

TRENDICATORS RESEARCH REPORT

# The 2022 Job Seeker Survey Report

# Introduction

Welcome to the *2022 Job Seeker Survey Report*, an analysis of the perceptions and preferences of active and passive candidates across all major industries in the U.S. produced by Trendicators, the research division of Engage2Excel Group. This report is based on survey responses from 1,516 job seekers in February 2022. The report presents a revealing perspective on six key questions, the answers to which should influence your organization's talent acquisition and retention strategies to optimize success:

- Why do candidates accept or reject job offers?
- Why do people seek employment elsewhere?
- How will your company manage today's remote work realities?
- What do candidates think about recruiting processes?
- How important is recognition in the recruiting process?
- What do candidates think about onboarding processes?

The results published in this report are based on a survey of 1,516 individuals, from all major industry sectors and demographic groups, including 1,143 active job seekers, 373 passive job seekers. Trendicators is the research division of Engage2Excel Group, a leading provider of employee recruitment, recognition, and survey and analytics solutions. Trendicators provides original research, along with reports on insights and best practices from industry leaders and experts.

## Survey Demographics

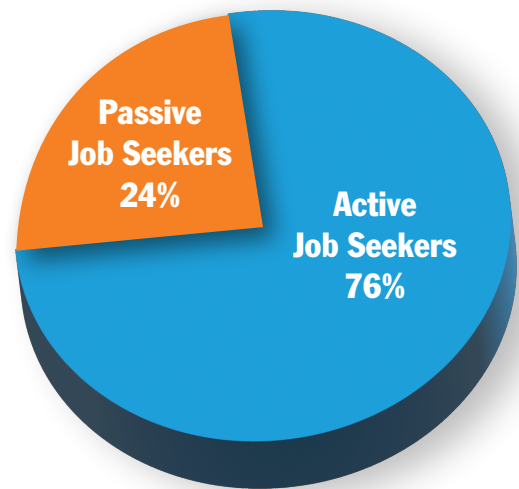
**Number of Respondents:** 1,516

**Countries Represented:** United States

**Industries Represented:** All major industries

**Respondent Demographics:** US adult workers in all job types with proportionate representation of gender, age group and racial/ethnic origin

**Margin of Error:** 95% confidence level +/- 1.5%



**Special thanks to following members of the Trendicators Advisory Board who provided editorial review and guidance to help shape the contents of this report.**



**Jean Delbridge**  
Senior Vice President, HR  
Primeritus Financial Services



**Lisa Esparza**  
CHRO  
Essilor North America



**Lisa Kraska**  
Vice President of Talent  
Baylor Scott & White Health

# Why do candidates accept or reject job offers?



The table below shows that candidates' top three factors with the greatest influence on their decision to accept or reject a job offer have remained constant since 2019. Whether or not a candidate is shown recognition, appreciation and respect throughout the entire hiring process is most important, followed by fair compensation and job fit. This data shows that the “Great Resignation” is not about changing perceptions but about employees becoming more aware of their options in making meaningful career decisions.

