

# What You Need To Know About Today's Job Seekers



# Introduction

**As the employment marketplace continues to heat up, recruiters must become better marketers to attract and retain the best-qualified talent. That means the increased use of segmentation and the development of candidate personas to create and target more effective recruitment content, job descriptions, candidate experiences and sourcing strategies.**

Engage2Excel is pleased to present Part Two of the *2017 Trendicators Report: What You Need to Know about Today's Job Seekers*, which examines the perceptions and preferences of job seekers from different demographic segments. This research report is the result of collaboration between Engage2Excel and Dr. Jack Wiley. Dr. Jack Wiley is well known for his RESPECT framework, which focuses on what employees really want from their employer. The acronym RESPECT stands for Recognition, Exciting Work, Security, Pay, Education and Career Growth, Conditions, and Truth.

The results published in this report are based on a survey of 1,500 job seekers, including 940 active job seekers, 507 passive job seekers and 53 non-job seekers.

Common sense dictates that different demographic groups share perceptions, preferences and behaviors during the recruitment process. However, until now, there has been a lack of data for understanding these differences in today's talent marketplace.

Because of a lack of reliable demographic insights, many companies resort to homogenized recruitment strategies. Whether you are marketing products or employment opportunities, one-size-fits-all strategies don't work. Just as consumers are drawn to brands that "understand them," job seekers, who have many more choices available to them today, are attracted to employers that cater to their career requirements, interests and expectations. Failure to understand and address differences in perceptions and preferences among job seekers today results in fewer qualified candidates in your pipeline, lower offer-to-acceptance rates and higher voluntary turnover within the first year of employment.

**In this report, we explore what you need to know about today's job seekers from six different perspectives:**

- The Recruitment Process through a Generational Lens
- Fundamental Differences between Active and Passive Job Seekers
- How Demographics Influence Job Seekers' Reasons for Leaving
- Key Factors that Influence Job Offer Acceptance
- Job Seeker Expectations before Day One
- The Impact of Onboarding on Retention

For additional insights, check out Part One, *Trendicators Report: The Role of Recognition in Recruiting, Onboarding and Retaining Employees*.

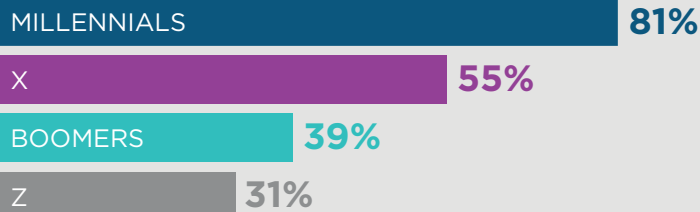


*Jack Wiley is an author, consultant, researcher and instructor. For almost three decades, he has focused on two big research questions: what do employees most want and what organizational factors best promote employee engagement, performance confidence and business success.*

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE



IMPORTANCE OF **RECOGNITION** DURING PRE-HIRE PROCESS



IMPORTANCE OF **SOCIAL INTERACTION** DURING PRE-HIRE PROCESS



CURRENTLY **WORKING REMOTELY** AT LEAST 20 PERCENT OF THE TIME



JOB SEEKERS WHO **ACCEPTED A JOB OFFER** DURING MOST RECENT RECRUITMENT PROCESS



TOP REASON FOR **LEAVING CURRENT EMPLOYER**



**MEN**  
Lack of recognition,  
appreciation, or respect



**WOMEN**  
Inadequate or unfair  
compensation

## DECEMBER 2016 SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

- Number of Respondents: 1,500 (940 active job seekers, 507 passive job seekers open to learning about a better job opportunity and 53 non-job seekers)
- Countries Represented: United States
- Industries Represented: All Major Industries
- Respondent Demographics: U.S. adult workers in all job types with equal representation of gender, age group and racial/ethnic origin
- Margin of Error: 95% confidence level +/- 1.5%

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## SECTION 1

# The Recruitment Process Through a Generational Lens



Millennials have surpassed Baby Boomers as the nation's largest living generation, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In this section, the sample was divided into generational groups according to Pew Research Center classifications: Gen Z (born after millennials), millennials (born 1981–1997), Gen X (born 1965–1980), boomer (born 1946–1964), and the silent generation (born 1928–1945).

