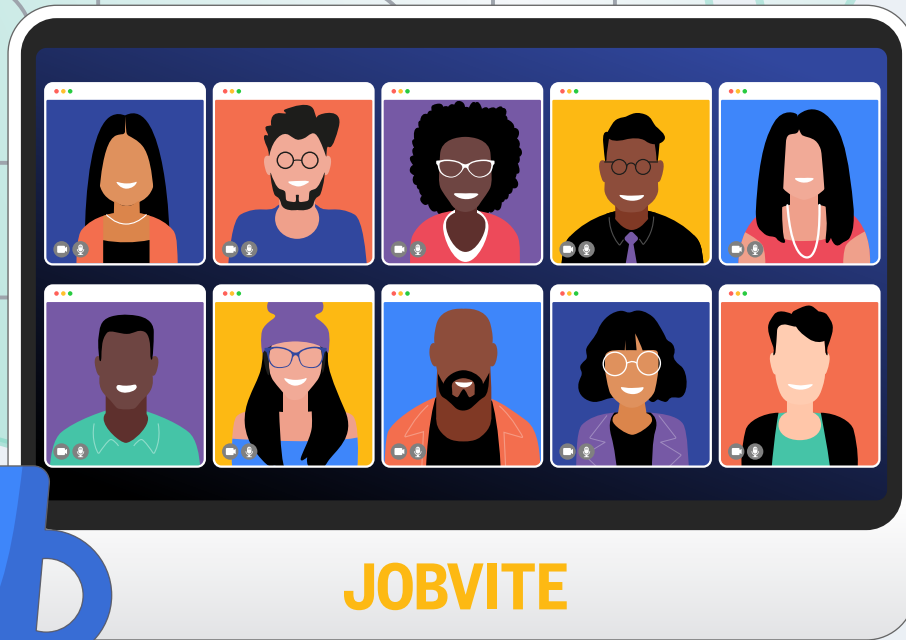# 2020

RECRUITER NATION SURVEY

JOBVITE

JOBVITE

INTRODUCTION

Year after year, Jobvite surveys hundreds of recruiters and HR professionals for its annual Recruiter Nation Survey report to determine where the industry's priorities lie and what current hiring trends are. As uncovered in this year's report, recruiters believe that many of the shifts brought forth in 2020 – from new and virtual interviewing and onboarding methods to investments and priorities – will be here to stay.

As Americans continue to face significant societal challenges and change in 2020, the impact is being felt by talent acquisition professionals from organizations of all sizes and across all industries. Unsurprisingly, the majority of recruiters today report an increased stress level at work since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic along with diminished headcount and hiring.

With this year prompting many Americans to reflect on what is important to them and what their values are, it is fitting that those beliefs and priorities are being brought into the job search. Organizations' diversity and inclusion initiatives, flexibility, accommodations for working parents, and mental health benefit offerings are gaining in importance among candidates. Meanwhile, finding candidates who are cultural fits is viewed as a less important factor for recruiters in today's increasingly remote work environment.

Despite a tumultuous year, job seekers appear to remain confident, with recruiters reporting an increase in candidates negotiating for higher salaries.

This year's Recruiter Nation Survey report aims to help recruiters and talent acquisition leaders across the U.S. understand:

- Recruiting priorities and investments
- Stress levels of recruiters today
- Challenges in hiring quality talent
- Importance of D&I initiatives
- Salary negotiation in today's hiring climate
- Effective interview and communication tactics and technology
- Importance of COVID-19 safety measures
- Valuable metrics for tracking recruiting success
- Top-rated sources for hiring
- Trends in social media for recruiting
- Candidate evaluation factors and measurement
- Effective benefit and perk offerings
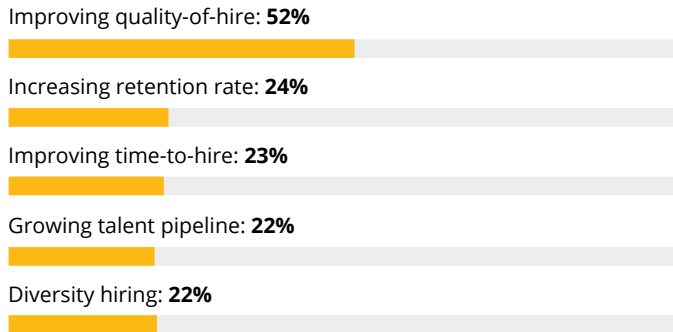- How recruiters are using AI and automation

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Recruiting priorities have changed as the importance of improving time-to-hire fades and prioritizing diversity in hiring gains prominence. The quality of the hire is now more important than ensuring an expedited hiring process.

- Social media, employee referral programs, and job boards are the recruiting areas most likely to see increased financial investments in the next 12 months.

- Lack of skilled/qualified candidates and competition from other employers remain the biggest challenges in hiring quality talent.

- Three-quarters of surveyed recruiters choose in-person interviews as the most effective interview mode. However, recruiters have adapted. Half of surveyed recruiters conduct 50% or more of their interviews via video and 40% of recruiters believe virtual interviews will be the default moving forward.

- One-third of surveyed recruiters report that, at their organization, 50% or more of open roles are being hired as remote workers.

- Internal hires remain the top-rated source for hiring, followed by employee referrals and job boards.

- Recruiters are comfortable using text messaging to source and especially communicate with applicants.

- Almost two-thirds of surveyed recruiters report that, since the onset of the pandemic, their stress level at work has increased at least somewhat. This includes one-fifth of recruiters whose stress level has drastically increased.

- The pandemic has led to diminished headcount and hiring in about one-third of organizations.

- A majority of surveyed companies have specific goals for diversity in hiring with respect to race/ethnicity and gender, while substantial numbers also have goals related to age, veterans, LGBTQ+, and immigrants.

- Inquiring about an organization's D&I initiatives has become more common – one-third of recruiters reported that job seekers are doing so more than they did in the previous year.

