

New CareerBuilder Study Identifies 12 Missing Links in Your Candidate Experience

-73 percent of candidates say the job search process is one of the most stressful things in life
-One in 4 employers say the amount of time it took to fill their last opening was too long

CHICAGO and ATLANTA, June 27, 2017 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- Any business process is only as strong as the weakest link – and candidate experience is no different. A new CareerBuilder study outlines the complex perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of both candidates and hiring managers to better help employers identify and address where they fall short in their current process, which may be putting them a step behind competitors.

CareerBuilder's 2017 Candidate Experience study, conducted by Inavero between March 7, 2017 and March 14, 2017, included 4,512 workers ages 18 and over, and 1,500 hiring decision makers. View full results and the executive summary [here](#).

"A positive candidate experience is a competitive advantage in a job market where candidates have flexibility in their job selection," said Rosemary Haefner, chief human resources officer at CareerBuilder. "To remain competitive and create a candidate experience that attracts, secures and retains today's top talent, you need to determine how your current hiring methods measure up to what candidates are looking for."

Exclusive research and insights from CareerBuilder's 2017 Candidate Experience Study show what peers and competitors have identified as shortcomings in their process, illustrate the role for technology to help improve the process and provide tips to make things easier for employers and prospective employees. Here are some aspects employers are struggling with:

1. **Not having a quick apply process for every device:** The application process itself can contribute to a negative experience for modern candidates as "applications taking too long" (28 percent), "having to customize documents for every job" (34 percent) and "uploading a resume into a system but still having to manually fill out fields" (29 percent) are reiterated as frustrating aspects of the process by a considerable amount of candidates.
2. **Not preparing hiring managers:** On average, only 2 out of 5 hiring managers are prepped by recruiters or talent acquisition specialists. Of those who do, only 2 out of 5 prep hiring managers specifically on the topic of candidate experience. This means only 16 percent of hiring managers overall are prepped by specialists to help manage the candidate's experience.
3. **Not having an effective career site:** An employer's career site is important for getting key information, according to 89 percent of job seekers. But a quarter of employers (24 percent) say their company career site doesn't accurately portray what it's like to work for their organization, and only 45 percent of candidates say they can typically tell what it would be like to work for a company based on their career site.
4. **Not tailoring communications methods to specific segments:** The ever-emerging multigenerational workforce demands a shift in the way we communicate. Millennials significantly prefer email communications (57 percent) over phone calls (31 percent), whereas boomers significantly prefer phone calls (58 percent) over emails (37 percent). Gen Xers have equal preferences towards email and phone calls (47 percent for both).

Further, millennials are 2-3 times more likely to prefer alternative communication methods (text messaging, social media messaging and video calling) compared to Gen X and baby boomer generations.

5. **Not recognizing when the employee experience really begins:** The lines between the candidate and employee experience are blending – at least in the eyes of candidates, as 3 in 4 say their candidate and onboarding experience with a company is the first part of their broader employee experience with that company.
6. **Not building relationships with candidates for future opportunities:** The most valuable resource an employer has is their talent pool. While it is important to attract the top candidates, it is equally as important to frequently and effectively communicate with your talent pool, but more than a third of employers (35 percent) say they don't put time into doing this.
7. **Not having an efficient background check process:** Employers that want to keep top talent from talking to other companies while they want to receive employment screening results should improve their screening process. Sixty percent of candidates continue communicating and interviewing with other companies while waiting on background results.
8. **Not having the right ATS or an ATS at all:** Organizations currently utilizing an ATS (applicant tracking system) reported placing more emphasis on the candidate, employee and hiring manager experiences. For example, those who currently use an ATS are 25 percent more likely to have a standardized process to help deliver a consistent candidate experience.
9. **Not informing the candidate where they stand:** More than half of job seekers say employers don't do a good job of setting expectations in terms of communication at the beginning of a potential hiring interaction. Eighty-one percent of job seekers said continuously communicating status updates to candidates would greatly improve the overall experience.

10. **Not staying connected with candidates once they have accepted the position:** Once the hiring process is in the post-acceptance and onboarding stage, the expectation is for the process to be seamless and frustration-free for new hires – yet a noticeable number of candidates say this stage has not been ideal. Two in 5 candidates (40 percent) say they've experienced a lack of communication in the past between when they accepted the job and their first day of work. This is not surprising, since less than half of employers (47 percent) have a formal process in place for communicating and interacting candidates between the time the day they accepted the job and the day they start work.
11. **Not paying attention to how their employer presence/brand is portrayed on social media:** Employers are trying to reach an audience, and they can't afford to let their brand's social media pages fall by the wayside. Yet, 60 percent of employers don't monitor their employer presence/brand on social media. Of those who do, 68 percent take steps to encourage positive reviews while 16 percent just react to negative information.
12. **Not treating candidates with the same respect as employees:** While the majority of employers (51 percent) say the line is blurring between the company experience and employee experience, less than half of job seekers (49 percent) say employers treat candidates with the same level of respect and accountability as current employees. This is an issue since the vast majority of job seekers (nearly 4 in 5) say the overall candidate experience is an indicator of how a company values its people.

Survey Methodology

In partnership with Inavero, CareerBuilder surveyed 4,512 workers, ages 18 and over and 1,500 hiring decision makers, between March 7, 2017 and March 14, 2017 in the United States, 504 workers in Canada in an effort to understand the factors that influence candidates' job search experience. With pure probability samples of 1,500 and 5,016, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have sampling errors of +/- 2.53 and +/- 1.38 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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