GENERATIONS	
Z	2%
MILLENNIALS	58%
X	24%
BABY BOOMERS	16%
SILENT	1%

Table 1. Sample Configuration

Millennials made up most of the sample (58%). Although five generations were represented, the Silent Generation was too small for subgroup comparisons. In the following sections, comparisons are made among the remaining four generations.

To understand the generational groups, we see that, within the Z, X and boomer generations subsamples, more employees report being passive job seekers. However, the majority of all active job seekers are millennials (72%).

FIGURE 1

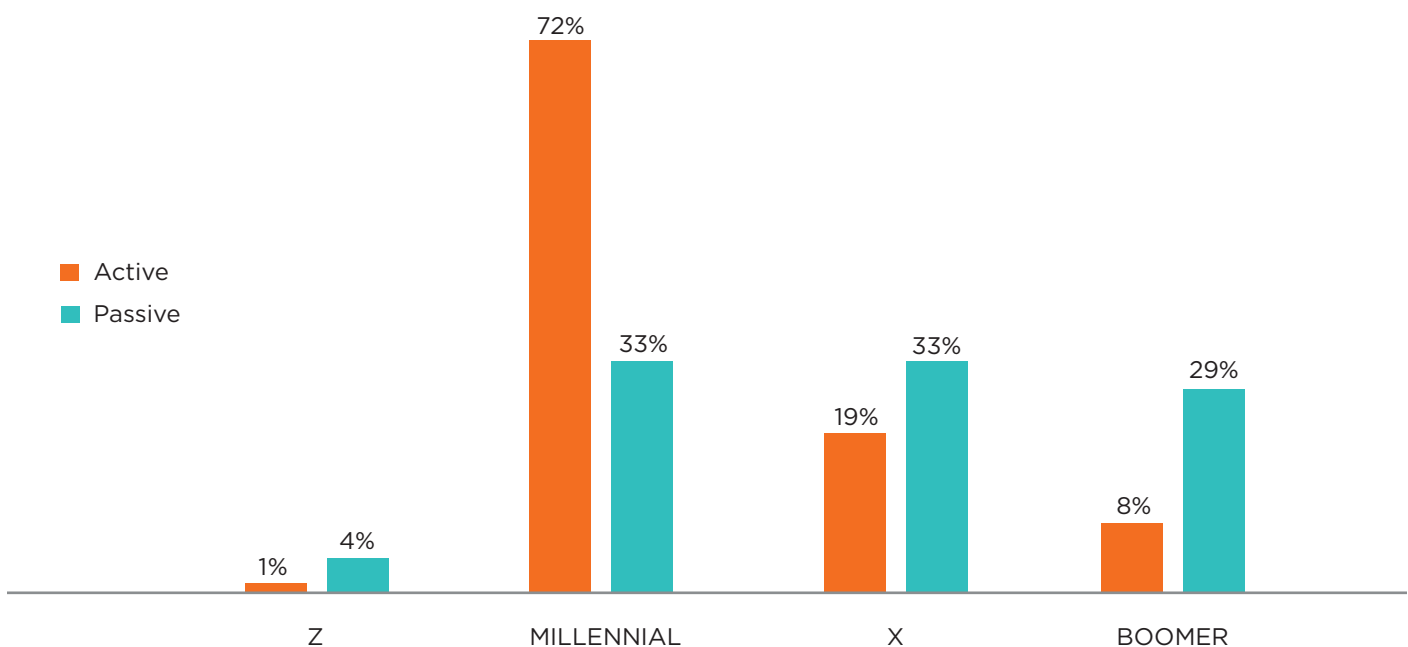


Figure 1. Active and Passive Job Seekers

### Social Interaction During the Hiring Process

During all phases of the hiring process, upwards of 81 percent of millennials rate socializing or collaborating with other employees of the company as *Very Important* or *Important*, more than members of other generations.

