

2018 REPUTATION MANAGEMENT STUDY

Conducted in partnership with Haley Marketing Group



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SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS



As global experts and leaders in the search and recruitment industry, **MRINetwork** recruiters conduct searches every day in virtually every industry at the executive, managerial and professional level. They have a keen awareness of the overall job market, as well as the factors and trends that affect it. In March-April, we conducted the 2018 **MRINetwork** Reputation Management Survey, asking candidates/employers across the U.S., to assess the importance of employer brand strength, social media profiles and the overall evaluation of each candidate's personal brand, to determine how these factors impact the hiring process. Companies and candidates were represented from a variety of industries.

KEY FINDINGS

SOCIAL MEDIA & PERSONAL BRANDING

- Eighteen percent of employers formally evaluate candidates' social media profiles, and another 17 percent say they're considering it. This points to a growing trend of companies of making social media reviews an important part of the hiring process.
- In terms of what employers focus on when evaluating social media profiles, both candidates and employers chose questionable behavior or content most often. Twenty seven percent of employers say active engagement in professional or trade associations throughout a candidate's social media presence is second on their list. Nineteen percent of companies also report that offensive social or political views are analyzed.

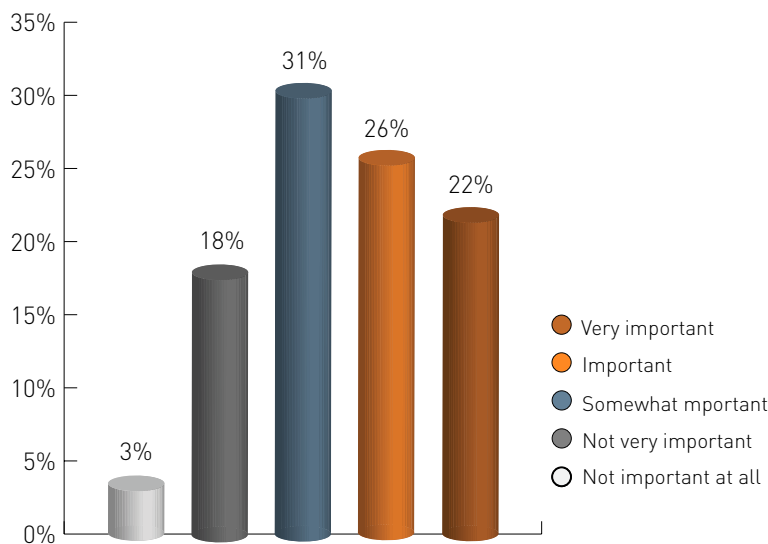
EMPLOYER BRANDING

- Sixty-nine percent of candidates and 71 percent of employers rank employer brand strength as important or very important when a candidate is evaluating a job offer.
- Candidates feel a lack of communication throughout the interview process and discrepancies among interviewers about job duties are the biggest turnoffs in the interview process. Although companies often use interviews as an opportunity to gather as much candidate information as possible, it's important for employers not to lose sight of a high-performing candidates' need to be kept informed, and on a timely basis. To a candidate, an interview is a two-way street.
- Candidates and employers both selected compensation most often, followed by advancement opportunities as positive factors impacting employer brands. Candidates and employers also agree poor work-life balance and excessive turnover across the company are the most negative factors that can impact an employer brand.
- Candidates feel referrals from current employees are the most important method for evaluating employer brands. While applicants frequently conduct their due diligence via company websites and review sites like Glassdoor, employee referrals remain a valuable asset that employers can leverage to attract top talent.
- Seventy-six percent of employers feel the interview process positively reflects their company culture, compared to 64 percent of candidates who feel the interview provides a fair amount to a lot about company culture.

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Nearly half (48 percent) of candidates believe their social media presence is important or very important to potential employers. While the level of importance varies by industry, this indicates many job seekers are aware of the impact their activity on social media can have in the hiring process.

CANDIDATES



Q1. CANDIDATES: How important do you think your social media presence is to potential employers?

CANDIDATE COMMENTS

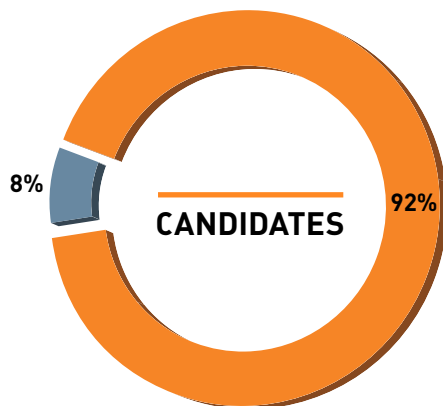
- How you present yourself on social media is a reflection of your true character, both professional and personal. If it is displayed for the public to see, it is a valid way for employers to analyze potential candidates for a position.
- LinkedIn notwithstanding, many employers have at least a basic level of curiosity associated with the non-professional side of a potential employee's personality. These forums (FB, Insta, Twitter, etc.) can round out a person's profile.
- I'm confident this will become an increasingly important and commonplace assessment step in all comprehensive candidate evaluation.
- Depends on industry and job specifications.
- Social media provides a window into a candidate's life that will not be available in a face-to-face interview. It can strongly influence the decision to interview/hire an applicant.
- An unprofessional presence can bar an otherwise qualified candidate from further consideration.