- Close to half of surveyed recruiters are reporting that job seekers are inquiring about mental health benefits more frequently since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Interest in accommodations and flexibility for working parents is even higher, with two-thirds of recruiters reporting more frequent inquiries.

- Half of surveyed recruiters report at least a moderate increase in negotiating for higher salaries since the onset of the pandemic.

- Half of surveyed recruiters report that they are seeing more employees taking on side jobs outside of their work for the company.

- Surveyed recruiters most commonly leverage AI for job recommendations on career sites, candidate matching, job description recommendations, candidate screening with automated messages, and candidate engagement scoring.

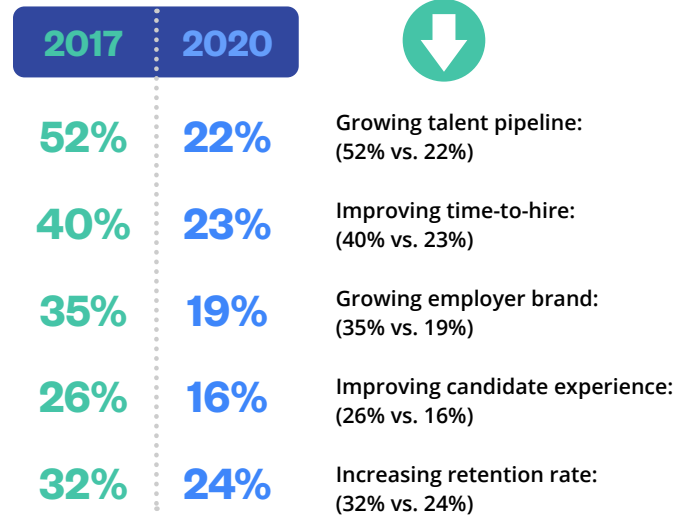# TALENT ACQUISITION PRIORITIES AND INVESTMENTS
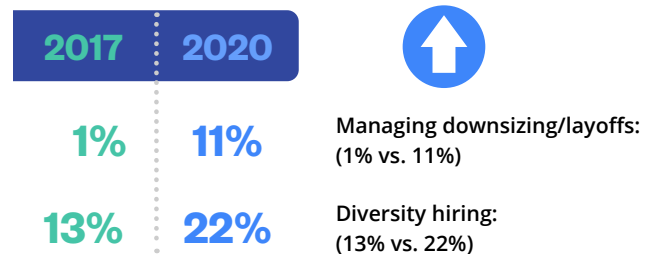*Recruiting may never look the same again*

71%

71% of recruiters' priorities for the next 12 months are different from the past 12 months

Where staffing agency and in-house recruiters differ:

Recruiting priorities have shifted more for staffing agency recruiters **(79%)**

vs. for in-house recruiters **(67%)**

Top recruiting priorities (next 12 months)

Improving quality-of-hire: **52%**

Increasing retention rate: **24%**

Improving time-to-hire: **23%**

Growing talent pipeline: **22%**

Diversity hiring: **22%**

Biggest downward shifts (2017 vs. 2020)

2017	2020	
52%	22%	Growing talent pipeline: (52% vs. 22%)
40%	23%	Improving time-to-hire: (40% vs. 23%)
35%	19%	Growing employer brand: (35% vs. 19%)
26%	16%	Improving candidate experience: (26% vs. 16%)
32%	24%	Increasing retention rate: (32% vs. 24%)

Biggest upward shifts (2017 vs. 2020)

2017	2020	
1%	11%	Managing downsizing/layoffs: (1% vs. 11%)
13%	22%	Diversity hiring: (13% vs. 22%)

TALENT ACQUISITION PRIORITIES AND INVESTMENTS

Recruiting may never look the same again
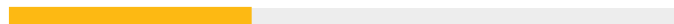
Recruitment investment focus (next 12 months)
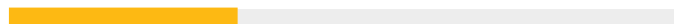
Social media: **46% (vs. 41% in 2018)**
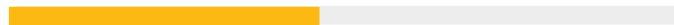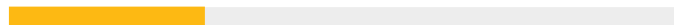
LinkedIn: **40% (N/A)**
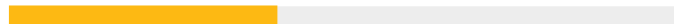
Employee referrals: **36% (vs. 41% in 2017)**
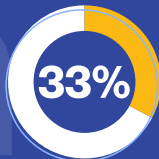
Job boards: **34% (vs. 29% in 2017)**

Recruiters' professional networks: **29% (no shift)**

In the next 12 months, larger companies are more likely to increase investment in recruiting activities through LinkedIn:

48%
500+ employees: **48%**

33%
<500 employees: **33%**

Biggest recruitment investment shifts

7% → **23%** Outside recruiters/recruiting agencies: **7%** in 2017 to **23%** in 2020

17% → **28%** Internal hires: **17%** in 2017 to **28%** in 2020

18% → **26%** Direct applications: **18%** in 2018 to **26%** in 2020

Note: "Direct applications" was not an option in the 2017 survey.

Recruiters expect all recruiting activities to increase compared to previous years

Social media: **78%**

Recruiters' professional networks: **74%**

Mobile career site applications: **75%**

LinkedIn: **72%**

Text recruiting capabilities: **74%**

Who expects increased investments in social media?

Staffing agency recruiters: **61%** vs. **38%** in-house recruiters

Recruiters under age 40: **52%** vs. **42%** over age 40

KNOWN HIRING CHALLENGES

With a larger talent pipeline, efficient, automated qualification is of utmost importance

Why recruiters are concerned about hiring quality talent

Lack of skilled/qualified candidates:
58% (67% in 2017)

Competition from other employers:
47% (60% in 2017)

Good news: Fewer recruiters are worried about finding quality talent due to lack of skills or competition.

Other top concerns

Lack of budget (including salary, marketing, and incentives): **34% (43% in 2017)**

Lack of employer brand awareness:
24% (33% in 2017)

28% of recruiters for companies with 500+ employees believe this is a major challenge, compared to

19% of recruiters for companies with less than 500 employees

Good news: Recruiters are less worried about lack of budget and lack of employer brand awareness than they were in 2017.