FIGURE 2

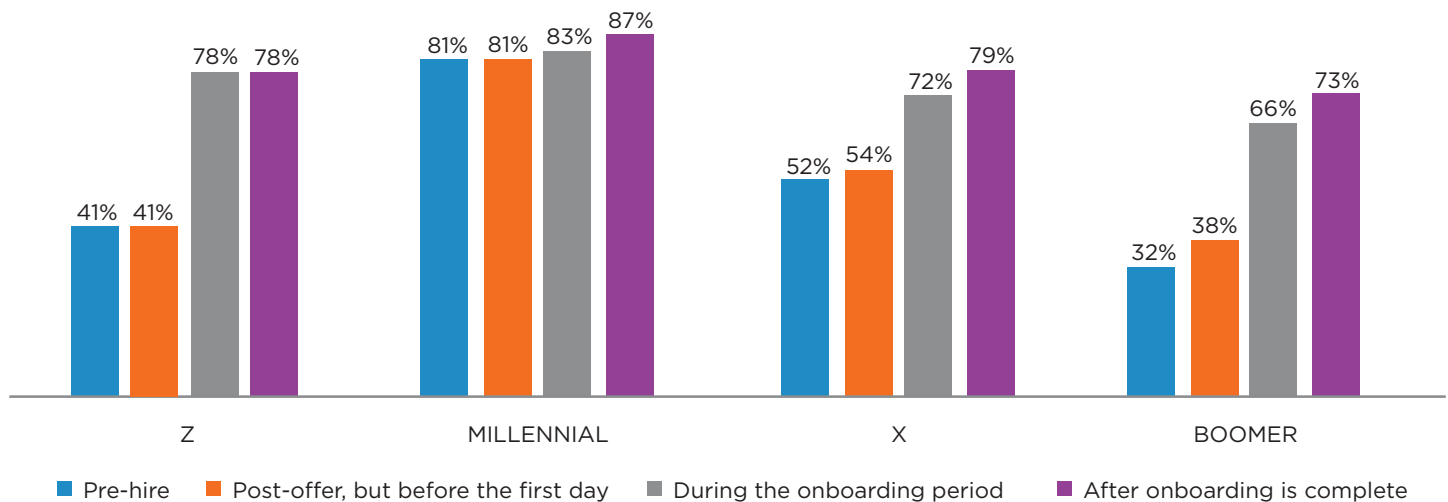


Figure 2. Importance of Social Interaction during Hiring Process

### Participation in Social Communities

Nearly 80 percent of millennials indicate they are *Very Likely* or *Likely* to participate in a social community for an organization they're interested in, even if there are no current job openings—that is more than 26 points higher than Generation X. Boomers are least likely to participate in such a community (26%).

FIGURE 3

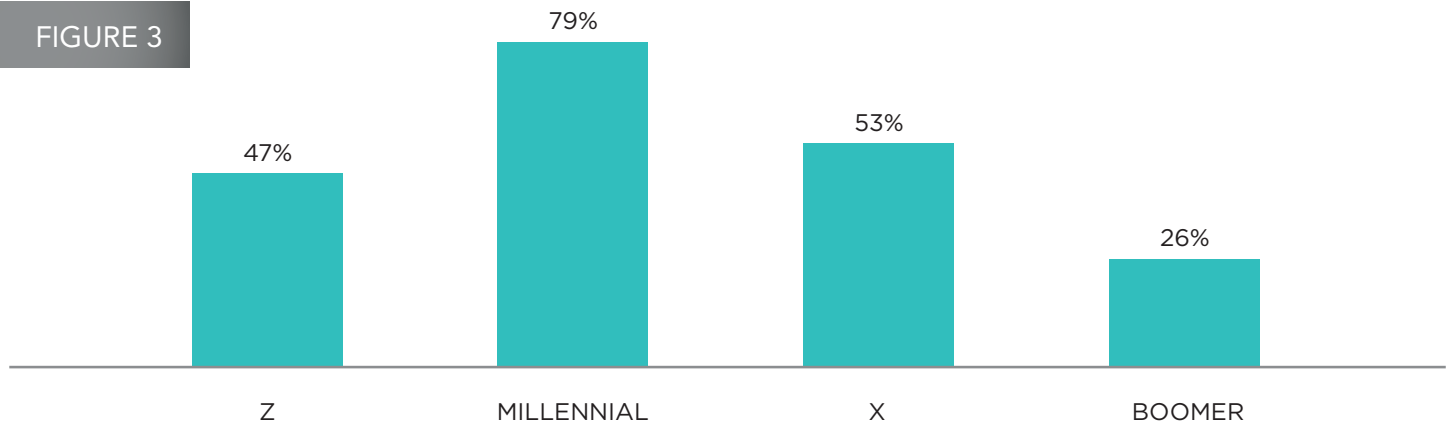


Figure 3. Participation in the Organization's Social Community

### Recognition during the Hiring Process

Throughout all phases of the hiring process, more millennials rate receiving recognition or praise as *Very Important* or *Important* than members of other generations. Upwards of 79 percent of millennials believe recognition is important at each stage.

