

Converting Candidates Into Brand Ambassadors

A GUIDE ON HOW
TO CREATE A
POSITIVE CANDIDATE
EXPERIENCE AND
CONVERT THEM
INTO BRAND
AMBASSADORS

Table of Content

Introduction	Page 2
Candidate Pain Points	Page 3
Great vs Poor Candidate Experience	Page 5
What Turns Candidates into Ambassadors	Page 7
Recommendations	Page 9
Conclusion	Page 11
About Talentsquare	Page 12

Introduction

Creating a positive candidate experience has become an essential part of attracting and retaining top talent. Furthermore, the better the experience provided to candidates during the hiring process, the more likely an organization is to attract the best talent thanks to word of mouth.

This report is based on data compiled by Talentsquare with its candidate users, as a way to understand their frustrations better and know what can be done in order to increase the quality of the hiring process across sectors.

Candidate users were asked to rate their top frustrations when applying for jobs anywhere on the web, and share a short story on an application process they were part of and that stood out.

A total of 375 candidate users participated in the survey and shared their stories.

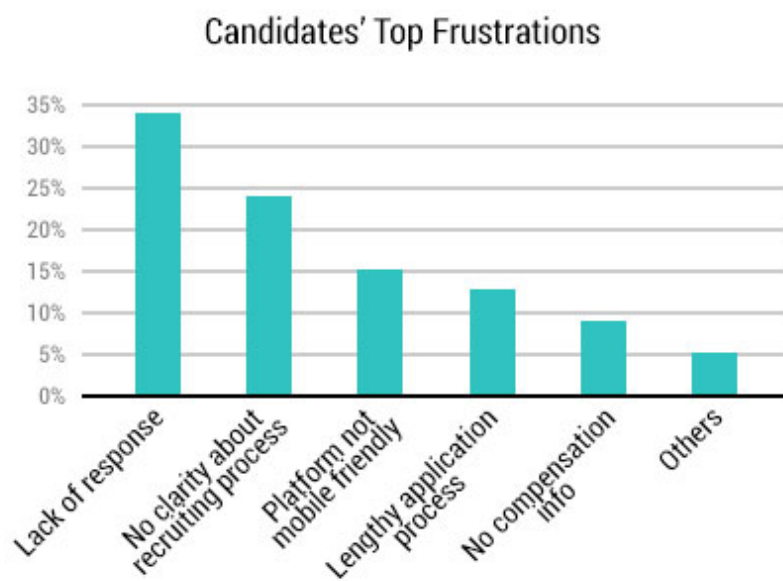
Various analyses were conducted on candidate users' responses including: an analysis of patterns of responses on the questionnaire to determine the primary factors of a positive candidate experience; a comparison of the difference in survey responses between the most satisfied and least satisfied candidate users.

Significant findings of these analyses are summarized throughout this white paper, which explores the following topics:


- **What Are Candidates' Biggest Pain Points?**
- **What Differentiates an Exceptional Candidate Experience from a Poor One?**
- **What Turns Candidates into Ambassadors?**

CANDIDATE PAIN POINTS

We asked our candidate database a simple multiple choice question, “What is your biggest frustration when applying for a job?”, and the results are striking. While technology and social engagement is increasing, it seems that the very basics are still missing for the candidate experience to be positive.



The #1 top frustration is still the lack of response when applying for a job. When asked for further information, many of the stories of candidates are about, “Did not even received an acknowledgment email”, or “Never got a reply about my application or why I was rejected”. Ongoing communication is key to ensure candidates are happy with their application experience, regardless of them being selected or not.



Looking at the other factors of a frustrating application experience, it's important to highlight the dissatisfaction with the lack of knowledge about the recruiting process (i.e. phases/stages of the recruitment flow) and the increasing importance of mobile optimization for candidates to apply for jobs. An increasing amount of candidates do check potential jobs on their mobile phone, and organizations that do not take that into consideration might lose hires.

Other factors include the time that it takes to apply and the non-existence of compensation data. These frustrations can lead to a poor employer brand, and therefore have to be taken into consideration.

GREAT VS POOR CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

According to a MysteryApplicant infographic, only 5% of candidates rate their experience as excellent, while 46% rate it as poor or very poor. On top of this, only 37% would recommend the company to someone else. Finally, the infographic tells us that 38% of candidates are less likely to buy from an organization or use its products or services due to poor candidate experience.

