

**THE  
RECRUITMENT  
COMPANY**

**THE  
GREAT  
BIG RECRUITMENT  
INDUSTRY  
SURVEY**

**RESULTS**

**ARE IN!**

**2024**

**AND THEY AREN'T PRETTY ...**

RESULTS  
ARE IN!

# THE SOBERING RESULTS

We want to make people enjoy the recruitment experience again. It's why we exist. But to do this we need to understand what about our industry people enjoy and what they don't. Over the last five years we have conducted an annual survey to gauge the sentiments of our community.

56%

OF AGENCIES WERE RATED AS **'TERRIBLE'**

16%

OF AGENCIES WERE RATED AS **'EXCEPTIONAL'**

(UP FROM 10% IN 2022)

74% OF RESPONDENTS SAID THAT A RECRUITMENT EXPERIENCE **WOULD** INFLUENCE THEIR BUYING DECISIONS

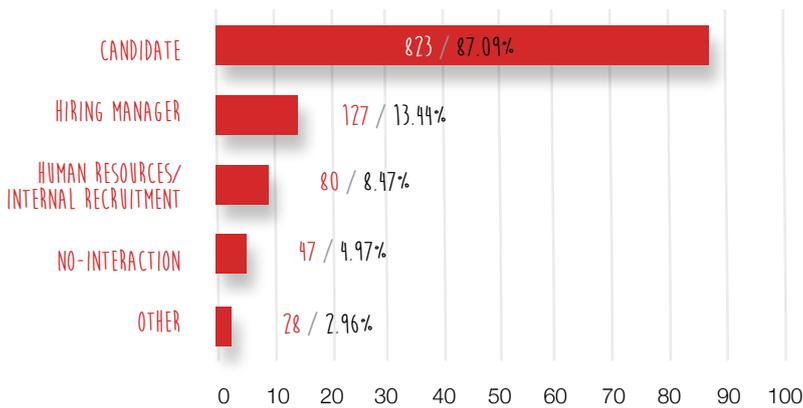
## TOP 3 THINGS PEOPLE HATE

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

## TOP 3 THINGS PEOPLE LOVE

1. THOROUGH FEEDBACK AND CRITICISM (GOOD OR BAD)
2. SWIFT FEEDBACK AND CLOSURE
3. WELL WRITTEN JOB DESCRIPTIONS

**SERIES 1: 945 RESPONSES**



**THE DEMOGRAPHICS**

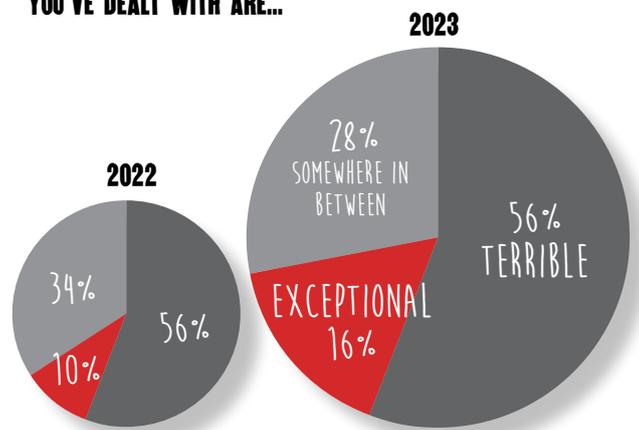
Our survey has taken the opinions of 945 people. We asked them to describe in what capacity they had engaged with the recruitment process over the last 12 months. Quite a few respondents had engaged with recruitment in more than one capacity. The vast majority of respondents had engaged with the recruitment experience in the capacity of candidate however we were pleasantly surprised how many people from the other side of the table got involved.

**HOW THEY RATE RECRUITMENT AGENCIES**

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 16% were rated as 'exceptional'. This leaves 29% as being average. A sobering result!

However, the industry has made some improvements between the post-Covid years of 21/22 and the tougher year of 2023. Although the number of 'terrible' agencies remaining stable at 56% the percentage rated as 'exceptional' increased from an all time low of 10% in 2022 to a more respectable 16% in 2023.