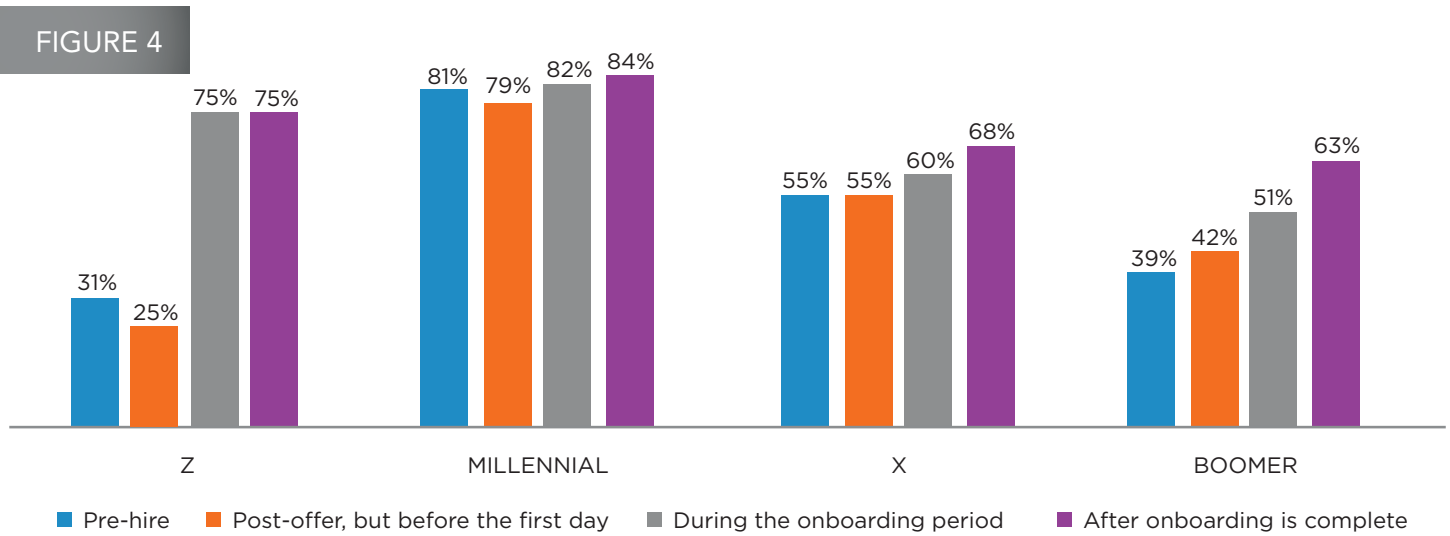


Figure 4. Importance of Recognition during Hiring Process

### Working Remotely

At least 20 percent of the time, 85 percent of all millennials work remotely. In contrast, only 42 percent of boomers, 65 percent of Xers, and 59 percent of Generation Z respondents work remotely at least 20 percent of the time.