This is extremely important to know since many organizations do not connect their hiring process with their sales and branding results. In order to offer a great candidate experience, one needs to be mindful of the following:

1. Keep constant communication


Make sure your candidate gets an acknowledge email confirming their application. This immediately gives a good first impression and avoids doubts or concerns from the candidate about the delivery of the application.

After that, consistently update your candidates. Be sure to not leave them in the dark, as that is their main source of frustration. This is extremely important to know in order to create a great candidate experience.

2. Be social & transparent

If you are present on social networks, do not let candidates without a reply. Engage with them and answer their doubts. When creating job descriptions be specific and let them know who's in charge and who could clarify questions about the job.

Also be transparent with the timeline of the hiring as well as with



the recruiting process. If candidates know the time that it might take to be hired and the steps needed, then they are less uncertain about and more committed to the application process.

3. Provide a friendly experience

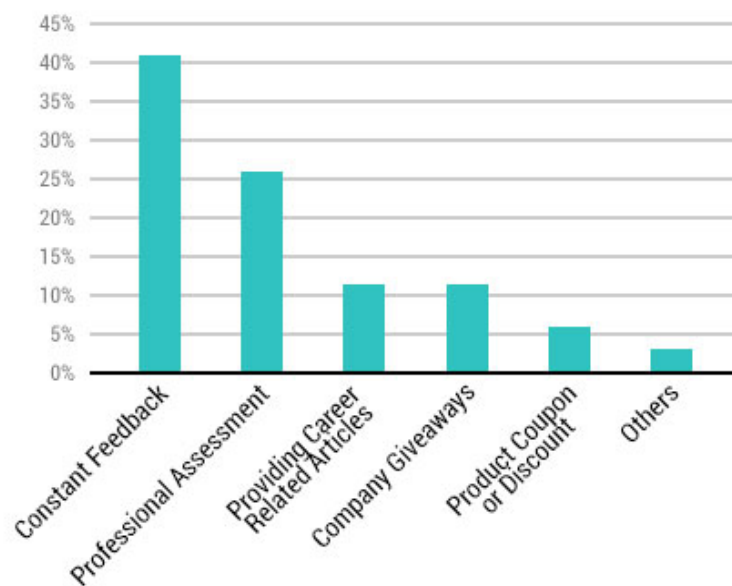
Candidates happily talk about how great their hiring process was, even if not selected, when the process to fill their application and the way they were treated was friendly and smooth. More than uploading a CV and a standard motivation letter, organizations have to evolve and offer that little extra. Helping candidates to improve their own CV through a recruiting platform can be one of the solutions.


WHAT TURNS CANDIDATES INTO AMBASSADORS

We also asked our candidate database what they believe would be some 'special elements' that organizations could consider providing for job seekers applying for their jobs.

When going into more detail about the data, we also verified that most dissatisfied candidates had feedback as their top preference for becoming an ambassador. Candidates with a satisfying application experience referred more to additional insights such as company perks and giveaways as an additional element to influence them into becoming company ambassadors.

Factors influencing the becoming of a Brand Ambassador





Getting constant feedback about their status was, by far, the top influencer for becoming an ambassador. Following that, many candidates referred getting a “Professional Assessment” of themselves as a great way of being happy about their application. Other elements include providing career related articles, giving away company marketing material or discounts for products.

It’s important to understand that probably not all candidates need to get something extra besides continuous communication, but the ones that reach a certain level and/or perform well throughout the application process will become engaged with the company’s mission and products/services, and even become brand ambassadors if they receive something that’s valuable to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These findings suggest that certain factors affect the candidate experience and the manner in which they can become brand ambassadors: the ongoing communication during the hiring process, the application experience from a technology point of view, the transparency and clarity of the process, and the importance of that little “extra”.

They also suggest that certain variables are more strongly correlated with these factors than others. This information can be used to prioritize certain variables to create a better candidate and new-hire experience.

Based on these research findings, there are several practices that organizations can apply to improve the candidate experience and turn candidates into ambassadors. Below are some recommendations, based on the research we conducted:

1. Define your recruiting values & engagement practices

Get your hiring team together and start by gathering thoughts from your candidates. Ask for their feedback, collect it, analyze it and based on the findings define what your candidates value the most. Take that into consideration to set your own company values when interacting with candidates and define principles of engagement so that everyone on the team is aligned on how they communicate with potential hires.

