas they felt they struggled with were:

- Filling their recruiting pipeline with qualified candidates
- Accurately screening candidates remotely
- Communicating with candidates in a timely manner

Perhaps even more concerning, recruiters themselves are willing to leave their company for one with better technology. According to [Aptitude Research](#), 50% of recruiters would leave their current company for another organization if it had better technology. Talent acquisition technology today must consider the experiences of those individuals looking for talent day-in and day-out for your organization, and should validate the experiences of recruiters.

It is essential to understand what is important to recruiters and to help them automate, streamline, and reduce the manual requirements of their jobs — like sourcing and scheduling. Because when recruiters are supported with the right technology, they will be more effective in their jobs and make the talent acquisition function more successful in supporting candidates in their journey.



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## What Candidates Actually Want

Candidates and employees are looking for an intuitive, easy-to-navigate experience that helps match them with the right opportunities at the right time. They don't want to be sold to about working for your company; they want to see why taking a position with you will take their career in a positive new direction. They want to feel a sense of belonging to bring their authentic selves to work and have the flexibility to do that work remotely.

As the list of candidate and employee expectations grows, it's helpful to understand the baseline of what today's job seekers need from your organization:

- **Remote work flexibility:** If the job can be done remotely, you should offer an option for an employees to do some or all of their work this way. The 2022 Job Seeker Nation Report indicates that 45% of candidates are willing to accept a lower paying job to work remotely, while 65% of workers say remote work is important in their decision to accept or reject a job offer.
- **Advanced technology:** With today's workplace being mostly remote or hybrid, companies need to offer a seamless recruiting and onboarding experience to candidates and employees. One-quarter of all workers say the new technologies they encountered during the hiring process, including chatbots, and AI, helped them answer their questions more quickly and 80% of those candidates rated their experience as very good with these new technologies.
- **Quick response rates:** Typically, top talent is off the market within 10 days, so ensuring prompt, responsive communication is crucial. 47% of candidates indicate that great communication, including prompt feedback and follow-ups, was the top reason for a recent candidate experience that was positive. Identify how long a candidate spends waiting on a response during your hiring process and work to shorten that window.



## Outsourcing Recruiting Processes to Enhance the Hiring Process

As most anyone in talent acquisition can tell you, technology and recruiting go hand-in-hand. Aligning your recruitment process to your talent acquisition technology can help you find and hire talent faster, and ensure you have a steady supply of candidates to fill your open roles.

With the end-to-end hiring process more challenging than ever, talent teams are stretched to the limit. The [right recruitment process outsourcing \(RPO\) partner](#) can alleviate this pressure by taking on some (or all) of the hiring activities for your company. Outsourcing your recruitment process can provide plenty of benefits, including faster time to fill, improved quality of hire, increased hiring efficiencies, and a more consistent candidate experience.

Recruitment process outsourcing providers offer the combination of human connection, innovation, and recruiting experience to build a tailored recruitment solution for each organization's unique hiring needs. With expansive talent networks and a stack of intelligent recruiting technology, RPO providers can tackle everything from end-to-end recruiting and project recruitment to front-end recruiting support and recruiter augmentation.





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## The Impact on the Candidate Experience

The [Recruitment Process Outsourcing Association](#) indicates that a positive candidate experience leads to more engaged, happier employees. Specifically, it cited a recent Career Builder survey that showed 78 percent of candidates say the overall candidate experience they encounter reveals how an organization values its workforce.

Companies can significantly improve their candidate experience and hiring outcomes by outsourcing recruiting processes. RPO providers interact with candidates under the client's brand — not their own. As a result, every candidate receives an on-brand experience, without any indication that they're working with an outside firm. And because they partner with your company on a strategic level, RPO providers can help optimize your employer brand positioning and deliver a more positive, consistent candidate experience every time.





## Focusing on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Throughout the Candidate Journey

Diversity hiring isn't just ethical. It can bring many cultural, financial, and productivity benefits to an organization. When employees feel represented and included, they're more likely to succeed in their roles. Research from McKinsey & Company found that organizations within the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams are [25 percent](#) more likely to have above-average profitability. This is in comparison to companies in the fourth quartile.

Beyond bringing many benefits to your organization, [diversity, equity, and inclusion \(DEI\)](#) are top employee demands. In fact, [78 percent](#) of workers say diversity in the workplace is important to them. And this number is only going to rise as [newer generations](#) enter the workforce. These job seekers are more likely to apply to roles in organizations that champion diversity.

