THE RECRUITMENT COMPANY

THE GREAT BIG RECRUITMENT INDUSTRY SURVEY

2022

RESULTS

ARE IN!

56%

OF AGENCIES WERE RATED AS 'TERRIBLE'

10%

OF AGENCIES WERE RATED AS 'EXCEPTIONAL'

(DOWN FROM 16% IN 2020)

78%

OF PEOPLE SAID THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS HAD SOME IMPACT ON THEIR VIEW OF THE END CLIENT'S BRAND

(UP FROM 77% IN 2020)

TOP 3 THINGS PEOPLE HATE

1. NO RESPONSE TO APPLICATIONS
2. POOR INTERVIEW FEEDBACK
3. MISREPRESENTATION OF ROLES

TOP 3 THINGS PEOPLE LIKE

1. THOROUGH FEEDBACK AND CRITICISM
2. SWIFT FEEDBACK
3. WELL WRITTEN JOB DESCRIPTIONS

BIGGEST CHANGE: PEOPLE VALUE "CLOSURE OF PROCESS"

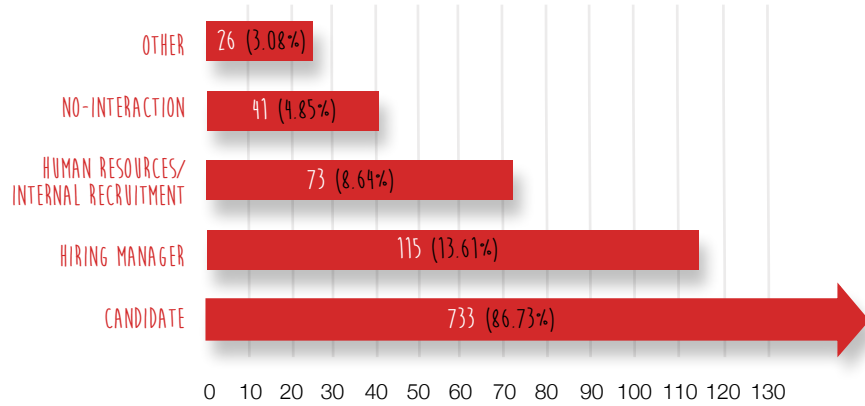### (UP FROM 40% IN 2020 TO 62%)

EARLY RESULTS ARE IN!

THE DEMOGRAPHICS

Our survey has taken the opinions of 845 people. We asked them to describe in what capacity they had engaged with the recruitment process over the last 12 months. Quite a few respondents had engaged with recruitment in more than one capacity.

The vast majority of respondents had engaged with the recruitment experience in the capacity of candidate however we were pleasantly surprised how many people from the other side of the table got involved.

SERIES 1: 845 RESPONSES

Category	Value
OTHER	26 (3.08%)
NO-INTERACTION	41 (4.85%)
HUMAN RESOURCES/INTERNAL RECRUITMENT	73 (8.64%)
HIRING MANAGER	115 (13.61%)
CANDIDATE	733 (86.73%)

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130

HOW THEY RATE OUR INDUSTRY

When asked to rate recruitment agencies based on the percentage of agencies they felt were 'exceptional' and the percentage they felt were 'terrible' the market definitely spoke. The results are sobering.

56% were rated as 'Terrible'

But sadly only 15% were rated as 'exceptional'.

This leaves 29% as being average.

A sobering result! On average 56% of agencies are rated as terrible. Before we can address this we next need to look how this rating may impact the clients we are representing and then assess what it is that we need to do less of and what we need to do more of.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES YOU'VE DEALT WITH ARE...

2020
16%
28%
56%

2022
EXCEPTIONAL 10%
34% SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN
56% TERRIBLE
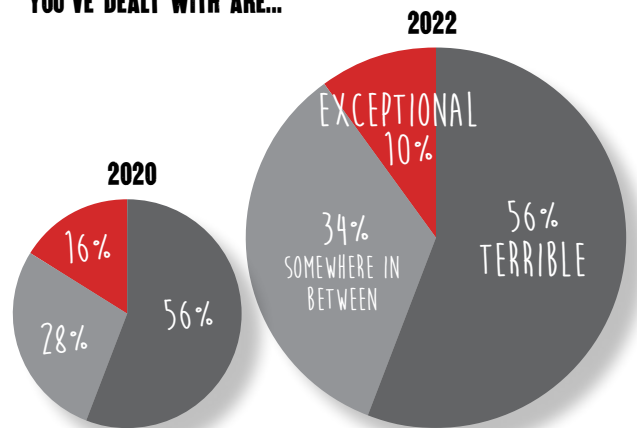
HOW THIS IMPACTS THEIR VIEW OF OUR CUSTOMERS

We asked respondents about how the treatment they received during the recruitment process (both via agency and via internal recruitment teams) impacted their view of the end client.