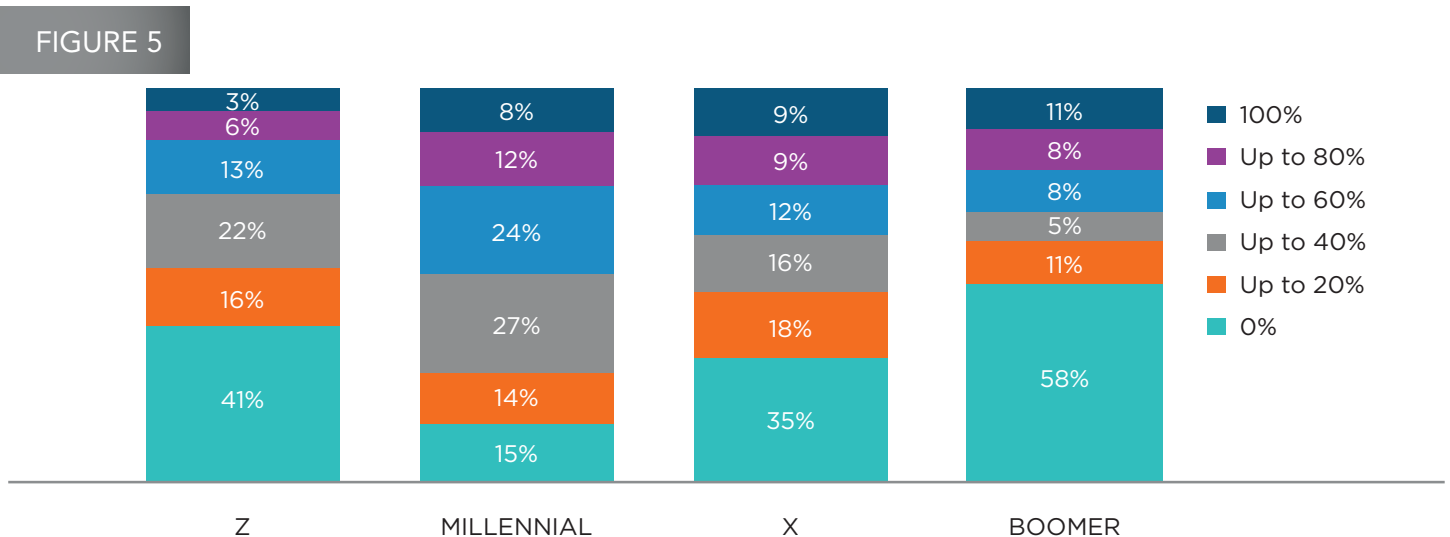


Figure 5. Time Spent Working Remotely



## Mobile Technology

Regarding millennials, 79 percent report using a mobile device for searching and/or applying for jobs, and 84 percent of this generation expect to be able to apply for a job on a mobile device—significantly more than other generations. Interestingly, the majority of each generational group are willing to continue searching for a job even if they cannot apply for it using a mobile device.