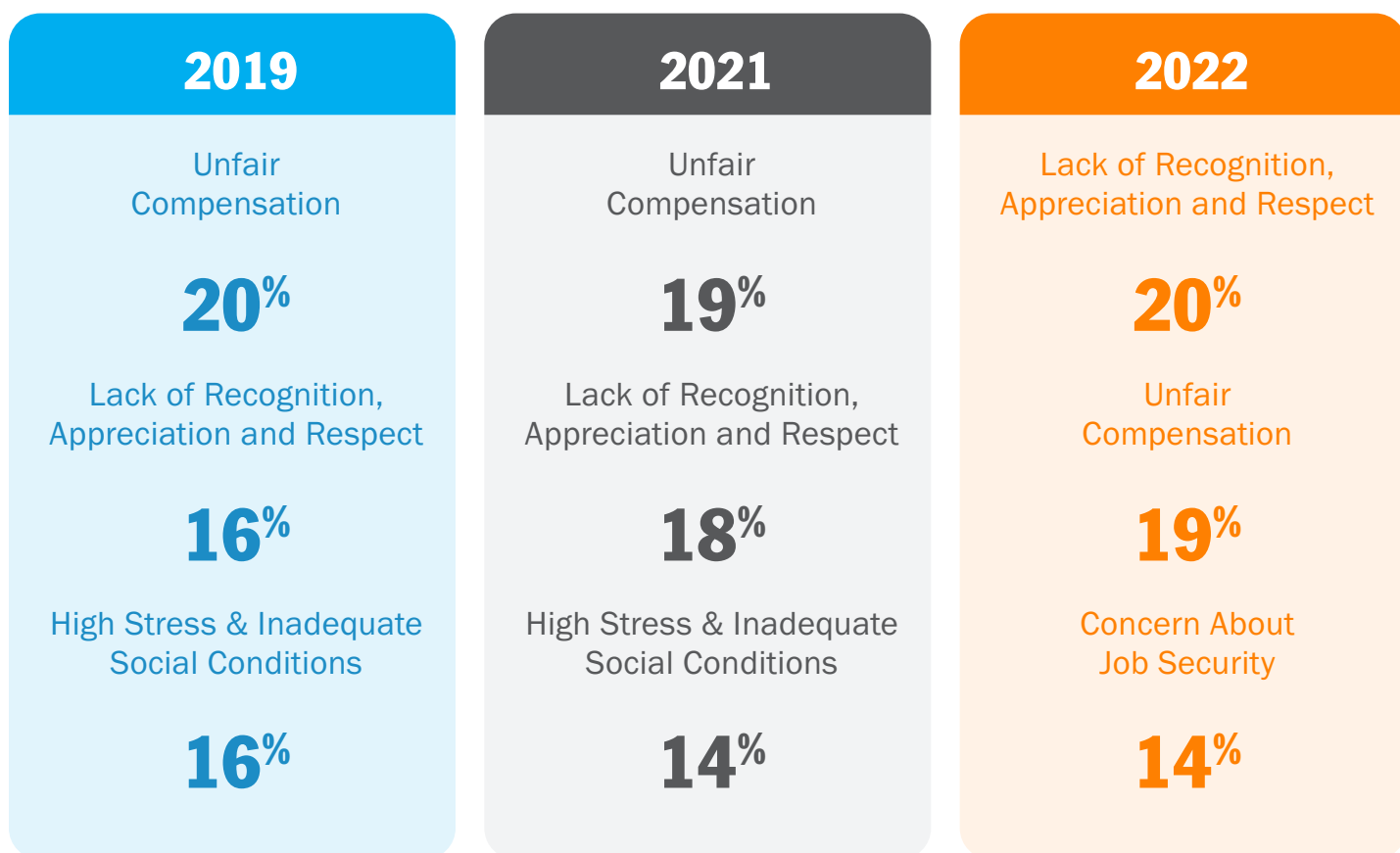
2019	2021	2022
<b>TOP REASONS FOR ACCEPTANCE</b>		
<b>27%</b> Recognition, Appreciation & Respect	<b>29%</b> Recognition, Appreciation & Respect	<b>32%</b> Recognition, Appreciation & Respect
<b>23%</b> Compensation	<b>22%</b> Compensation	<b>21%</b> Compensation
<b>21%</b> Job Fit	<b>17%</b> Job Fit	<b>17%</b> Job Fit
<b>TOP REASONS FOR REJECTION</b>		
<b>26%</b> Lack of Recognition, Appreciation & Respect	<b>24%</b> Lack of Recognition, Appreciation & Respect	<b>24%</b> Lack of Recognition, Appreciation & Respect
<b>20%</b> Concern About Job Fit	<b>19%</b> Unfair Compensation	<b>18%</b> Concern About Job Security
<b>17%</b> Unfair Compensation	<b>16%</b> Concern About Security & Job Fit	<b>17%</b> Concern About Job Fit & Compensation



# Why do people seek employment elsewhere?



The unemployment rate dropped to 3.6% in March 2022 as employers extended a robust hiring streak, adding 431,000 new jobs—a sign of economic resilience despite continued impact from the pandemic and the highest inflation rate in 40 years. For the first time since 2019, the top reason given by all candidates for their willingness to seek employment elsewhere is not compensation but the failure of their employer to demonstrate recognition, respect and appreciation. Unfair compensation was cited as the second most important factor this year, followed by concerns over job security. Employees have increased power to act on what has always been important to them. This gives Total Rewards Managers additional leverage to argue for budget increases to expand their employee recognition and rewards programs.