A staggering 79% said that the treatment they received during this process impacted their view of the end client's products and services. With 41% stating that it would significantly impact their future buying decisions.

So what does this mean? If you are a hiring manager then how applicants to your roles are treated can positively or negatively impact sales. If your agency, your own internal recruitment team or you treat applicants badly then you have destroyed your brand with a significant number of them. A positive exercise has turned into a PR disaster. Does every recruitment drive need to be a PR disaster? Well no, because the opposite is also true. If you are able to give great service then this will positively impact sales.

IMPACT:

2020
3%
20%
36%
41%

2022
2%
10%
38%
50%
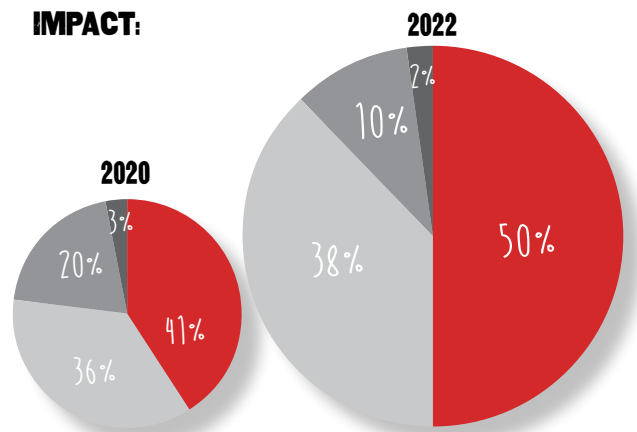
- 🟥 EXTREMELY HIGH IMPACT, WOULD IMPACT BUYING DIRECTIONS
- ⬜ SOME IMPACT BUT MAY NOT CONSCIOUSLY IMPACT MY BUYING DECISIONS
- ⬜ NO IMPACT, AGENCY AND END CLIENT ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT
- ⬛ DON'T KNOW

ANECDOTE TIME

COMMENTS

'If you're super interested there can be additional anxiety that the recruitment partner may not represent you in the best way possible.'

'I believe the relationship between recruiter and client is a reflection of the client overall - if the recruiter is a bit half-arsed I assume the client will be too.'

'100% reflection on the client'

'In my experience companies either use recruiters to save them time or put a level of deniability on less ethical filtering choices either way a recruiter is the first reflection that an organisation is less than ethical.'

'A bad recruiter shows the company isn't totally on top of their suppliers or how new potential employees are treated.'
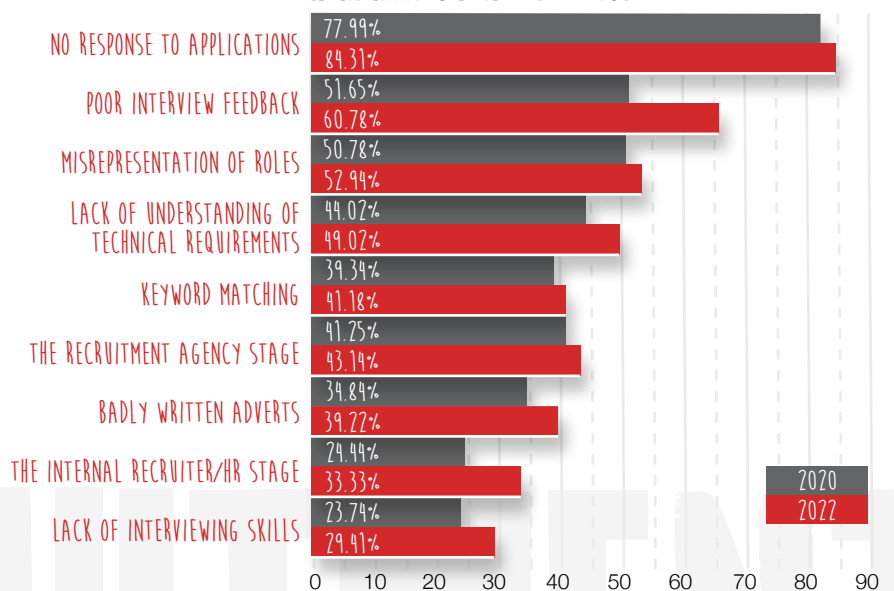
SO WHAT DO THEY DISLIKE?