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



**HOW THIS IMPACTS THE MARKETS VIEW OF THE END CUSTOMER**

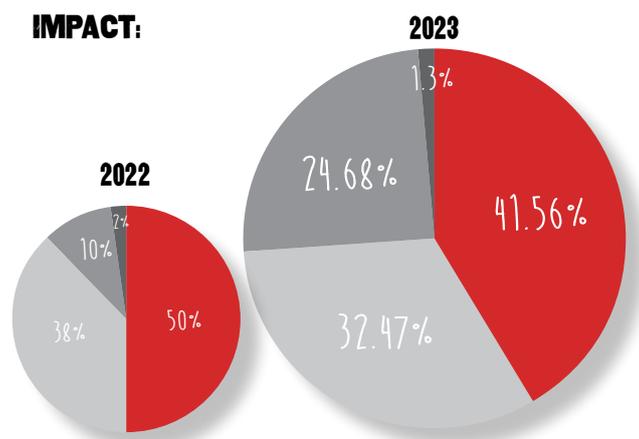
Whilst it may not be a surprise that recruitment agencies aren't generally loved by the market, what is surprising is the level to which this impacts the view of the organisations those recruiters recruit for.

This means that a staggering 74% of candidates state that the way they are treated during the recruitment process (by agency or internal talent acquisition team) directly impacts, positively or negatively, their view of the end client and impacts their likelihood to buy or not to buy that organisation's products or services.

Whilst this has dropped from 88% in 2022 it is still a significant number which demonstrates that picking the right agency and giving them the tools they need to provide good service is a marketing tool as well as a recruitment tool that has direct impact on the bottom line of the company.

In a world of cost cutting, it should give any organisation pause when they are considering cutting talent acquisition team budgets.

**IMPACT:**



- EXTREMELY HIGH IMPACT, IT WOULD IMPACT MY BUYING DIRECTIONS
- THERE IS SOME IMPACT BUT IT WOULDN'T CONSCIOUSLY IMPACT MY BUYING DECISIONS
- NOT AT ALL, I SEE THEM AS COMPLETELY SEPARATE
- DON'T KNOW

RESULTS ARE IN!

ANECDOTE TIME



*I went for an interview for a board role with a provider of workplace safety software aimed at contingent workers. It's a topic I know well and we spoke at some length. I was interested in the role, I thought the company sounded interesting. I have never heard back from them, not a word, not an email, not even a courtesy rejection email. Personally I would never buy their software and I've had 3 people ask me about my recommendations for similar software. With one I specifically told them not to bother with the company in question, with the other two I didn't mention them at all and recommended their competitors. The lessons?*

*1. I'm bitter, twisted and vengeful and 2. Get back to people.*

**Anonymous**, bitter candidate



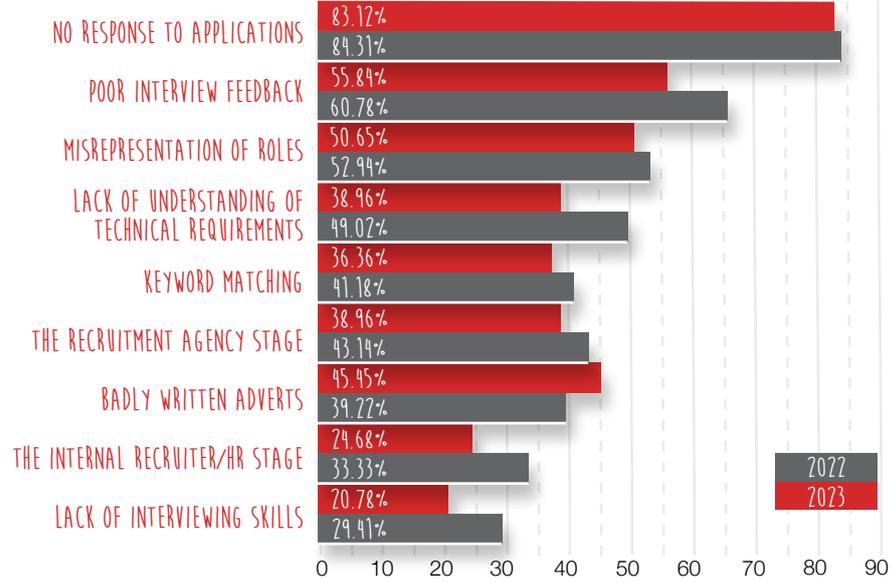
SO WHAT DO THEY DISLIKE?