FIGURE 6

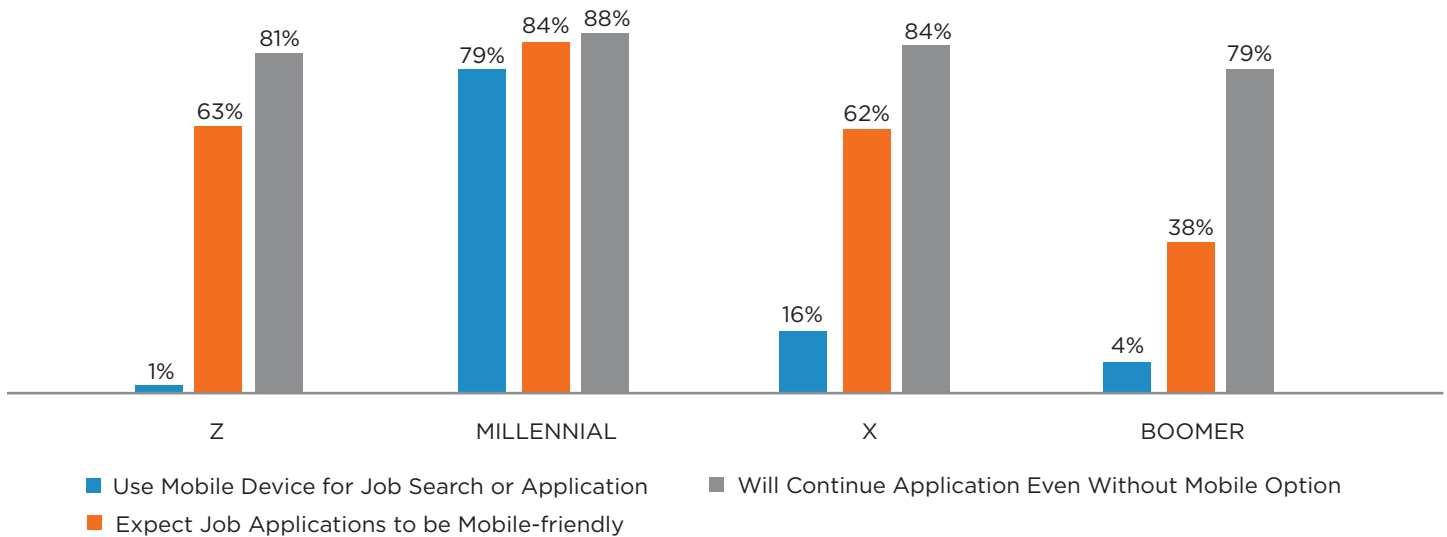


Figure 6. Mobile Devices

### Attitudes toward the Most Recent Recruitment Process

Millennials were most likely to *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* with positive statements regarding their most recent recruitment process—nearly all (91%) found it to be smooth and efficient. Most felt valued (89%), were satisfied (90%), and would refer a friend (82%). Boomers appeared to have the least favorable attitudes toward the recruitment process.

FIGURE 7

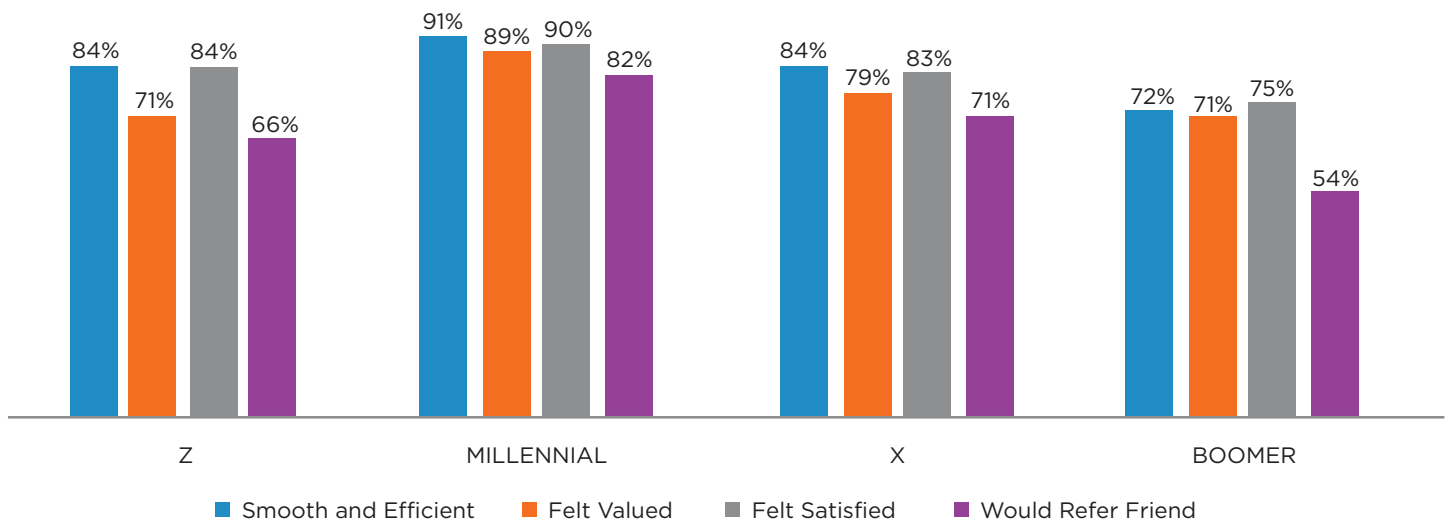


Figure 7. Employee Attitudes toward the Recruitment Process

## SECTION 2

# Fundamental Differences between Active and Passive Job Seekers



**It's no surprise that active and passive job seekers have different needs.** The items below, constituting some of the largest differences between active and passive job seekers, represent actionable insights for targeting and fine-tuning your recruitment strategy.