We listed a number of things that we felt would annoy people about the recruitment process. They were allowed to tick as many as they liked.

The list was ⟶

As you can see, the most hated aspect of the process is lack of response to applications. This is followed by mis-representation of roles then a close grouping of poor interview feedback and lack of understanding of roles.

We weren't surprised by the 'lack of response' result but we have to state that we were surprised with the volume of people who felt that roles were misrepresented in the process.

WHAT ANNOYS PEOPLE THE MOST:

	2020	2022
NO RESPONSE TO APPLICATIONS	77.99%	84.31%
POOR INTERVIEW FEEDBACK	51.65%	60.78%
MISREPRESENTATION OF ROLES	50.78%	52.94%
LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS	44.02%	49.02%
KEYWORD MATCHING	39.34%	41.18%
THE RECRUITMENT AGENCY STAGE	41.25%	43.14%
BADLY WRITTEN ADVERTS	34.84%	39.22%
THE INTERNAL RECRUITER/HR STAGE	24.44%	33.33%
LACK OF INTERVIEWING SKILLS	23.74%	29.41%

COMMENTS

'The bar is fairly low – any recruiter who bothers to let me know why I wasn't successful in a role impresses me because more often than not, they ghost and you never hear from them again.'

'No acknowledgement of receipt of application, nil response to phone messages. Very unprofessional. '

'I am just sick of lengthy application processes only to be ignored and given no feedback. We want easy, streamline application processes that actually get to the point of whether you're right for the organisation and even the tiniest bit of constructive feedback. It can be soul crushing doing so many applications selling yourself to get nothing in return.'
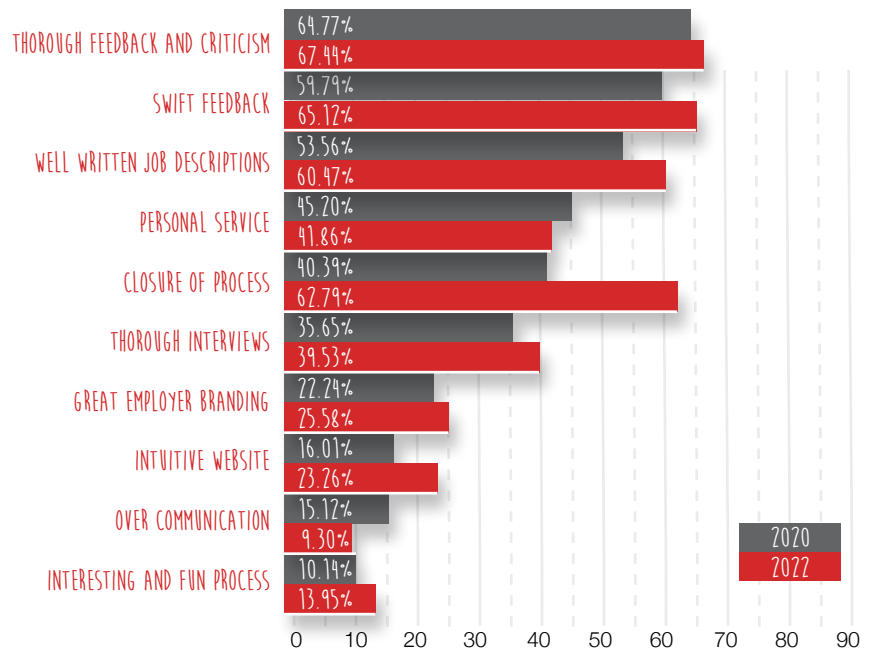
SO, WHAT IMPRESSES THEM?

We then asked the opposite question, what impressed them? Again, they could select as many options as they liked.

By far the thing that impressed people the most is thorough feedback and criticism (67%). This is followed by swift feedback, closure of process, well written job descriptions and personal service.

Interesting the lowest scoring elements were employer branding, intuitive websites and gamification. It seems that if you want to impress applicants you're better off just giving them a ring than pumping money into that fancy careers page.

So overwhelmingly, the thing that impresses most is personal, thorough, brave and swift feedback.