The overwhelming conclusion from this year's survey is the same as all previous years: the recruitment industry AND internal talent acquisition teams are terrible at responding to applicants. It is also very clear that this is the number one gripe. Lack of any response or responses that are automated "if we like you, we'll contact you, if not, we won't" style responses are the thing that annoy people the most.

Close on the heels of this is the lack of quality interview feedback (positive or negative).

The quality of the process is also a frustration, with many respondents airing frustration at misrepresentation of roles, badly written adverts, and lack of technical understanding.

WHAT ANNOYS PEOPLE THE MOST:



COMMENTS

- 'I carry a grudge like nobody's business, so it basically means that I won't deal with companies that have wronged me in some way.'*
- 'Discrimination to people with foreign names even if they are born in Australia.'*
- 'I find it very disheartening, especially when having gone to such effort to develop a cover letter etc., for companies to not even open your application, or provide any updates. It just results in waiting around for days-weeks, unsure of any possibility.'*
- 'Inability to get the interview process going. Inability to read my CV before calling me. Lack of communication. Lack of industry knowledge.'*
- 'I am suitably qualified for positions in my industry yet should I jump through the hoops, if successful I find the actual position requirements in many instances, have nothing to do with the actual job.'*
- 'Inadequate investigation of the candidate's suitability. Lack of detailed feedback – often generic automated response that does not assist with improving your candidacy going forward. Recruiters are best positioned to advise you, yet they can't be bothered to do so.'*
- 'Zero response even when you have done second round interviews. Candidates are treated like trash and highly expendable.'*
- 'Recruiter doesn't actually have a relationship with the hiring manager to be able to talk about the role, the organisation, and expectations beyond the job description. And then no call backs.'*
- 'I write this as I await feedback on a 1st round interview a fortnight ago. Constructive feedback is always welcome, so that we as candidates may fine-tune our approach in further interviews!'*

**RESULTS  
ARE IN!**

## SO, WHAT DO PEOPLE LIKE?

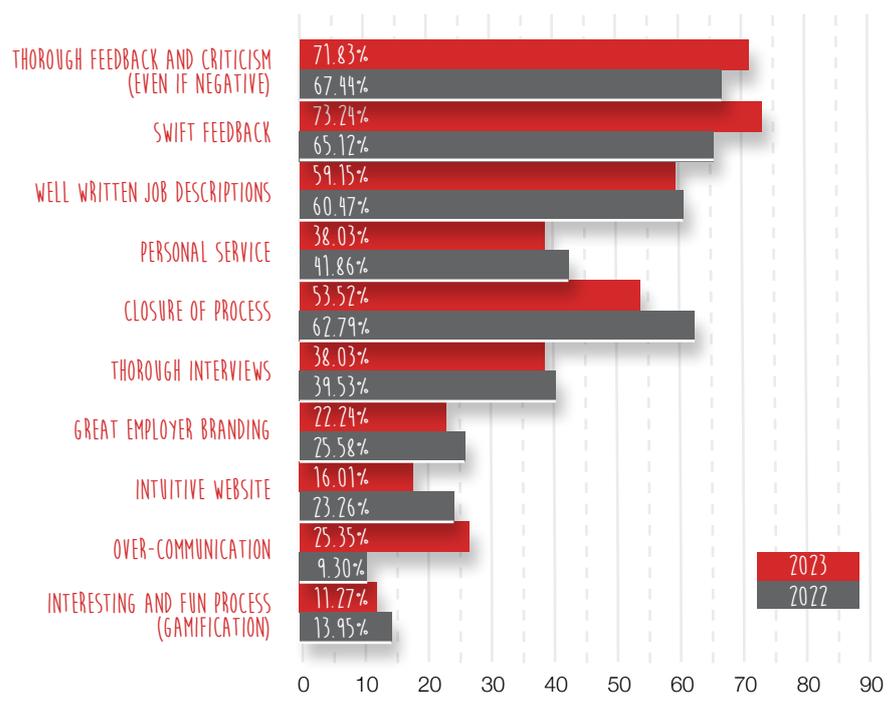
Overwhelmingly the survey shows us that people love swift and thorough feedback as well as closure. The majority are impressed when they receive this from recruiters and internal recruitment teams.