Communication and quantity are larger concerns than in previous years

Communication with candidates throughout the hiring process:
25% (20% in 2017)

Too many candidates: **20% (4% in 2017)**

Communication with candidates is an almost non-existent problem for survey respondents who work with Jobvite.

Only 5%

Only **5%** chose it as one of the biggest challenges

vs. **28%** among the rest of the survey sample

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Attract and engage more diverse job seekers

Inquiring about an organization's diversity and inclusion initiatives has become more common

33% of recruiters report that job seekers are inquiring about D&I initiatives more than they did in the previous year

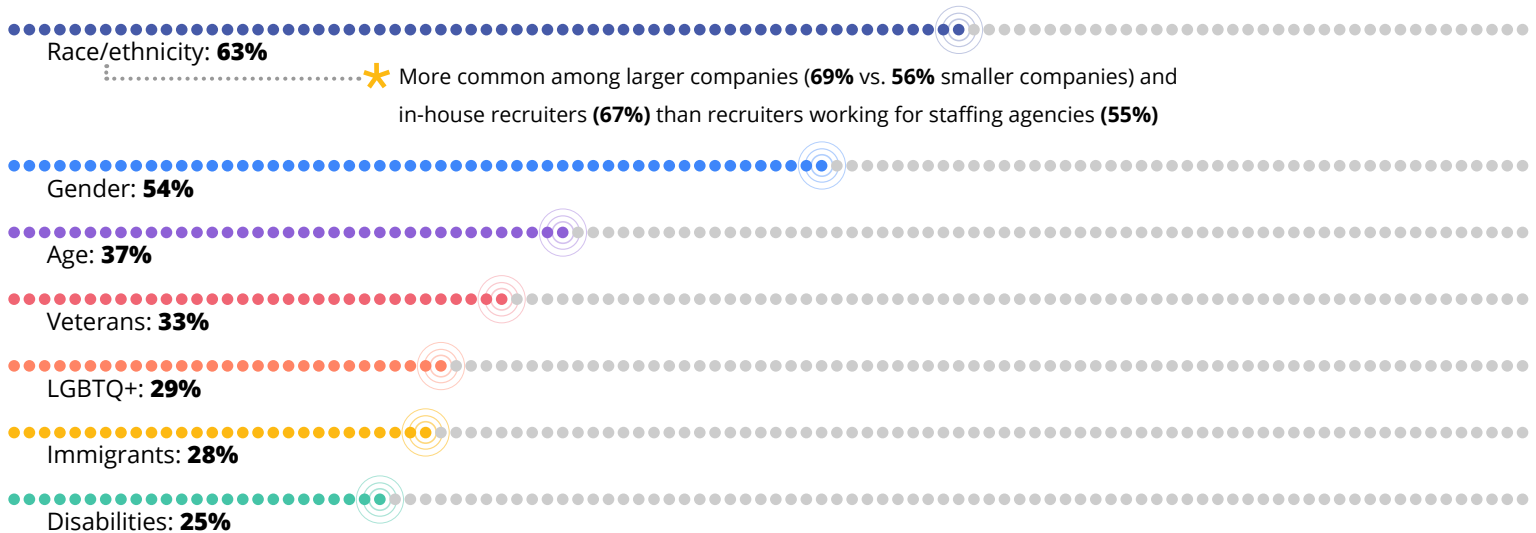## Who is more likely to observe an increase in inquiries about D&I?

Staffing agency recruiters:
49% vs. 24% for in-house recruiters

Recruiters in large companies:
42% vs. 23% smaller companies

Diversity in hiring goals

The majority of companies have specific goals for diversity in hiring with respect to:

Race/ethnicity: **63%**

★ More common among larger companies (**69%** vs. **56%** smaller companies) and in-house recruiters **(67%)** than recruiters working for staffing agencies **(55%)**

Gender: **54%**

Age: **37%**

Veterans: **33%**

LGBTQ+: **29%**

Immigrants: **28%**

Disabilities: **25%**

JOBVITE

THE TALL TALES JOB SEEKERS TELL TO GET HIRED

When job seekers stretch the truth

The tallest tales include

Technical Skills:
50%

Experience:
48%

Competitive offers:
35%

Salary history:
31%

Candidates are also likely to pad their resumes when it comes to

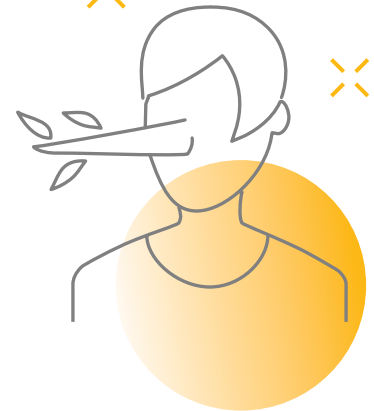Citizenship status: **21%** in 2020, compared to 11% in 2017
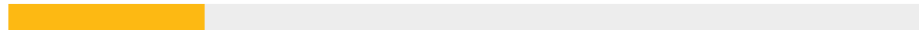
Education history: **26%** in 2020, compared to 18% in 2017
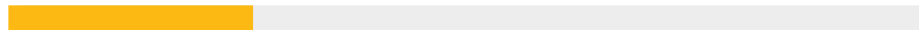
Language proficiency: **19%** in 2020, compared to 14% in 2017
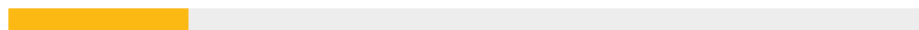
Note: This would include proficiency in other foreign languages.

IS IT 2021 YET?