WHAT PEOPLE LIKE:

Category	2020	2022
THOROUGH FEEDBACK AND CRITICISM	64.77%	67.44%
SWIFT FEEDBACK	59.79%	65.12%
WELL WRITTEN JOB DESCRIPTIONS	53.56%	60.47%
PERSONAL SERVICE	45.20%	41.86%
CLOSURE OF PROCESS	40.39%	62.79%
THOROUGH INTERVIEWS	35.65%	39.53%
GREAT EMPLOYER BRANDING	22.24%	25.58%
INTUITIVE WEBSITE	16.01%	23.26%
OVER COMMUNICATION	15.12%	9.30%
INTERESTING AND FUN PROCESS	10.14%	13.95%

COMMENTS

BTW

| MOST FREQUENTLY USED DESCRIPTIVE WORD: **'FEEDBACK'** | SWEAR WORDS: **32** (FROM 11 PEOPLE) | NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WERE DIRECTLY CRITICAL OF THE RECRUITMENT COMPANY: **2** | RESPONDENTS: **846** |

AMAZING STORIES

We asked people to share some of their best experiences. There were some great stories but alarmingly there were also quite a few people who claimed to have never had an exceptional experience. Here are a few highlights.

'I had an agent looking out for roles for me. Even after getting the role which didn't start for another 6 weeks she put me into a temp role knowing I needed to pay the rent. She also came in and met me at the workplace again later down the track. Very professional and friendly towards me as a candidate.'

'A company once contacted me for a role that I qualified for through an application I had previously submitted for a different role. The interview process was conversational and they even had a quick skills test after the interview.'

'As simple as someone who has taken the time to let me know I was unsuccessful. Made me feel respected, instead of being ignored, as is the case with 80% of recruiters out there.'

'There was one young girl who was a junior recruiter with a passion to do the right thing. She went beyond the role to do her best to get me the job e.g. gathering points from past interviews, doing research of the interviewer/ company and passing a summary to me ... etc'

'Yes when people promise to get back to you and they do. Even if you don't get the job it means you go stop thinking about that job and move onto the next application. I really like this communication.'

I found a more fulfilling role through approaching a recruiter who understood my unique talents and aspirations they then sought out a role to fill that suited me.

'Recruiter followed up a day after telling me I'd missed out on a job, as she knew I'd taken it hard. She was simply calling to make sure I was OK, and to give me hope that the right job was out there and the market was picking up.'

> **I had been struggling to find a job in the UK years ago and had applied for lots and lots of jobs. Getting very little return for my effort. Then a recruiter contacted me out of the blue and had 5 interviews in 24 hours for me.**
>
> **One of which was the job I ended up taking. He saw me as a resource to sell and did cold calls to companies and sold me.**
>
> **The company I ended up working for wasn't even looking for someone at the time.**

MORE LIFE EXPERIENCE

THE RANT BOX.

We asked respondents to rant. We inevitably got some interesting responses.
Only a few were unrepeatable but many were very sobering. Here are a few highlights:

Mostly human traffickers. Their motivation is the commission/sale and not the career or need of the candidate. They are very tunnel visioned and cant see left or right of the applicants role. They seem to have difficulty in helping candidates identify transferable skills that are valuable in other industries they may have vacancies for.

The should have proper system to let the applicant know that their profile has been viewed and why they are not considered.

Try to imagine the sort of skills and experience and reliability you are missing when dismissing, without interviews, applications from older workers.

There's nothing worse than being 'sold' a role, then going into the role with an expectation, that's fully smashed when you see what the role is in reality. I'm smart, lots of people are, don't treat us like idiots. I know you have KPI's to adhere to and I'm not to be used as disposable fodder for you to get there.

Get decent communications pre interview but then ghosted post. Employers are at fault too (not just recruiters). I find the ghosting very disrespectful as have spent time and effort, then just left hanging hoping for something that never comes.

useless

Some agencies are not equipped to manage certain professional positions. It's like letting Kath & Kim loose at a UN convention!

I am annoyed when I go into the city for a chat with a recruitment agency and they are all over me so to speak then there is just nothing, no calls no emails not unless you are in their direct spotlight for a role. I waste a lot of time going in for chats, and then nothing comes of it.

95% of the time there is no acknowledgment.

GET SOME MANNERS!!!! :)
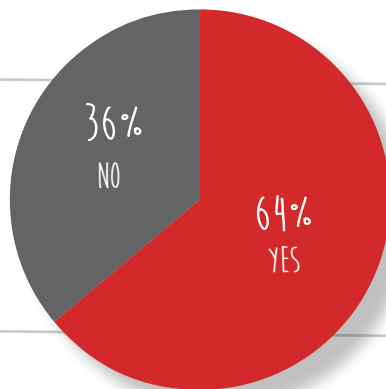*Just understand that silence is extremely frustrating, worst when you are in between roles.*

GHOSTING

HOOOOOOOHOOOOOOOO

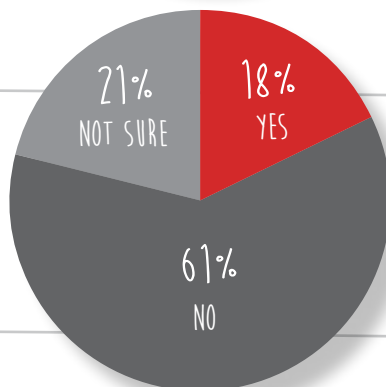HAVE YOU EVER BEEN 'GHOSTED' BY A CANDIDATE?