# How will your company manage today's remote work realities?



The pandemic has profoundly and forever changed perceptions about the modern workplace. More than half the people we surveyed say they work from home at least 40% of the time. Additionally, despite the fact that nearly three-quarters say they expect to return to the office within the next three to six months, 47% would prefer to work from home 100% of the time. Only 22% of those surveyed say they prefer to work in the office 100% of the time.

Market research firm Forrester predicts that 60% of offices will adopt a hybrid work policy this year. How does this data stack up with your organization's return-to-office policies?

**What percentage of the time do you work remotely?**

**52%**

are working remote at least 40% of the time

**When are you going back into the office?**

**73%**

Expect to return within the next 3-6 months

**What is your preferred work location?**

**47%**

Prefer to work remote 100% of the time

**22%**

Prefer to work in office 100% of the time

**26%**

Prefer a hybrid work environment





# What do candidates think about recruiting processes?

In today's talent market, candidates have all the power. Among the most significant changes since our 2019 survey: 91% of candidates, a 19% increase, expect to apply for a job on a mobile device; 61% would participate in an organization's social community even if there are no current job openings; and 61% would consider another job offer if not contacted between the time of offer and the first day on the job.

## What matters most to you in the application process?

Easy and straightforward	<b>57%</b>
Quick to complete	<b>27%</b>
An engaging experience	<b>15%</b>

## How do you prefer to communicate with a recruiter?

Email	<b>41%</b>
Phone call	<b>36%</b>
Text	<b>15%</b>
LinkedIn	<b>6%</b>

## How long should it take to complete an application?

5 to 14 minutes	<b>31%</b>
15 to 29 minutes	<b>43%</b>
30 to 44 minutes	<b>14%</b>

## “I expect to apply for a job on a mobile device.”

'19: **72%**   '21: **83%**   '22: **91%**

## What is a reasonable number of pre-hire assessments?

1 assessment	<b>29%</b>
2 to 3 assessments	<b>43%</b>
4-6 assessments	<b>17%</b>

## “I would participate in a social community for an organization I'm interested in even if there are no current job openings.”

'19: **44%**   '21: **56%**   '22: **61%**



# What do candidates think about recruiting processes?

## How do candidates feel about video interviews?

	2019	2021	2022
Comfortable in a panel video interview	63%	63%	75%
Comfortable doing a two-way video interview	59%	70%	70%
Comfortable doing a one-way video interview	46%	60%	65%
Expect a video interview in the interview process	43%	65%	71%

## Overall, having a positive experience with the following individual is most important to me

Hiring Manager	39%
Recruiter	22%
Coordinator	17%

## What are the most important recruiter behaviors and characteristics?

Percentage who said it is Very Important

Being open & honest	59%
Explaining the recruitment steps	58%
Being respectful	58%

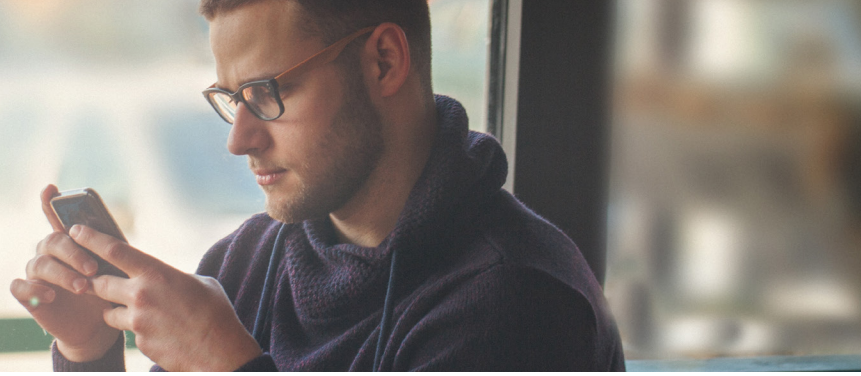
## What is the likelihood that you'll be working for a new employer within the next 6 months?