Like everything else, hiring shifts look different this year

March 2019-March 2020

62% of recruiters have received 100 or fewer applications per average requisition

43% have received fewer than 50 applications per average requisition
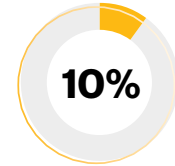
33% have received 100 or more applications per average requisition

35%

Recruiters representing staffing agencies **(35%)** report more executive-level openings

10%

than do in-house recruiters **(10%)**

The largest volume of openings in the current job market

Full time: **46%**

Hourly: **39%**

Salaried: **36%**

Working from home:

One-third **(32%)** of surveyed recruiters report that, at their organization, 50% or more of open roles are being hired as remote workers

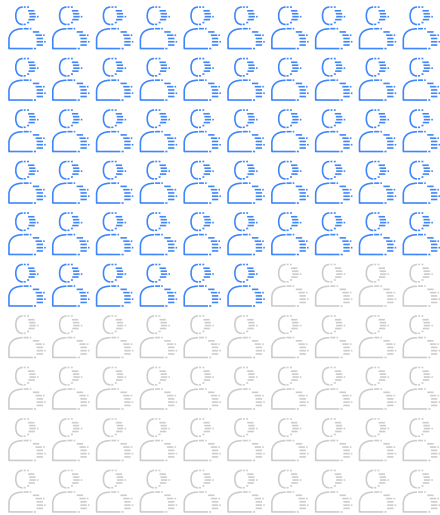**29%** report that about 25% of open roles are filled by remote workers

IS IT 2021 YET?

Like everything else, hiring shifts look different this year

Ghosting

An accepted offer is not always a done deal. Candidates may still have a change of heart.

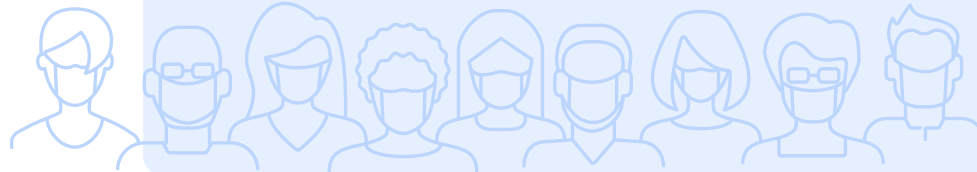**56%** of recruiters have been ghosted by a candidate who had accepted an offer

Being ghosted by a candidate happens more often in large companies:

61% for companies with 500+ employees

51% for companies with less than 500 employees

Keeping silver medalists warm:

77%

77% of recruiters have gone back and hired a candidate who was second or third on the candidate list, or who had a great resume but wasn't a fit at the time

COVID-19 safety concerns:

47% of recruiters report that job seekers today frequently inquire about their organizations' COVID-19 safety measures

Questions about COVID-19 safety are more often experienced by recruiters representing staffing agencies **(56%)** vs. in-house recruiters **(42%)**

INTERVIEWING IS NOT REMOTELY THE SAME

Remote interviews are a delicate art

In the pandemic job market

67% of recruiters interview via video

49% via phone calls

53% conduct 50% or more of their interviews via video

40% believe that virtual interviews will be the default moving forward

61% of staffing agency recruiters think virtual interviews will be default moving forward vs. **29%** of in-house recruiters

55% of male recruiters think virtual interviews will become default in the future vs. **32%** females

Only **11%** of recruiters believe video interviews will not be the default moving forward

Biggest video interview mistakes by candidates

Poor connectivity: **37%**

Inappropriate attire: **25%**

Poor eye contact: **23%**
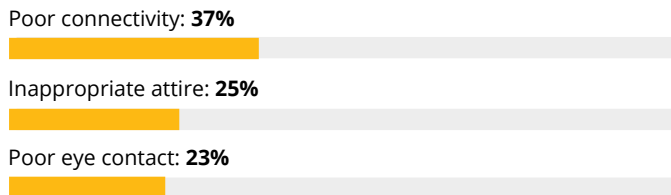
Given the option, in-person interviews take the cake

77% of surveyed recruiters believe in-person interviews are the most effective interview mode

69% report being comfortable performing in-person interviews in today's job market

11% prefer video

8% prefer phone call

Insights from survey respondents who work with Jobvite:

95%

95% are very comfortable with video interviews, higher than any other method of interviewing and higher than any other demographic group

Only **52%** of recruiters representing staffing agencies report being comfortable, compared to **75%** of in-house recruiters

34% conduct video interviews 100% of the time
30% conduct video interviews 75% of the time

RECRUITMENT MARKETING
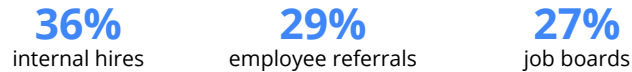
What's powering successful recruiting

Tracking recruiting success

Quality-of-hire is the most valuable metric surveyed recruiters use to track recruiting success, increasing by 27 percentage points since 2017.
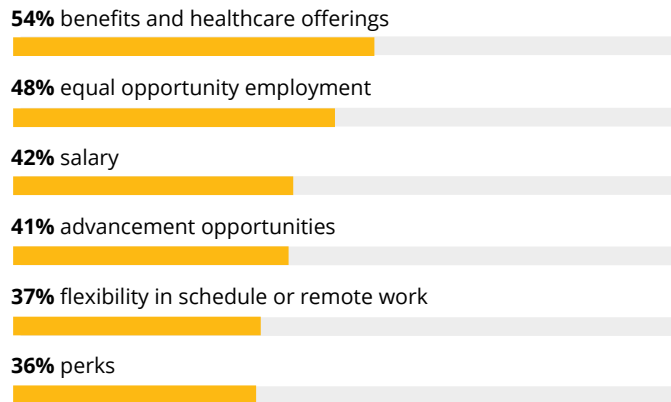
48%
say quality-of-hire

17%
say retention rate of hire

14%
say time-to-hire

Top hiring sources for high-quality candidates

Internal hires remain the top-rated source for hiring, followed by employee referrals and job boards.