EMPLOYER COMMENTS

- We would like to know how candidates represent themselves outside of work, as they will need to have the maturity and positive personality to represent the company both professionally and socially.
- We would never hire without seriously searching all platforms. All platforms could use better search capabilities.
- It would depend on the position we have open.
- We don't regularly check social media accounts as we hire based on reputation.

FORMAL SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS

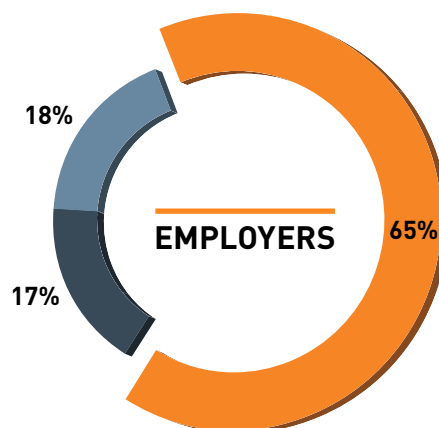
Virtually all (92 percent) of candidates said in recent interviews, potential employers had not asked permission to conduct a formal social media review.



- No formal reviews conducted
- Formal reviews conducted

Q2. CANDIDATES: In any recent interviews, has a company asked permission to conduct a formal social media check? (Similar to a background or credit check)

While most employers do not conduct formal social media reviews, 18 percent do, and a notable 17 percent are considering it. This points to a growing trend among companies, making social media reviews a more important part of the hiring process.



- No formal reviews conducted
- Conducting formal reviews
- Considering formal reviews

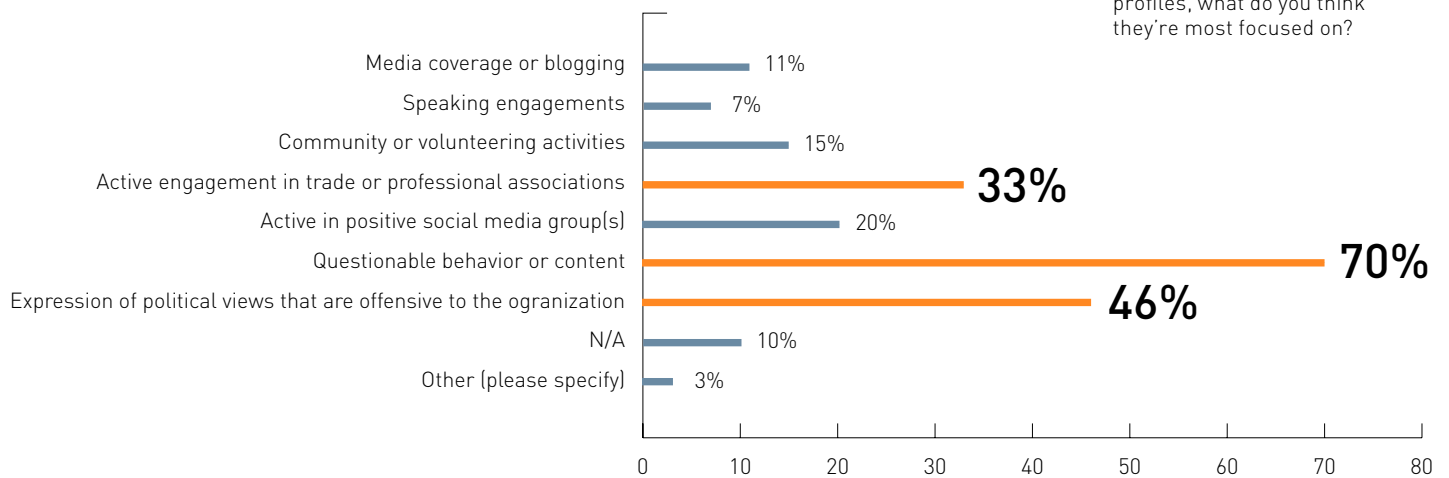
Q2. EMPLOYERS: Does your hiring process include a formal social media review of a candidate?

SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES AND WHAT EMPLOYERS FOCUS ON

Candidates and employers are on the same page about the focus of social media profiles: Both selected questionable behavior or content most often. Trade/professional associations and expressions of offensive social or political views were the second and third most selected factors.