2. Provide feedback & communicate

Whatever the values and engagement practices you define, you need to provide feedback and communicate with everyone. Delays and no-response attitude towards candidates always results in negative experience. So if you have far too many candidates, and not enough time to take care of each and every one of them, do consider a recruiting tool to help you out.

3. Give applicants information about the job description, the company culture, the mission and the hiring process.

Honesty and transparency are values taken in high consideration by candidates. Be transparent with them and share on your recruiting process and its timeline, and talk about your company culture and mission. Use your website, build a career page and even ask which employees would like to be an ambassador to promote the company to potential applicants.

4. Think mobile.

It's clear that mobile is surging and is more than just a buzz or trend. Candidates are using mobile technology more and more often, so consider having your job pages optimized and mobile-ready. Perhaps even consider having a mobile application to support your hiring, since communication will become more frequent.

5. Give value to your candidates.

Feel free to test, experiment and see what works best. It could be that everyone who reaches the interview stage gets to do a personal assessment and can keep their results. It's a great learning experience for the applicant and surely they will talk about the results to their colleagues and friends.

If not an assessment, at least provide feedback. Reply to them and thank them for their interest. It's of uttermost importance to be friendly, welcoming and to keep a constant line of communication. If the applicants feels that the process was well conducted and that they were treated well, they will talk about your company from a positive point of view.

Conclusion

Creating a positive and great candidate experience is a critical differentiator to attract top talent. We have identified here what frustrates candidates, what they value the most and the difference between a poor and great candidate experience.

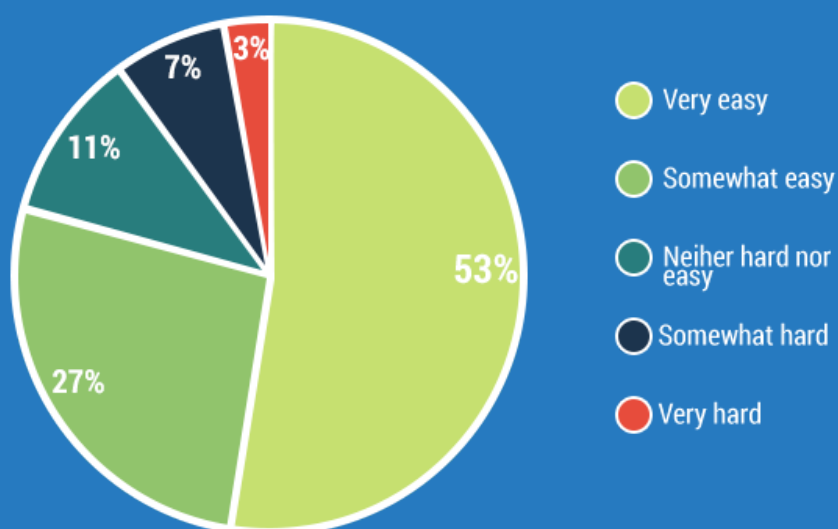
Top organizations highly consider the experience they offer to candidates and that makes them attractive employers. To build a great employer brand you need to start from somewhere, and definitely the candidate experience is at the core to reach such great outcome.

ABOUT TALENTSQUARE

Talentsquare is changing the talent game by providing a free, simple and attractive recruiting platform for both Employers and Candidates. Talentsquare is a SaaS HR recruitment solution, with over **500** companies having started to use the software to source, screen & select candidates. A simple tool to manage occasional hiring as well as mass recruitments.

Talentsquare focuses on providing a best-in-class candidate experience. We asked our candidate users how easy it was to apply for a job for companies that use Talentsquare as their recruiting tool, and **80%** considered the experience somewhat easy or very easy. This is extremely high, taking into account the statistics presented earlier in this whitepaper.

Talentsquare Candidate Feedback



WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY ABOUT TALENTSQUARE:

“Talentsquare is a really user friendly application. It really makes my job easier as a recruiter.

Gaelle Spinnoy
HR Administrator at Verisure

“In a context of change management (paradigm shifting towards proactive market approaches), Talentsquare offers powerful leverage.

Katrien Sterckx
Talent Manager at Partena



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