36%
internal hires

29%
employee referrals

27%
job boards

Most common content included in career site job posting

54% benefits and healthcare offerings

48% equal opportunity employment

42% salary

41% advancement opportunities

37% flexibility in schedule or remote work

36% perks

To attract top candidates, recruiters must also be marketers

58%
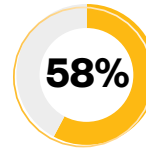
58% of recruiters believe recruitment marketing is more important in an increasingly digital world

This sentiment is even stronger among:

Male recruiters **(66%)**

Staffing agency recruiters **(66%)**

Respondents who work with Jobvite **(66%)**

Recruiters working for companies with 500+ employees **(64%)**

Top tools for growing employer brand

A strong employer brand remains crucial to attracting candidates. The channels recruiters find most effective in growing employer brand are:

Social networks:
47%

Company's career website:
22%

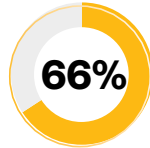In-person or virtual recruiting events:
10%

THE SPEED OF TALENT
Recruiter efficiency is key

Recruiters are comfortable using text messaging to source and especially communicate with applicants.

44%

66%

44% have used text messaging to source potential candidates

66% have used text messaging to engage and communicate with current applicants

(!) **Don't forget:** Collection of data and practices must be compliant with the requirements set forth by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Using text messaging to source potential candidates is more common

At large companies: **52%** of recruiters representing companies with 500+ employees vs. **37%** among recruiters from companies with less than 500 employees

Among male recruiters: **63%** vs. **32%** among female recruiters

Among staffing agency recruiters: **72%** vs. **30%** for in-house recruiters

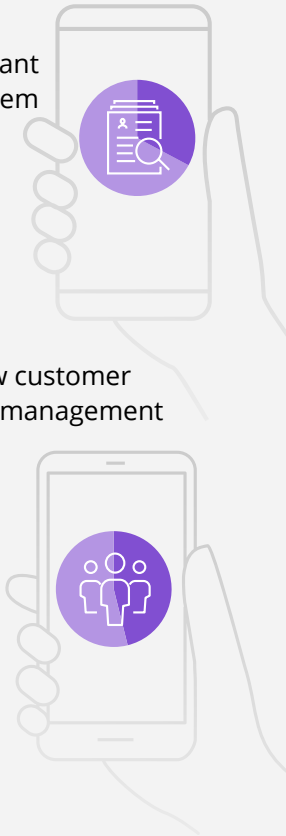## If a recruiter could choose one technology to make the job easier:

33% say a new applicant tracking system

33% say new customer relationship management technology

46% of recruiters from staffing agencies prioritize a new CRM first
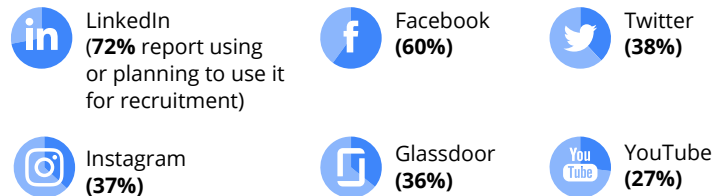
SOCIALLY INCLINED
Recruiters aren't fully distancing from social media

With the exception of YouTube and Instagram, usage of all social media channels in recruiting has somewhat diminished compared to previous years.
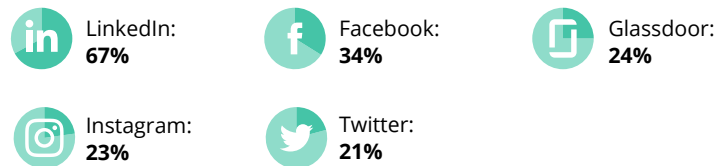
*The use of **LinkedIn** has gone down 20 percentage points since 2017 **(92% vs. 72% today)**; meanwhile **Instagram** use for recruiting has grown from **18% to 37%** during that same time.*
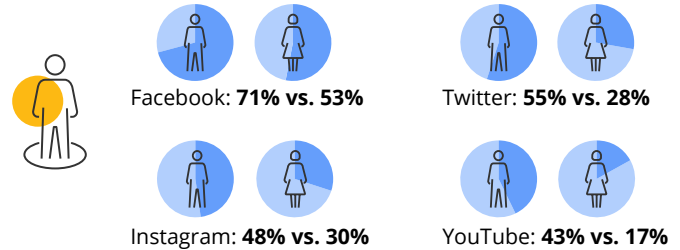
in 92% 2017 → **in 72%** 2020

18% 2017 → **37%** 2020

Social media channels most used for recruiting

LinkedIn (**72%** report using or planning to use it for recruitment)

Facebook (**60%**)

Twitter (**38%**)

Instagram (**37%**)

Glassdoor (**36%**)

YouTube (**27%**)

Social channels that source the highest quality candidates

LinkedIn: **67%**

Facebook: **34%**

Glassdoor: **24%**

Instagram: **23%**

Twitter: **21%**

Male recruiters use social media more than female recruiters

Facebook: **71% vs. 53%**

Twitter: **55% vs. 28%**

Instagram: **48% vs. 30%**

YouTube: **43% vs. 17%**

Where staffing agencies vs. in-house recruiters

Staffing agencies use Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube more frequently

In-house recruiters use LinkedIn and Glassdoor more often
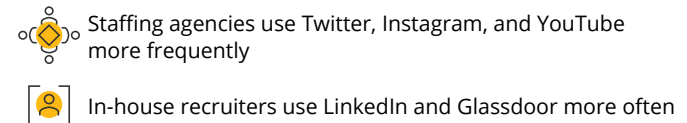
Biggest recruiter turn-offs when it comes to social

Spelling and grammar errors in posts or tweets: **53%**

References to marijuana: **45%**

Alcohol consumption: **42%**

Political posts: **32%**

Pictures of body showing skin: **30%**
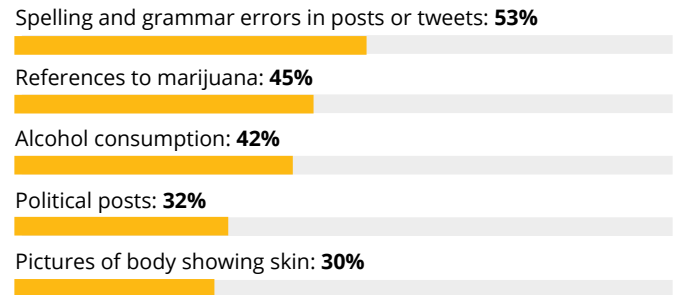
SOCIALLY INCLINED
Recruiters aren't fully distancing from social media

⚠️ *New finding*
TikTok "Dreams" Recruiting

Recruiters are starting to leverage TikTok, with **7%** of respondents using the platform for recruiting efforts. Snapchat is also seeing a rise, with **13%** of recruiters using it — an increase of 8 percentage points since 2017.