As employee expectations change, your organization must try to accommodate them wherever possible. Ensuring your recruitment, onboarding, and HR practices align with these desires will improve your overall appeal to candidates. It'll also ensure your workforce engagement rates are high. Indeed, employees in 'inclusive' workplaces are [three times](#) happier than those in less inclusive businesses. This leads to higher levels of productivity and engagement.

If your company hasn't begun to work on improving DEI in the organization, it is time to start. An increase in job seeker focus on building diverse and inclusive workplaces over the past two years has directed employers to prioritize DEI or risk losing top talent. Candidates are looking not only for representation at the entry levels of your business, but also in leadership positions, board members, and even clients. They're looking for a culture that prioritizes inclusion and supports employees bringing their authentic selves into the workplace.

More companies are taking specific steps this year to improve DEI in their organizations, including hiring diversity experts, incorporating automation tools, and even forming employee resource groups and committees. Strategic talent teams are automating tasks and using software to help them focus on the human aspects of recruiting.

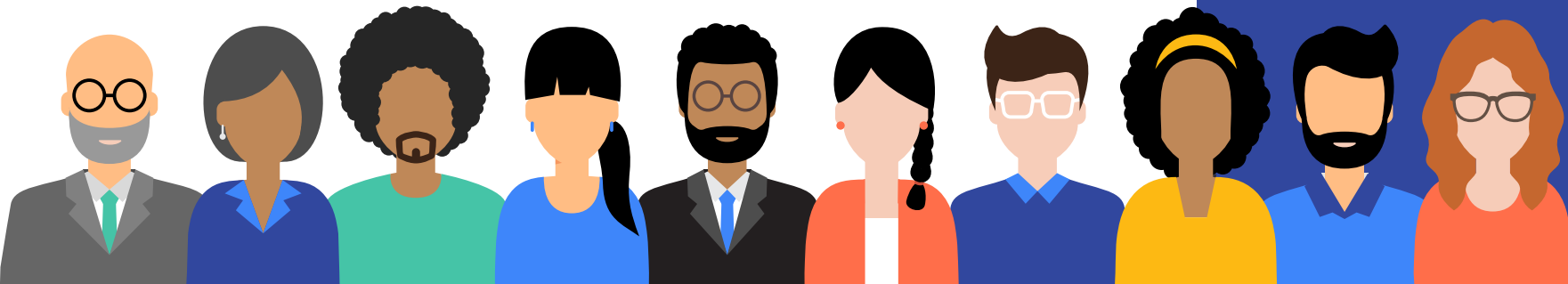
## Innovative tools like these are giving recruiters time to improve DEI in the hiring process:

- **Job Description Grader:** An inclusive job description is crucial to attracting a diverse pool of candidates and moving them through to the later stages of your recruiting process. Automated tools like the [Job Description Grader](#) can help identify potential biased language and provide suggestions to improve a job description.
- **Candidate skill matching:** Automated skill matching saves recruiters time by sourcing candidates based on a set of skills, experience, certifications, or even training needed for a role. This ensures talent pools stay diverse, while still screening for necessary qualifications.
- **Intelligent messaging:** Recruiters can help reduce bias in the top of the applicant funnel by incorporating automated messaging tools to screen, accept applications, and answer candidate questions. Chatbots and texting are currently preferred by candidates and recruiters to communicate with each other quickly and easily.

Candidates are looking for an employer that prioritizes DEI in all aspects of their business, especially recruiting. They want to feel supported from the very first step in the candidate journey all the way through to their first day. Show candidates and potential employees your commitment to improving DEI within your organization by doing things like sharing a wide diversity of employee stories on your career site or [hiring a DEI expert to your leadership team](#).



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## Leveraging Internal Mobility Tools to Retain Employees and Attract Promising New Ones

It's not enough to have the most competitive job offer with the best benefits. Candidates want to know that they have a future in your company where they can develop skills and grow. The Great Resignation has shown talent acquisition professionals that employees are looking for opportunities to grow professionally and personally during their time with a company. As a result, internal mobility has become a huge priority for talent teams looking to retain quality employees for the long term.