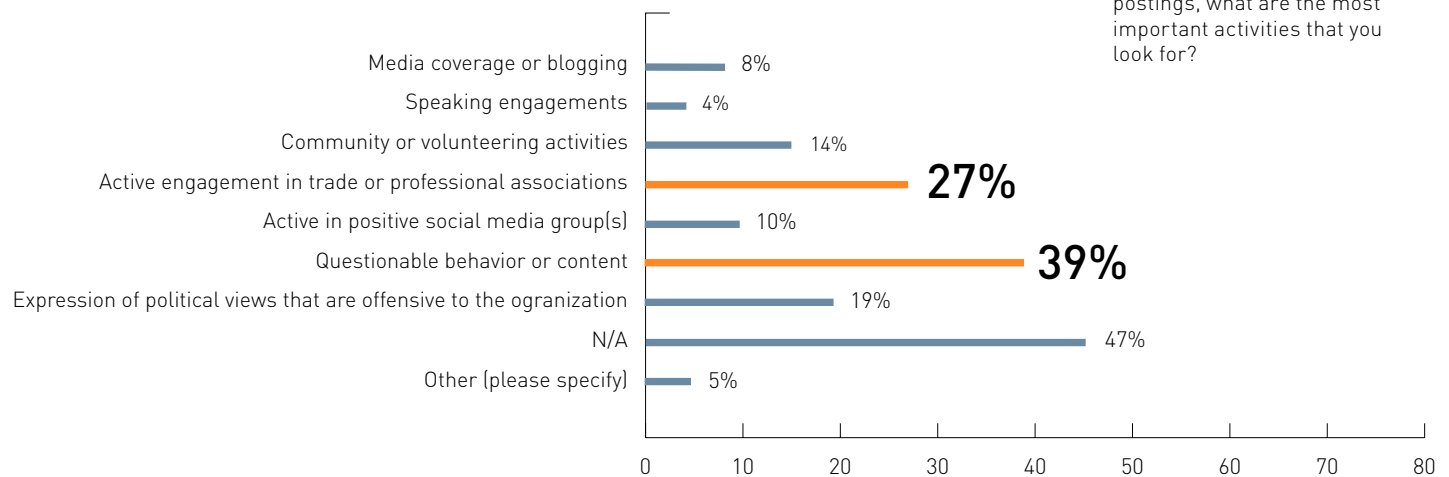
CANDIDATES

Q3. CANDIDATES: Of companies that review candidate social media profiles, what do you think they're most focused on?



EMPLOYERS

Q3. EMPLOYERS: If you review candidate social media profiles/postings, what are the most important activities that you look for?



IMPORTANT TO EMPLOYERS WHEN EVALUATING CANDIDATES

Portfolios, special projects and active engagement in trade or professional associations were selected most often as factors candidates think employers prioritize when evaluating applications.

CANDIDATES

TOP ACTIVITIES CANDIDATES THINK EMPLOYERS ARE EVALUATING



Special projects



Portfolio/work samples



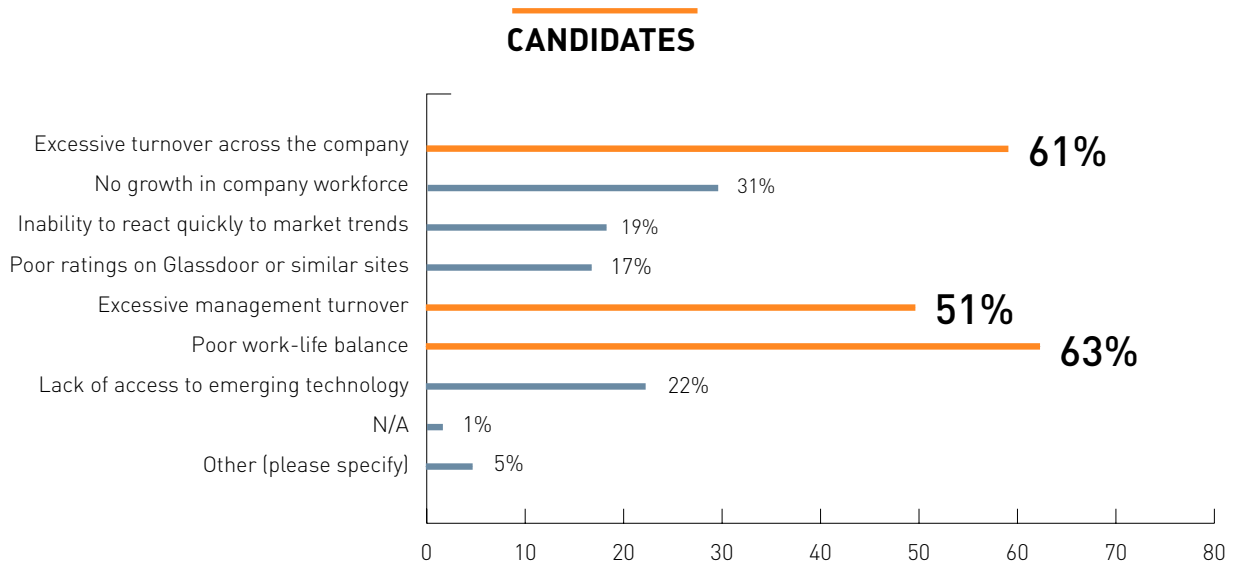
Active engagement in trade or professional associations