Highly Likely or Likely **66%**

## Would you consider another job offer if not contacted between the time of offer and the first day on the job?

	2019	2021	2022
Yes	45%	57%	61%
No	28%	21%	19%
Not sure	27%	23%	19%

# What do candidates think about recruiting processes?



## How do you feel about participating in drug screening?

	2019	2021	2022
Employers should be able to require drug screenings	60%	56%	62%
I would stop pursuing a job if drug screenings were required	32%	46%	49%

## How long should the recruiting process take from application to job offer?

1 week or less	34%
8 to 14 days	28%
15 to 21 days	15%
22 to 28 days	6%

## In life, having a career is important to me

18 to 24	79%
25 to 34	89%
35 to 44	88%
45 to 54	83%
55 to 64	88%
65+	63%

## Percentage of passive candidates willing to learn about a new opportunity

2019	2021	2022
82%	100%	89%





# How important is recognition in the recruiting process?

Do your organization’s recruiters and hiring managers understand the importance candidates place on recognition today? As cited on Page 3, it is the most important reason candidates give for accepting or rejecting a job offer. Nearly three-quarters of candidates say that the presence of a recognition and rewards program on an employer’s website is “Very Important” or “Important.” Since 2019, there are also significant increases in the importance candidates place on being praised and recognized during each phase of the hiring process.

## The importance of a recognition and rewards program on a company’s website

Percentage who said it is Very Important or Important

2019	2021	2022
58%	65%	72%

## Importance of being praised/recognized during various phases

Percentage who said it is Very Important or Important

	2019	2021	2022
Pre-Offer	45%	68%	71%
Post-Offer but before first day on the job	49%	71%	74%
During onboarding	72%	75%	79%
After onboarding	76%	78%	82%

**“A gift from an employer at the time of the offer would influence my acceptance decision.”**

2019	2021	2022
36%	64%	67%

# What do candidates think about the onboarding process?



The onboarding experience sets the tone for the employee’s career experience with your company. The pandemic, shift to remote work and changing candidate perceptions require new approaches. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of candidates now say that their onboarding experience will affect their decision to stay with the company for more than a month, a 12% increase from 2019. Even more pronounced is that 71% of candidates, a 26% increase since 2019, say that interacting with other employees is “Very Important” or “Important” in the Pre-Offer stage.

## How will your onboarding experience affect your decision to stay with the company?

Percentage reporting Highly Likely or Likely

	2019	2021	2022
First day will affect decision to stay over a month	60%	72%	74%
Total onboarding experience will affect decision to stay over a year	60%	67%	72%

## Importance of interacting with other employees

Percentage reporting Highly Likely or Likely

	2019	2021	2022
Pre-Offer	45%	68%	71%
Post-Offer but before first day on the job	49%	71%	74%
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# Insights from the 2022 Job Seeker Report to Optimize Recruiting and Onboarding Experiences

## ASSESS THE BENEFITS OF HYBRID WORK EXPERIENCES

**Survey employees before finalizing your return-to-office policy.** Nearly 50% of our survey respondents reported that they prefer to work remotely 100% of the time. In today's challenging talent marketplace, where 89% of passive candidates say they are willing to learn about a new opportunity, offering a hybrid approach can be an essential tool for attracting and retaining talent.

## OPTIMIZE RECRUITING EXPERIENCES

**Educate each member of your talent acquisition team about the importance of praising and recognizing positive behaviors among all candidates.** Consider hiring undercover candidates to audit recruitment experiences annually.

**Make sure your total compensation and benefits are competitive and clearly understood by employees and candidates.** Conduct an annual employee survey to evaluate causes that may negatively influence employee engagement, productivity and loyalty.

**Re-evaluate your recognition and rewards program periodically and actively promote this important benefit internally AND externally.** Make sure that this program occupies a prominent place on your career site.

**Review your company's new employee communications program.** Replace standardized form letters with engaging and personalized communications and consider sending branded gift items to make new hires feel welcome.

## OPTIMIZE ONBOARDING EXPERIENCES

**Carefully plan, organize and execute each employee's onboarding experience to avoid creating a negative first impression.** The first-day experience influences whether employees will stay for over a month.

**Formalize onboarding programs if you haven't already and build in opportunities for recognition and employee interaction.** In addition, set expectations about how long an onboarding program will last and what's included.

**Show your appreciation for a new recruit by celebrating their offer acceptance with a welcome gift branded with your company logo.** It's a great way to make new employees feel like they belong even before their first day.



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