People also enjoy quality processes including well written job descriptions, quality interviews and personal service.

So, any organisation looking to impress the market needs to focus on finding an agency that delivers (or giving its internal TA team the resources to deliver) a fast, thorough, and quality recruitment process that gives closure to all applicants.

Not an easy thing to do but judging by market feedback it is something that will bring significant competitive advantage over your competitors.

### WHAT PEOPLE LIKE:



## COMMENTS

*'Talking to someone who acts like a human. Talking to someone who knows the IT industry and understands the domain and is at least familiar with the tech stack of the company. Quick and intuitive application process.'*

*'Those who get back to candidates asap with answers to my questions. That is appreciated.'*

*'Feedback is so infrequent; I don't remember when the last was.'*

*'When I have a professional relationship with a recruiter or company.'*

**BTW...**

**MOST FREQUENTLY USED DESCRIPTIVE WORD:**  
**"HUMAN"**

**SWEAR WORDS:**  
**137**  
(FROM 22 PEOPLE)

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WERE DIRECTLY CRITICAL OF THE RECRUITMENT COMPANY:**  
**3**

**NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS:**  
**945**

RECRUITMENT COMPANY



**'The people I'm impressed by are those who actually provide some sort of feedback if you bother to attend an interview.** It's not so bad these days as any interviews are on Teams but pre 2020 it was just such a waste of time and money to have to go into the city to interview and then still potentially hear nothing for your trouble.'

'I recently had a recruiter reach out to me about a position, which she later let me know I may be too junior for. She told me she believed in my soft skills and that with development, my hard skills would match the PD over time which is why she selected me. **This feedback is so important to early-stage career development.**'

'From a job applicant perspective, being an advocate for us rather than cattle. **Respect our talent, represent us properly rather than just pushing a paper.**'

**'It's all about communicating.** Stop using the 'due to the high number of applicants' excuse to not contact people.'

*'I have done temp work for one company where everything was very smoothly laid out for online on boarding. Clear simple step by step and supported in a call at any time. **That was unexpectedly positive.**'*

*'Recently got an unsuccessful letter but the way it was presented gave me hope. In as much as we know that recruiters do not have time to respond to everyone some of their responses are so cold and they make one feel useless ... all we need recruiters to know is at the end of it all job seekers are also people with feelings and rejecting in a nice way won't take company's credibility. **There is every reason to be nice in this world.**'*

## THE RANT BOX

We asked respondents to let loose with their frustrations with the industry. We got some interesting responses.

'I sometimes feel as though I am on some sort of **secret blacklist**.'

'Immediate response is required. **A lot of time and energy is invested in applications.**'

'Legal pyramid scheme.'

**'Too often there is just silence.'**

'From internal recruiters – we think you'd be bored and lose interest. **Well, I applied for the job didn't! I'd like to work earn a living and buy food soooooo.....** Also, I have found interviews done always show you at your best – it's a snapshot. Govt interviews are such an insider process! It takes skill in the process not necessarily the job to get through. Lots of box ticking and little connection to the actual human being in front of you. Ok. Thank you for the rant.'

'I also think that there's an **ageism factor on the part of employers in certain sectors**. Some employers ask what salary you're after, but job adverts don't necessarily provide sufficient indications about the level of responsibility, so it's a very difficult measure.'