4. Community or volunteer activities	34% Important	6% Very important
5. Speaking engagements	29% Important	7% Very important
6. Active in positive social media group(s)	21% Important	3% Very important
7. Media coverage or blogging	17% Important	2% Very important

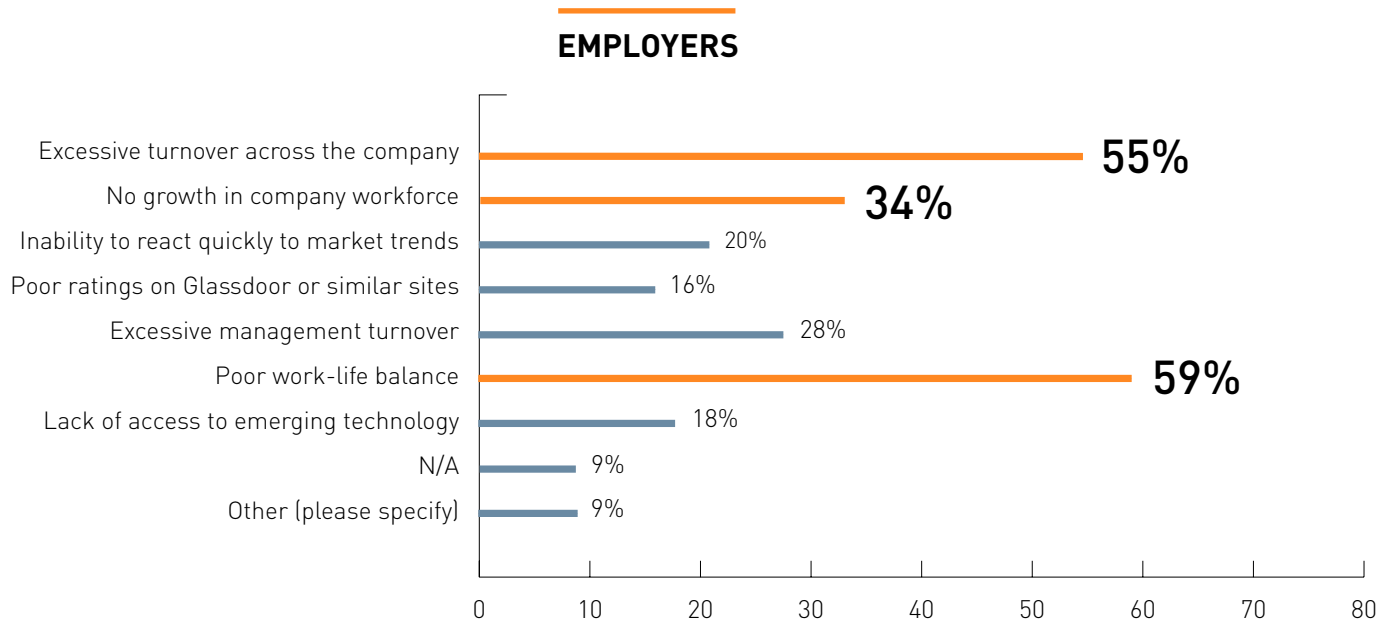
Q4. CANDIDATES: In general, what level of importance do you think employers place on the following activities when considering hiring a candidate?

NEGATIVE FACTORS IMPACTING EMPLOYER BRAND

Candidates and employers agree that poor work-life balance and excessive turnover across the company are the most critical factors that can impact an employer brand.



Q5. CANDIDATES: What are the most damaging factors, from your perspective, that can affect your decision regarding joining a company?