36% NO

64% YES

WOULD YOU RE-ENGAGE WITH A CANDIDATE WHO HAD GHOSTED YOU?

21% NOT SURE

18% YES

61% NO

COMMENTS

'Poor forward thinkers who are unable to consider the consequences.'

'I don't mind if people want to withdraw from the process but ghosting is unprofessional.'

'I always view it as an insight into the personality and despite the frustration, I am always glad I found out in advance of recruiting them.'

'Ghosting is plain rude.'

'On the flip side many orgs and recruiters can be notoriously bad at keeping you in the loop and engaged, so it works both ways.'

THE RECRUITMENT COMPANY

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- 56% of agencies are terrible
- Only 10% are exceptional
- 88% of people are put off buying your products/services by a poor recruitment experience (42% to a large degree)
- 84% say they hate lack of feedback
- 65% of people say that they are impressed by swift feedback
- 60% state that they are impressed by thorough feedback even if its negative

Then the conclusion must be drawn that if an organisation is neglecting its applicants, either directly, as a result of their (56 percenter) agency's processes or as a result of their combined lack of care then it is the organisations sales that will suffer.

ON THE FLIP SIDE HOWEVER:

If an organisation is able to provide personal, swift feedback, either directly, via its (10 percenter) agency or as a combined effort, then its sales will be positively impacted.

Another interesting element we found through the survey was this:

- Respondents who identified as candidates talked about how **recruiters refused to think outside the box in terms of skills not exactly matching the requirements**.
- Respondents who identified as hiring managers or HR managers bemoaned the fact that **recruiters often send candidates who don't exactly match their requirements**.

THE POST COVID WORLD

- In the post covid world candidates have more power and higher expectations. Their view of agencies has dropped with only 10% being rated as exceptional (down from 16%) which implies either a drop in standards or an increase in expectations (we're assuming it's a combination of both).

- There is also a significant increase in applicants holding the end client accountable for the service provided by the agency with an increase from 77% to 88% stating that how they are treated impacts their view of the end client. With the increase in demand for candidates, applicants are holding everyone in the talent value chain accountable for terrible (or good) service. And they are increasingly speaking with their buying habits and shopping elsewhere.

- What applicants like and dislike has remained consistent however there has been a notable increase in emphasis on interesting process and intuitive websites.

- The biggest jump is the emphasis on gaining closure (from 40-63%).

- Anecdotally we have seen a lowering of venom in the comments section with less swearing and anger directed at the recruitment industry (although with the rarer occasions when it does occur it seems to be with increased vigor and creativity).

- Overall, it appears that the shift in power dynamics has increased expectations from applicants whilst also reducing their frustration. This can only be a good thing for organisations (and the 10% of agencies) who put emphasis on quality of process, speed of response, innovation and treating applicants like humans.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

From our findings we suggest that organisations looking to up the ante on their hiring practices implemenet a simple (but not easy) 3 point plan:

1. **Find a 10%er agency (we have one we could suggest)**
2. **Set up systems to respond to every applicant to give specific, timely feedback and closure**
3. **Train everyone in the talent acquisition process on the importance of feedback and closure**

Get in contact with us if you'd like any help with setting up systems, training hiring managers or if you'd like an agency that is guaranteed to be a 10%er.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ABOUT THE SURVEY OR WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE ABOUT YOUR CAREER OR RECRUITMENT NEEDS THEN GET IN CONTACT VIA HELLO@THERECRUITMENTCOMPANY.COM

WE PROMISE WE'LL GET BACK TO YOU ...

ANXIETY *NO BULL* AGEISM

LACK OF MANNERS

SPAMMING *TRANSPARENCY

I FELT LIKE AN ACTUAL HUMAN BEING

HUMAN TRAFFICKERS

UNREALISTICALLY HIGH EXPECTATIONS

LITTLE BOXES THAT YOU ARE
TRYING TO PUT PEOPLE WITHIN

IT'S ALL ABOUT HUMANS

ONE WAY COMMUNICATION

NO RESPONSE * NO CLOSURE

PUSHY * A BLACK HOLE