ACTIVE JOB SEEKER PERSONA	PASSIVE JOB SEEKER PERSONA
The majority (72%) are millennials and 84% are working remotely (at least 20% of the time)	They're great targets for new roles: 65% accept a new position when it's offered to them
Lack of recognition is a hot button, representing their number-one reason for seeking employment elsewhere (two times more than other generational groups)	Among those aged 18-44, lack of recognition and uninteresting work are the key hot buttons; for those 45 and over, unfair compensation is the number-one reason for leaving
Active on social media: 73% recently updated their LinkedIn profile, and 64% have found a job or know someone who has found a job using Facebook	Two-thirds of passive job seekers find a thorough career website important
More than 9 out of 10 (91%) view the company's career website as influential in pursuit of a job	Only 34% reported that they recently updated their LinkedIn profile
A mobile-friendly job application experience is expected by 84%	Almost half (47%) don't work remotely
They don't shy away from video interviews; 74% expect them	Not comfortable with non-traditional interview methods; in fact, only 31% expect a video interview, and they have a lower tolerance for many interviewers
Regarding the hiring process, 77% say social interaction with employees of the company is important	Less than half care about external factors such as Glassdoor ratings, postings on social media, and CEO ratings
External factors like reputation, Glassdoor ratings, and awards received influence job acceptance	Only about five out of 10 would say the onboarding experience will affect their willingness to stay with the company
If they don't hear from anyone at their new employer before their first day, 71% will consider other opportunities after offer acceptance	

Table 2. Active vs. Passive Job Seekers

## SECTION 3

# How Demographics Influence Job Seekers' Reasons for Leaving



**Growing concern over rising voluntary turnover rates has many HR leaders considering more proactive strategies that begin during the recruitment process.** The following survey results show marked differences between different demographic segments regarding employees' top reasons for leaving their current employer.

FIGURE 8



Figure 8. Top Reasons for Leaving by Gender

FIGURE 9

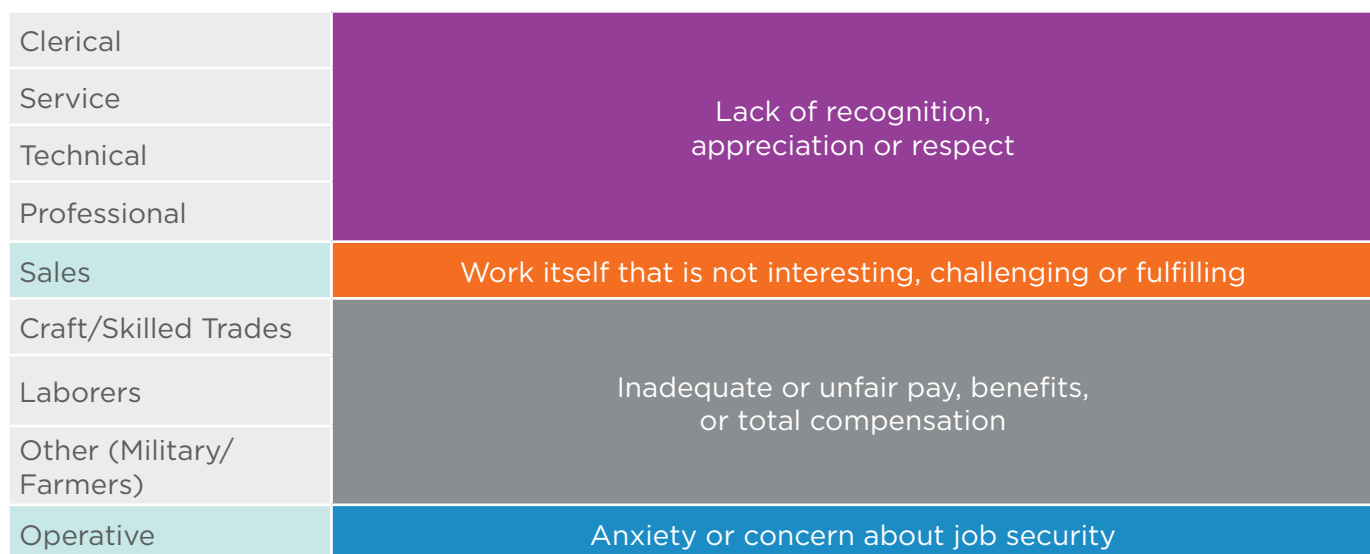


Figure 9. Top Reason for Leaving by Job Type

FIGURE 10

18-24	Lack of recognition, appreciation or respect
25-34	
35-44	
45-54	Inadequate or unfair pay, benefits, or total compensation
55+	

Figure 10. Top Reason for Leaving by Age Group

FIGURE 11

Full Time	Lack of recognition, appreciation or respect
Part Time	Inadequate or unfair pay, benefits, or total compensation
Independent Contractor	
Temp/Seasonal	High stress, inflexible hours, poor relations with coworkers

Figure 11. Top Reason for Leaving by Employment Arrangement

## SECTION 4

# Key Factors that Influence Job Offer Acceptance





**Recruitment is marketing. Just as companies need to market to their customers, marketing to job seekers is critical in the war for talent.** This means rethinking your corporate website, especially the career pages, to showcase your authentic brand and culture.