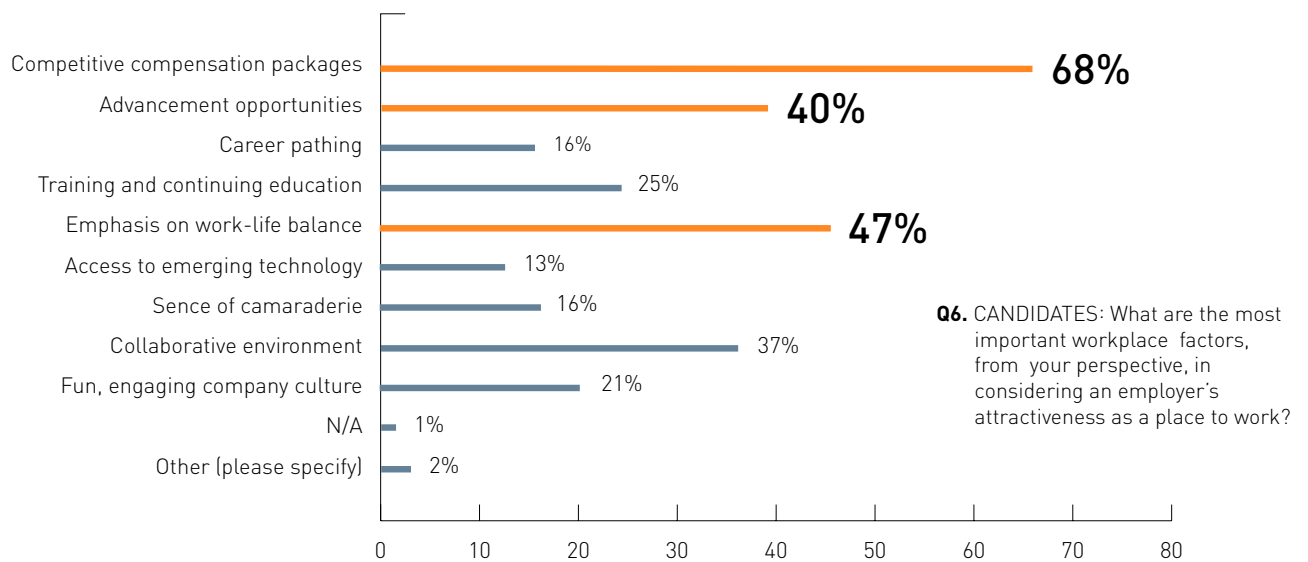


Q5. EMPLOYERS: What are the most damaging factors, from a candidate's perspective, that can affect your employer brand?

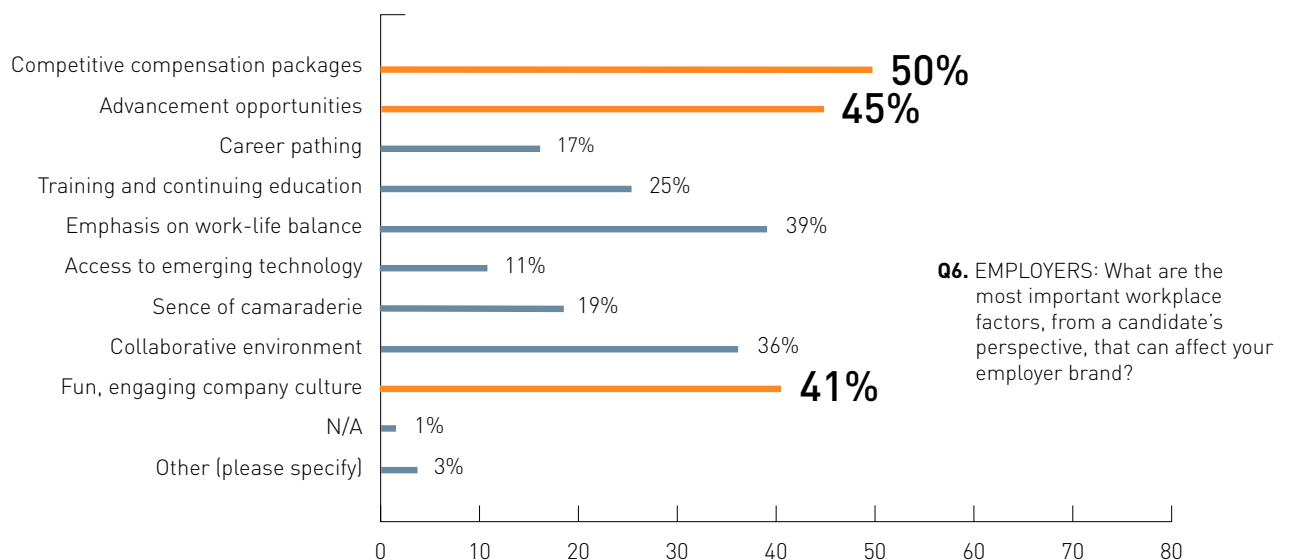
POSITIVE FACTORS IMPACTING EMPLOYER BRANDING

Candidates and employers both selected compensation most often, followed by advancement opportunities as positive factors impacting employer brands. The emphasis on compensation reflects the last few years of minimal pay increases. Recent hourly wage trends may indicate that we may soon see compensation packages following suit.