Other relevant TikTok / Snapchat findings:

The technology and IT-hardware industries are using TikTok the most for recruiting efforts.

Staffing agency recruiters believe using TikTok and Snapchat lead to more positive results.

11% believe that TikTok produces the highest quality candidates and

24% think the same of Snapchat

compared to in-house recruiters **(1% and 3%, respectively)**

TA software or platform most commonly used for recruiting

linkedin
jobvite **indeed**
glassdoor recruiter boards

ONBOARDING

Bringing new employees up to speed

A positive onboarding experience is essential to the recruiting process and can make it more likely for a hire to remain with the company compared to if their onboarding process is negative.

Over the past three years, long onboarding times (40+ hours) have become less frequent.

9% of recruiters spend 41-80 hours onboarding new employees (compared to 13% in 2017)

6% spend more than 80 hours onboarding (compared to 14% in 2017)

At the same time, very short onboarding times have also become less common

Only **19%** spend 8 hours or less onboarding (compared to 27% in 2017 and 42% in 2016)

42% spend anywhere from 1-3 workdays onboarding new employees (compared to 33% in 2017)

62% of those surveyed spend between 1-5 workdays onboarding new employees (compared to only 47% in 2017)
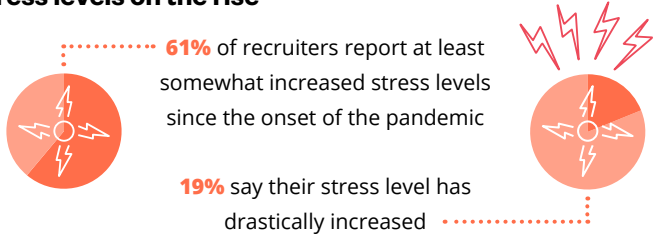
Most surveyed recruiters believe that, in the current job market, between one-quarter and half of new hires can be onboarded completely remotely.
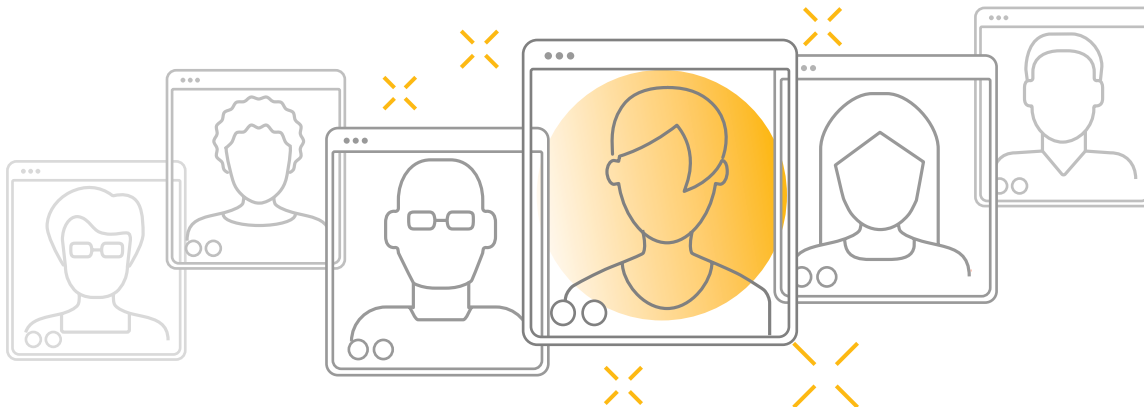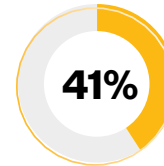
STRESS—2020'S UNIVERSAL SIDE EFFECT

*Recruiters' stress levels have significantly increased*

Stress levels on the rise

61% of recruiters report at least somewhat increased stress levels since the onset of the pandemic

19% say their stress level has drastically increased

Pandemic impact on recruiting:

34% of recruiting organizations have experienced diminished headcount and hiring resulting from the pandemic

26% of recruiters say their organizations are increasing staffing levels and hiring rapidly
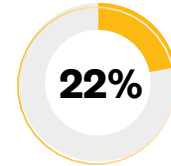
Where staffing agencies vs. in-house recruiters

41%

41% of in-house recruiters report reduced headcounts and hiring

18%
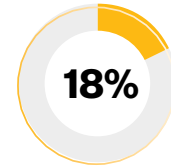
and **18%** report increased staffing levels and rapid hiring

41%
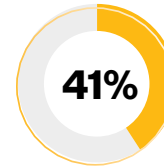
41% of staffing agency recruiters report increased staffing levels and hiring

22%

and only **22%** report reduced staffing levels

CANDIDATE EVALUATION

What's important in the eyes of the recruiter

Top behaviors that disqualify candidates

62%
Rudeness to the receptionist or other support staff
(vs. 86% in 2017)

48%
Checking one's phone
(vs. 71% in 2017)

46%
Showing up late
(vs. 58% in 2017)

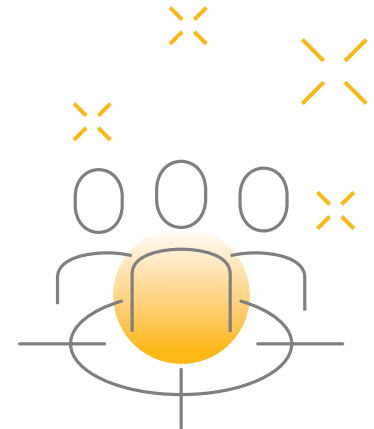**46%**
Poor hygiene
(vs. 52% in 2017)