'Please, for the love of all things holy, **stop asking for people to be passionate**. Humans aren't meant to define themselves entirely by their work.'

'I feel like I am being treated like **a product** most of the time.'

'Give feedback straight after a candidate's interview. I'm still waiting to hear back more than a week after an interview. **Be honest.**'

'If we as applicants need to provide so much of information on why we are applying and why we want the role, then the agencies and organisations who reject us need to provide the same for why they didn't progress with our applications. A simple email saying you have gone with someone else, or the role is filled, will not suffice. I want to know what exactly in detail that other person had that I didn't, that got them the role and not me. **I want to know what it is about my application that made you say no.** We deserve that at least after the million questions we get asked and research we have to do when we apply.'

'Spend too much time looking for keywords or buzzwords because a marketing system says X or Y word = success. **There's no more intuition or feel for a person anymore. It's just buzzword CV hunting.**'

'**Job hunting is a terrifying experience for me**, it's something that is very stressful, and I hate doing, it's difficult to reconcile that with a bored recruiter going through their 300th phone call for the day.'

'I don't know if this is specific to recruiters and talent acquisition, but as time goes on, **I find it harder to get the time of day for a conversation about a job.**'

'Recruiters/internal talent acquisition teams need to really start to look at their processes from a candidate experience perspective. Some now I would say **do not even do the bare minimum when it comes to communication/feedback** during the process.'

'Ghosting. Having to sign up & fill out an application form which is cumbersome and **contains the exact information as my CV.**'



'The candidate is left feeling like they have been "**Ghosted**". Worst still I have had instances where the same recruiter will contact me for another opportunity and has completely forgotten me or the previous role I had applied for (in the span of 6 weeks)... it reflects very poorly on their company.'

'There is always a **massive disconnect between what the job is and the role that the recruiter presents**. I know I'm eminently capable for a role, however the recruiter can't think beyond keywords and doesn't understand how my experience relates to those keywords.'

# WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

- 74% of respondents state that how they are treated in your recruitment process by an agency or internal talent acquisition team will directly impact their decision to buy your company's products or services.
- 42% state that it has a significant impact on their decision.
- 56% of recruitment agencies and talent acquisition teams are rated as "terrible".
- 16% are rated as "exceptional".
- The things that lead to a "terrible" rating (and therefore negatively impact the buying decision) are lack of feedback, poor process, and misrepresentation of roles by the recruiter.
- Those things that lead to an "exceptional" rating (and therefore positively contribute to buying decisions) are swift and thorough feedback (both positive and negative feedback) and a quality process.

## SO, WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

YOU

What has become clear through the many years we have conducted this survey is that when the recruitment process works, when the end client and recruiter are aligned and a good process is in place, everyone benefits. Candidates get a better service and feel heard, managers get better candidates and buying sentiments are positive.

But it's also clear that this is a rare occurrence and most of the time the recruitment process creates negativity.

To ensure that your organisation reaps the benefits of a good recruitment process (great candidates, a community of applicants who feel 'seen', positive buying sentiments towards your company's products and services), the survey suggests the following steps.

## STEP #1

Pick an agency that sits within the 16% "Exceptional" category.

Ask them questions such as:

- Do you get back to everyone?
- What is your rejection process?
- What is your google rating/what other reviews do you have?
- Are your consultants specialists who know their market?
- Can I review the job ads that go out representing my role?

## STEP #2

Give that agency (and your TA team) the tools they need to be "exceptional".

- Take the time to give them a full briefing on the role.
- Set out a clear interview/decision process so they can give clarity to those within the process.
- Give them the role exclusively – allow them to give the role 100% focus. Lots of agencies does not mean more coverage, it means lots of agencies scratching the same surface.
- Give good quality feedback straight after CV submission and after interviews.
- Set your expectation that you want every unsuccessful applicant rejected properly (not with automated messages).

**THE  
RECRUITMENT  
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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](mailto:HELLO@THERECRUITMENTCOMPANY.COM)

**WE PROMISE WE'LL GET BACK TO YOU!**