- **Among job seekers, 82% indicate that career websites are important in influencing their pursuit of a job with that company.**

And given that the number-one reason why job seekers accept job offers is being treated with dignity and respect, companies that showcase their recognition programs and people initiatives will have a competitive advantage.

- **Out of all job seekers, 70% find that information on the company website about recognition programs is *Important* or *Very Important* when considering a job.**

Active job seekers are more likely (81%) to find information on recognition to be important than passive job seekers (53%), a 28 percent difference. In addition, more men (81%) than women (60%) believe information on recognition is important.

But the buck doesn't stop there. Organizations need to be proactive in building their external brand. In fact, more than half of employees view external factors, such as reputation, as important.

### How Important Are External Factors in Influencing the Job Offer?

The company's reputation	84%
Company ratings and reviews on websites (e.g., Glassdoor)	69%
CEO ratings and reviews on websites	63%
Postings on social media about the company or employees	63%
Awards or recognition that company has received	63%

Table 3. External Factors in Influencing the Job Offer

## SECTION 5

# Job Seeker Expectations for Pre-Boarding and Onboarding



We've seen the emergence of pre-boarding, which refers to those onboarding activities that start before the first day on the job. In fact, **nearly six out of 10 individuals (58%) would consider another job if someone didn't engage them between the time of offer and the first day on the job.**

### What are employees' pre-boarding expectations?

The chart below gives a good indication. It's no surprise that tactical activities like the completion of new hire paperwork and background/drug checks appear at the top of the list. But look above the waterline. Consider going the extra mile with a new hire portal or a meet and greet with a member of the senior leadership team.

Completion of new hire paperwork	77%
Background check	74%
Drug test	71%
Review of employee benefits	71%
Facility tour	66%
Orientation session	63%
Access to a new hire portal to learn about the company	62%
Meet and greet with senior leadership	52%
Assessments to understand career pathing	49%
Being paired with a mentor who can help navigate the organization	47%

Table 4. Pre-boarding Expectations

We also asked job seekers their opinions on the impact of a personalized welcome gift from the employer, as well as when the welcome gift should arrive. Interestingly, **61% of individuals say that a personalized gift at the time of offer would influence their acceptance of that job offer.** For millennials aged 25–34, that number is even higher at 82%. Timing is also key.

### When should personalized gifts arrive?

Sometime between offer acceptance and my first day on the job	29%
At the time of job offer	26%
My first day on the job	18%
After completing my onboarding plan, to recognize my early efforts with the organization	18%
Shortly after my first day	8%

Table 5. Timing of Personalized Gifts

### The Impact of Onboarding on Retention

Is onboarding linked to turnover? The answer is a resounding “yes,” based on our research findings. More than half of respondents consider the onboarding experience crucial. If the experience is poor, they’ll seek employment elsewhere. And if the experience is a positive one, they’re more likely to stay. But make no mistake: newly acquired employees are still deciding whether they want to work for you.

- **69% say that their first day on the job experience will affect their decision to stay with the organization for more than a month**
- **72% say that their total onboarding experience will affect their decision to stay with the organization for more than a year**
- **59% say that a poor onboarding experience will result in their immediately looking for a job outside of the company**

## ABOUT Engage<sup>2</sup>Excel™

Engage2Excel provides HR solutions to help organizations increase engagement and performance throughout the talent lifecycle:

**Employee Recognition:** Improve engagement enterprise-wide with performance, social and service recognition programs.

**Talent Acquisition:** Infuse highly engaged employees into your workforce and improve productivity from day one.

**Employee Surveys:** Discover what employees really want with industry-leading engagement surveys.

**For more information, visit [Engage2Excel.com](http://Engage2Excel.com)**