What not to do

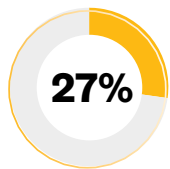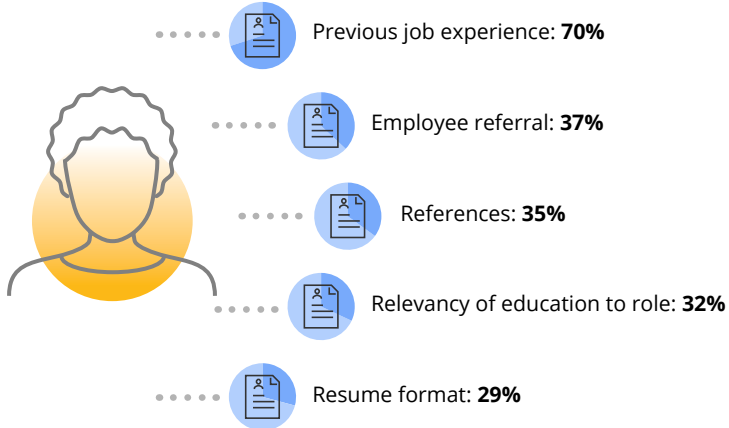Interrupt the interviewer: **31%**

Bring food: **31%**

Dress too casually: **22%**

CANDIDATE EVALUATION

What's important in the eyes of the recruiter

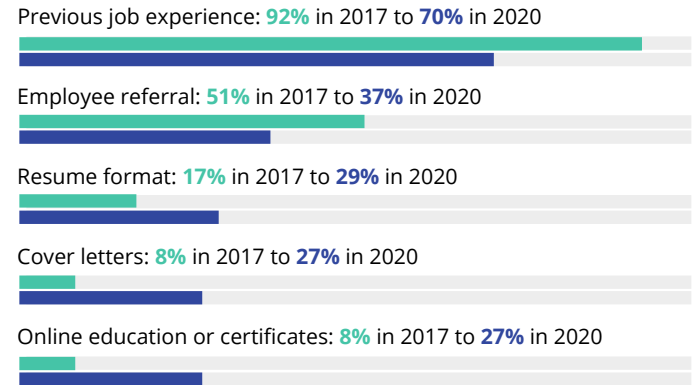## Which resume and application factors are most important when considering a candidate?

Previous job experience: **70%**

Employee referral: **37%**

References: **35%**

Relevancy of education to role: **32%**

Resume format: **29%**

27%

27% of surveyed recruiters prioritize cover letters in screening decisions, up from only 8% in 2017
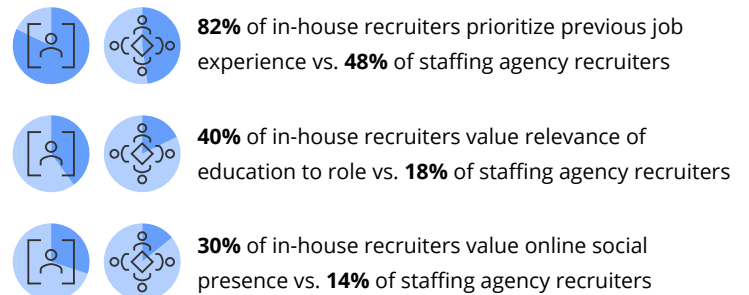
29%
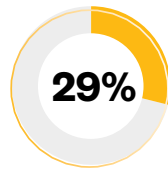
Likewise, **29%** of those surveyed prioritize resume format, up from only 17% in 2017

Major shifts in factors considered by recruiters when evaluating candidates

Previous job experience: **92%** in 2017 to **70%** in 2020

Employee referral: **51%** in 2017 to **37%** in 2020

Resume format: **17%** in 2017 to **29%** in 2020

Cover letters: **8%** in 2017 to **27%** in 2020

Online education or certificates: **8%** in 2017 to **27%** in 2020

Where staffing agency and in-house recruiters differ

82% of in-house recruiters prioritize previous job experience vs. **48%** of staffing agency recruiters

40% of in-house recruiters value relevance of education to role vs. **18%** of staffing agency recruiters

30% of in-house recruiters value online social presence vs. **14%** of staffing agency recruiters

BENEFITS AND PERKS
Working from home and flexibility top the list

What perks are most effective in attracting new candidates?

Medical/dental coverage:
55%

Work from home / flexible work hours:
48%

401(k):
44%

Diminishing in effectiveness
Most perks have diminished in effectiveness over the past year:

-19 **-17** **-14** **-12**

Continuing education reimbursement has decreased the most –19 percentage points – since 2017

Casual dress code: down 17 percentage points since 2017

Medical/dental coverage: down 14 percentage points since 2017

Signing bonus and 401(k): down 12 percentage points since 2017

401(k) is less of an incentive in the **South (36%)** than in the **West (52%)** and **East (49%)**

Benefits on the rise — a focus on the family:

+17 **+10**

Family planning: up 17 percentage points since 2017

Childcare services: up 10 percentage points since 2017

Working parents: 67% of recruiters report that job seekers express interest about accommodations and flexibility for working parents since COVID-19

Mental health benefits
The onset of COVID-19 has increased job seekers' desire for mental health benefits.

43% of recruiters report that job seekers are inquiring about mental health benefits more frequently since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis

Most likely to observe inquiries about mental health benefits are:

Staffing agency recruiters:
69%

Recruiters in the South:
49%

Recruiters working for companies with 500+ employees:
49%

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND AUTOMATION

Recruiters increase efficiency with a human + machine approach

How are recruiters using AI?