CANDIDATES

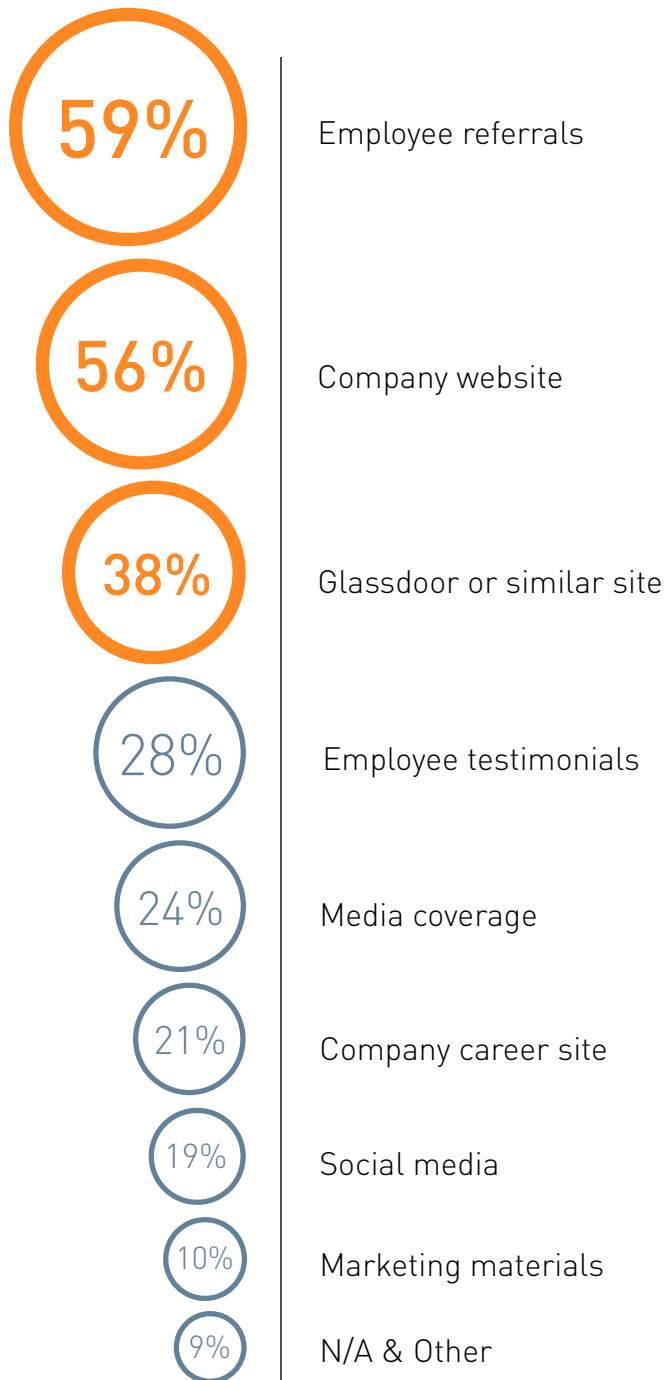


EMPLOYERS



TOP METHODS FOR EVALUATING EMPLOYER BRAND

CANDIDATES

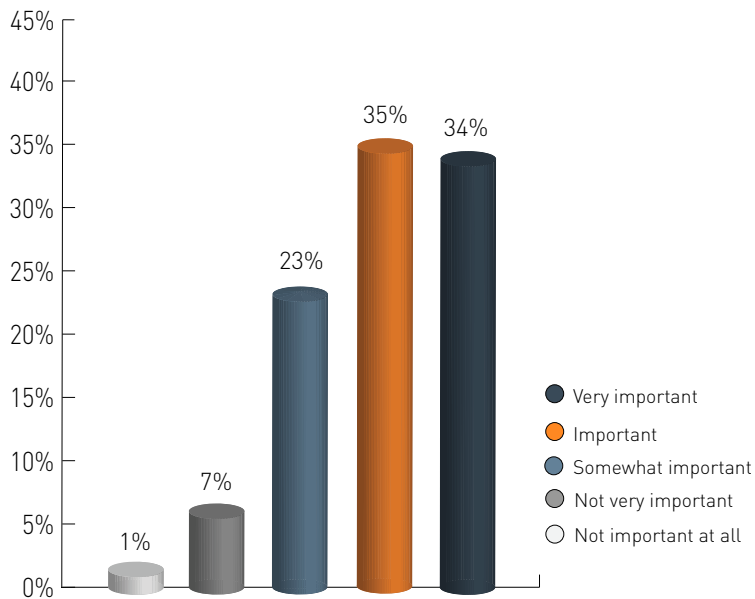


Candidates feel referrals by existing employees are the most important method for evaluating employer brands. While applicants frequently conduct their due diligence via company websites and review sites, employee referrals remain a valuable asset that employers can leverage to attract top talent.

Q7. CANDIDATES: When considering a new employer, what are your top sources for evaluating the company's employer brand?

IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYER BRAND STRENGTH

CANDIDATES

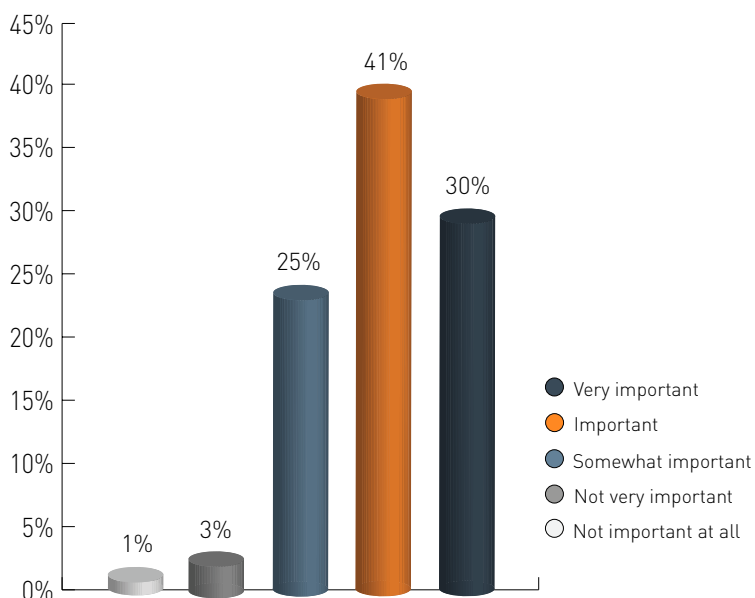


Q8. CANDIDATES:

When you are evaluating a new job opportunity, how important is the strength of the company's employer brand?