Internal mobility is essentially a re-hiring of an existing employee. It involves an employee's change of role within an organization, which includes a change in job function or switching from one unit or department in a company to another. Internal mobility ultimately gives an employee the freedom and flexibility needed to advance in a job and makes the employee happier and more productive.

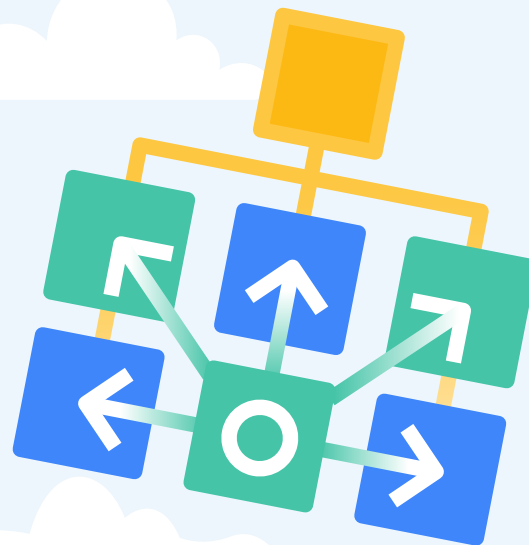


Lighthouse Research found talent teams are now **3x more likely** to report greater focus and priority on internal mobility initiatives.

The key to a successful internal mobility program is to incentivize leaders to provide growth opportunities to employees. Some teams have offered bonuses to managers for referring their employees for promotions to encourage long-term development and coaching. Small changes like this can stand out to candidates during the recruiting process and show them a promising future at your company.

Don't forget about the employee referral aspect of internal mobility. Current employees are a great source to expand your talent network as well as sourcing applicants for open roles. Talent teams have found success with employee referral programs that offer incentives for employees to refer their colleagues for positions. Consider offering a cash incentive to employees for referring a new hire.

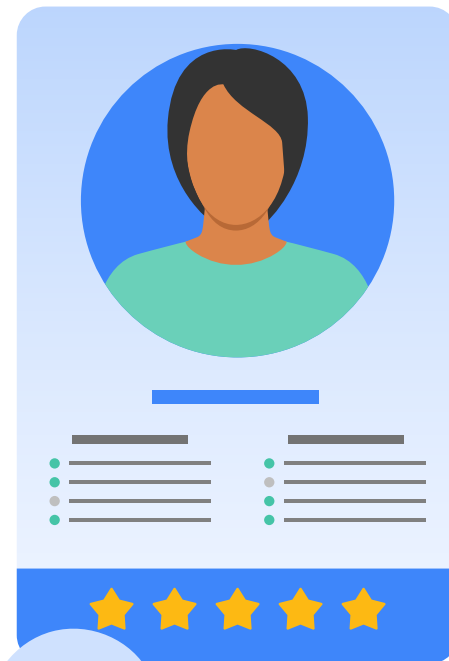
Even if an employee is just changing roles or departments within an organization, it's still important to keep him or her engaged, entertained, and eager to work hard. This can be accomplished through branding and creating a personalized employee experience. Employers can also keep new hires, even internal hires, engaged and connected through onboarding activities scheduled through a recruitment system. Internal mobility is a key strategy for businesses of all sizes. After all, an unhappy employee translates to lower overall revenue, a higher turnover rate, and less productivity. If your company hasn't yet created a way for employees to rise through the ranks internally, now is a great time to start.



## Start Bolstering the Candidate Experience

Now that you've had a chance to take in some of the latest insights and data on the candidate experience, take time to rethink how you are approaching the talent journey for candidates in your organization. Prioritize these five areas, and above all, make sure you regard the candidate experience holistically. Recognize that each touchpoint contributes to how candidates perceive your organization — and in turn — how you show candidates you value them.

When you focus on the candidate experience from the perspective of a data-driven approach, you will see how job seekers respond to your employer brand. Whether you're ready to dive headfirst into new technologies or are focused on improving DEI, enhancing the candidate experience can take your recruiting to the next level.



## About Jobvite

Jobvite, an [Employ Inc.](#) brand, is leading the next wave of talent acquisition innovation with a marketing-centric approach to recruiting. Jobvite's Evolve Talent Acquisition Suite offers more breadth and depth in functionality than any other talent acquisition technology available in the market, addressing the entire hiring lifecycle. To learn more, visit [jobvite.com](http://jobvite.com) or follow the company on social media @Jobvite.

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