Job recommendations on career sites: **34%**

Candidate matching: **32%**

Job description recommendations: **27%**

Candidate screening with automated messages: **24%**

Candidate engagement scoring: **23%**
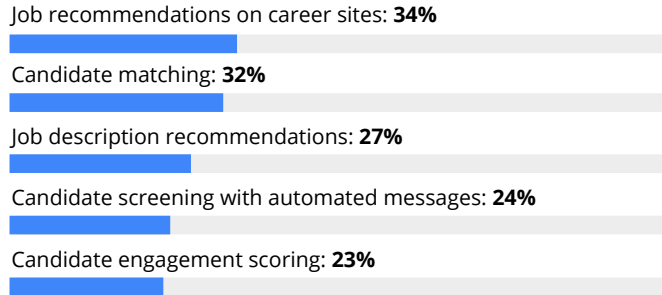
What tasks do recruiters use AI software to help with?

Communicate with candidates: **56%**

Schedule interviews: **56%**

Input applications: **48%**

Organize candidate databases: **41%**

AI also helps deliver a positive candidate experience, which has become the expected norm for the majority of candidates, according to the *2020 Job Seeker Nation Survey*.
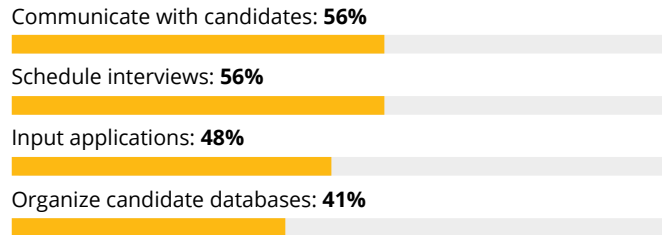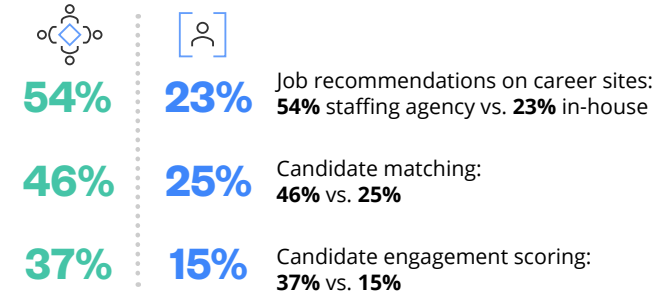
Where staffing agencies vs. in-house recruiters

Staffing agency recruiters leverage AI much more often than in-house recruiters.

54%   **23%**   Job recommendations on career sites: **54%** staffing agency vs. **23%** in-house

46%   **25%**   Candidate matching: **46%** vs. **25%**

37%   **15%**   Candidate engagement scoring: **37%** vs. **15%**

Impact of AI

36% of recruiters believe AI makes their jobs better

23% say it makes it better in some ways but worse in others

49% of male recruiters and staffing agency recruiters believe AI makes their job better

JOBVITE

REFERRALS AND INTERNAL MOBILITY
The key to unlocking hidden talent

Referral programs

71% of organizations offer employee referral programs

88% incentivize referrals

81% of companies with 500+ employees offer referral programs vs. **61%** of companies with less than 500 employees

While a majority of organizations offer referral programs, Jobvite's *2020 Job Seeker Nation Survey* revealed that employees do not participate in them. Two-thirds **(65%)** of surveyed workers have never participated in a company's referral program.

Methods of sharing referrals

Company newsletter: **42%**

Sending an email: **41%**

Posting on company social media: **39%**

Relying on front-line managers to communicate: **35%**

Sharing opportunities in internal communication system like Slack: **35%**

Communicating in in-person meetings: **20%**

Text messaging: **15%**

Internal mobility

83% of recruiters say their organizations are at least somewhat effective at enabling internal mobility

34% believe they are very effective in doing so

54% of recruiters alert employees to internal job postings at least once per week

62% of recruiters say that at least 25% of open roles include internal candidates in the talent pipeline

30% report that half or more of open roles include internal candidates

Internal mobility tech

41% of recruiters have a process and software that manages internal mobility

26% of recruiters have a process for doing so, but no software to manage the process

Outsourcing to gig workers:
COVID-19 does not appear to have changed organizations' propensity to outsource jobs to freelancers or gig workers. The majority **(70%)** of recruiters reported no change or more outsourcing.

48% report no change

21% report less change

22% report more outsourcing

INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTORS

Jobvite is pleased to share the results of the *2020 Recruiter Nation Survey*, and thank these industry thought leaders who helped to contribute to the great questions that are driving insights to help us all better understand this nation of recruiters.

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ABOUT THE STUDY

Zogby Analytics was commissioned by Jobvite to conduct an online survey of 802 recruiters in the U.S.

Jobvite supplied Zogby Analytics a list of contacts and customers, which was used to recruit survey participants. Additional recruiters were randomly invited using internal and trusted interactive partner resources. Each invitation was password coded and secure so that each respondent could only access the survey one time.

Based on a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error for 802 is +/- 3.5 percentage points. This means that all other things being equal, if the identical survey were repeated, its confidence intervals would contain the true value of parameters 95 times out of 100.

Subsets of the data have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. It should also be noted that there was a change in methodology between 2017 and 2018 so conclusions about trends in the data between these two years should be drawn with caution.

ABOUT ZOGBY ANALYTICS

Zogby Analytics is respected nationally and internationally for its opinion research capabilities. Since 1984, Zogby has empowered clients with powerful information and knowledge critical for making informed, strategic decisions.

The firm conducts multi-phased opinion research engagements for banking and financial services institutions, insurance companies, hospitals and medical centers, retailers and developers, religious institutions, cultural organizations, colleges and universities, IT companies, and federal agencies. Zogby's dedication and commitment to excellence and accuracy are reflected in its state-of-the-art opinion research capabilities and objective analysis and consultation.

ABOUT JOBVITE

Recruit with Purpose. Hire with Confidence.
Jobvite is a comprehensive talent acquisition suite that offers a marketing-inspired approach to recruiting by intelligently attracting your dream candidates, automatically screening for the highest quality, engaging employees invested in their futures, and retaining the people who care the most about your organization by combining the power of data and the human touch. To learn more, visit jobvite.com.

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