Sixty-nine percent of candidates and 71 percent of employers rank employer brand strength as important or very important when a candidate is evaluating a job offer. Regardless of how strong a company's employer brand is, this data shows that organizations are aware of the impact that employer brand can have in a candidate's decision to accept a new role.

EMPLOYERS

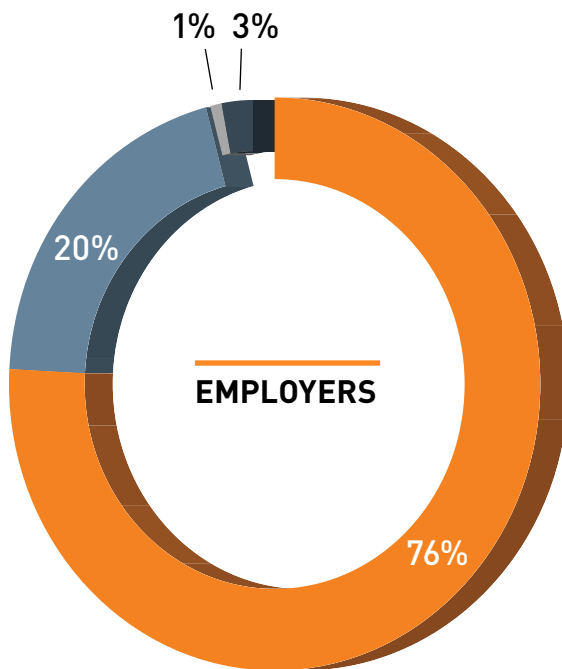


Q8. EMPLOYERS:

How important do you think your company's brand strength is in a candidate's decision to accept a job offer?

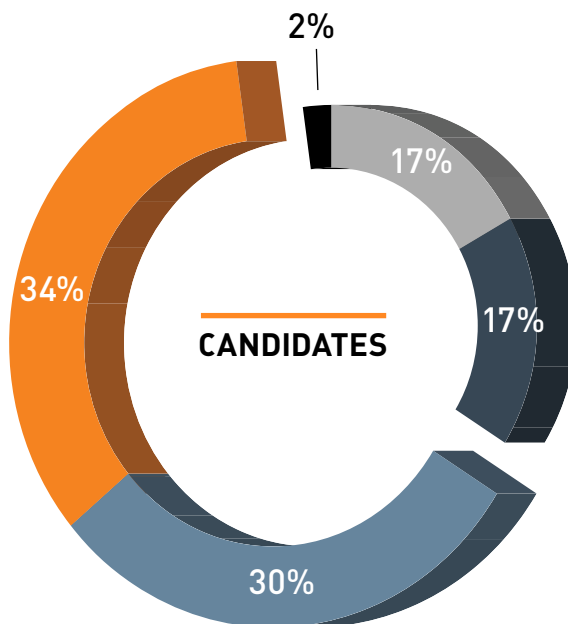
WHAT THE INTERVIEW PROCESS CONVEYS ABOUT COMPANY CULTURE

Seventy-six percent of employers feel the interview process positively reflects their company culture, compared to 64 percent of candidates who feel the interview provides a fair amount to a lot about company culture.



- Yes—we feel the interview process positively reflects our company culture
- Yes—but we recognize that we need to improve our interview process
- No—we don't think the interview process is a factor in conveying the company culture
- No—we have not given much thought to what the interview process conveys about the company culture

Q9. EMPLOYERS:
Does your company feel that the interview process conveys messages about the company culture?



- Conveys very much about the culture
- Conveys a lot about the culture
- Conveys a fair amount about the culture
- Conveys very little about the culture
- Conveys nothing at all about the culture

Q9. CANDIDATES:
How much does the interview process convey about the company culture of a prospective employer?

COMMENTS

Candidate: What the Interview Process Conveys About Company Culture

- The details of the interview coordination and process reveal volumes about operating priorities and corporate values.
- Behavioral-based interviewing has taken away the opportunity to really learn the culture of an organization.
- Management attitude says a ton about what the company culture is like as it often trickles down from above.
- In the past I've had fantastic interviews with multiple people, just to be greatly disappointed in the culture portrayed! It's often very hard to pick up on culture and let's face it, work life is all about relationships.
- The perceived intelligence and quality of questions asked by the interviewer speaks volumes about the company. Some know to focus on your abilities, transferrable skills, and past successes. Others are worried about pet issues, like your school choice, hobbies, or worse yet, your age, where you live, etc.

Employer: Messages Portrayed from the Interview Process

- This is a very important piece of the selection process, so much that we've recently hired a HR manager to assist in our hiring processes.
- We don't stress enough the unique difference in our culture.
- It is more difficult to proactively convey culture to government candidates because the Federal government uses a set interview process that does not reflect on the culture of the various agencies.

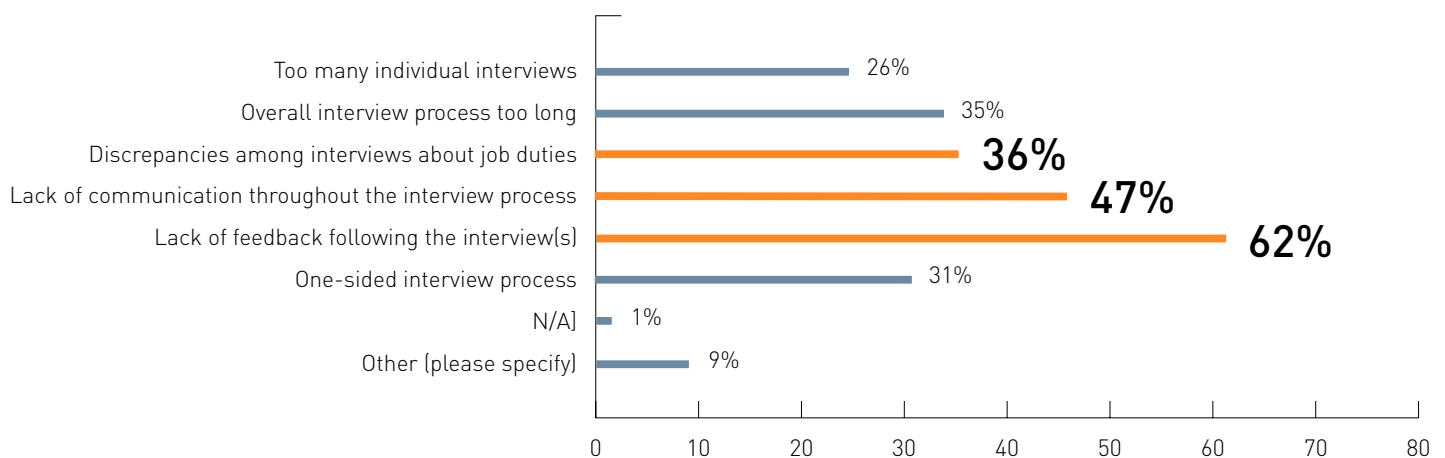
BIGGEST TURNOFFS ABOUT THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Candidates feel a lack of communication throughout the interview process. Discrepancies among interviewers about job duties are the biggest turnoffs committed in the interview process. Although lack of feedback after interviews was also a big turnoff, this can be attributed to an employer's decision not to move forward.

Although companies often use interviews as a chance to gather as much candidate information as possible, it's important for employers not to lose sight of a high-performing candidate's need to be kept informed in a timely manner. To a candidate, an interview is more like a two-way street.

CANDIDATES

Q10. CANDIDATES: What are the biggest turnoffs about the interview process?



BRAND STRENGTH



Q11. EMPLOYERS: How would you rate your company's employer brand?

On average, companies rated their employer brands at 3.5 out of 5 stars. Forty-two percent of employers feel they have an average brand, followed by 39 percent who feel they have a strong brand.

CONCLUSION

As the study results demonstrate, employer brand strength has become a critical determinant of whether companies are able to attract top talent within industries that are largely candidate-driven.

Along side that is the increasing importance of social media and how it is leveraged to both showcase employer brands while also shedding light on the personal brands of candidates. These trends will continue to impact the hiring process as the race for passive candidates (happily employed talent) intensifies. Employer brands that are able to harness these aspects of hiring will have the most success attracting and retaining high performers.

As you look at your hiring plans for the year, use the survey findings to help you understand some of the pressure your candidate searches will be under. Of course, as you come up against challenges, **MRINetwork's** team of approximately 1,500 recruiters around the world will be able to help your organization find specialized managerial, executive and professional talent in almost every industry and function.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The 2018 **MRINetwork** Reputation Management Study is based on a web-based survey conducted between March-April 2018 with a total of 400 candidates and nearly 200 employers responding. The survey has an 8 percent margin of error with a 90 percent confidence. All data has been rounded to the nearest 10th.

The survey was conducted by **MRINetwork**, in partnership with Haley Marketing Group. For more information about the Study, please contact Nysha King, Media Relations Lead for **MRINetwork**: 215.282.8821 | nysha.king@MRINetwork.com

This was the 1st edition of the study. Parties interested in downloading the study or viewing associated videos can do so at:

MRINetwork.com/Reputation-Management-Study.



**“A brand for a company is like
a reputation for a person—you
earn reputation by trying to do
hard things well.”**

- Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon



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