

CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE IN IT 2020

Guide to effective recruitment from the
candidates' perspective



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Introduction

Due to a growing interest in candidate experience, we decided to check how this process looks from the perspective of candidates on the IT job market. Thanks to a survey conducted in January and February 2020, we've collected answers from 1951 IT specialists on varied experience levels: mid, senior, expert, team leader and beginners (junior). The largest group of responders consisted of medium and senior specialists (50%) and juniors (22%). Based on the results of the survey we've created a "Guide in the effective recruitment from the candidates' perspective", in which we included a range of data regarding recruitment processes (their strong and weak points) as well as suggestions and formulas for optimization of these processes that can make them fulfil real expectations of people searching for jobs. Despite differences in age and years of service, all candidates have similar recruitment experiences.

Are they positive? Keep on reading!



Marta Steiner



Maja Gojtowska



Aleksandra Kubicka

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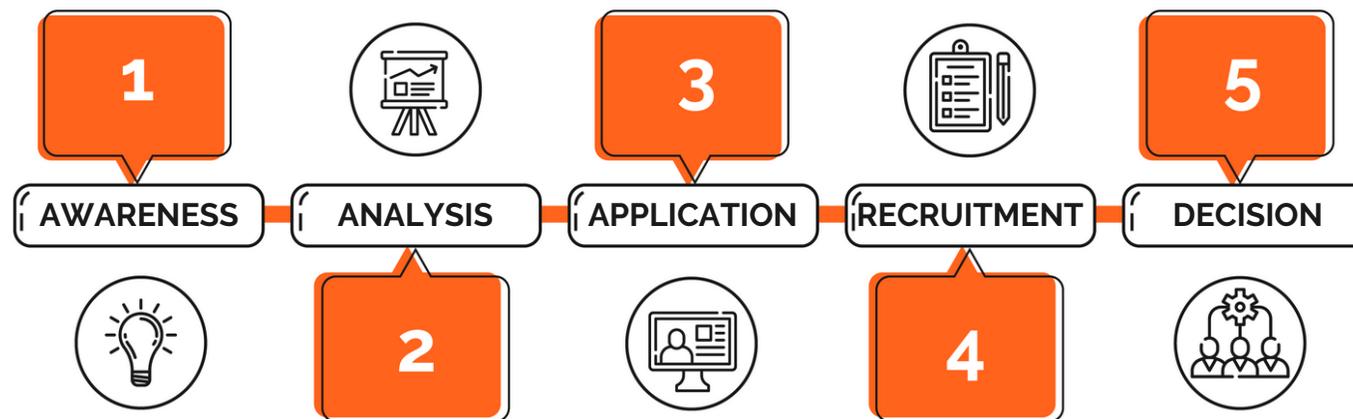
What is “candidate’s experience”?

Experience is our basic tool in creating a worldview. In the context of recruitment, a candidate's experience is simply a sum of experiences connected to the company as an employer which are created in the mind of a potential employee.

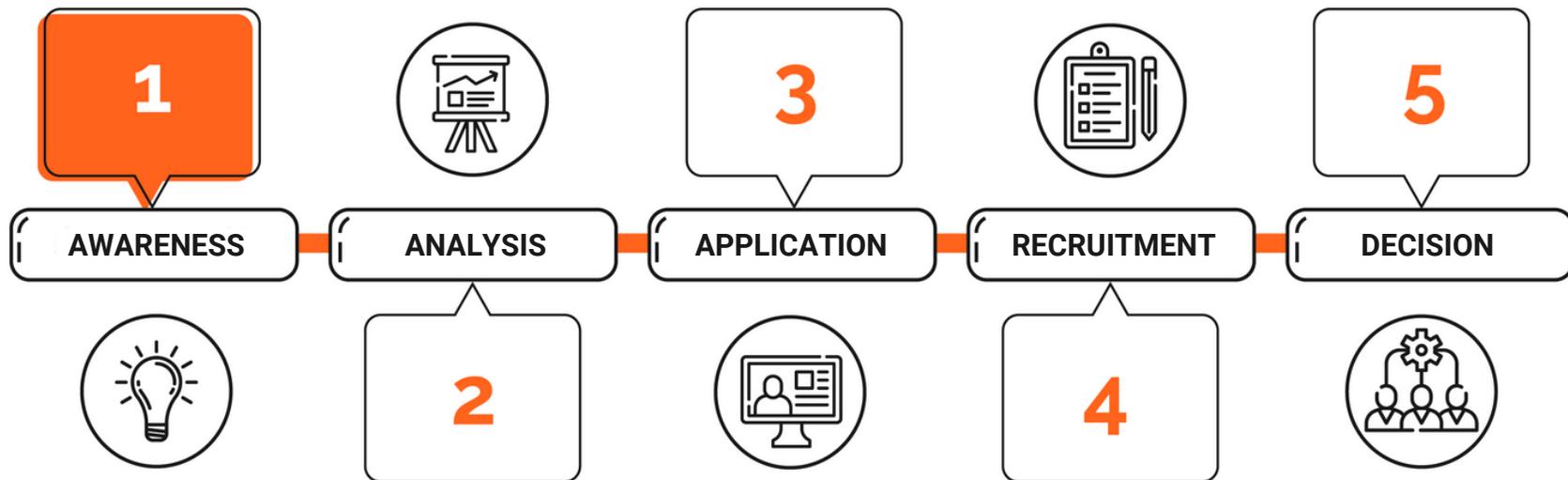
Do IT employers know how to consciously build it?

What does “candidate’s journey” look like?

Candidates' recruitment journey starts at the moment an employer wonders into their consciousness - so it doesn't have to be connected with an active job search. Potential candidates may learn about the employer from a friend, read about the company or its suggested solutions on a blog, or just notice an advertisement online, on the street or a job fair. Next step is the analysis during which candidates themselves look for additional information about the employer and consciously decide to take part in the recruitment process. The analysis is followed by the applying stage (candidates send their application to a potential employer) and stages such as recruitment and decision making (by the employer and by the candidate as well). Regardless of whether the end of the journey is an employment offer, a candidate should always become an ambassador of the employer. The outcome depends solely on the experiences that he or she had during the recruitment process.



Stage 1: Awareness building | Employer, who are you?



Where do I search for you?

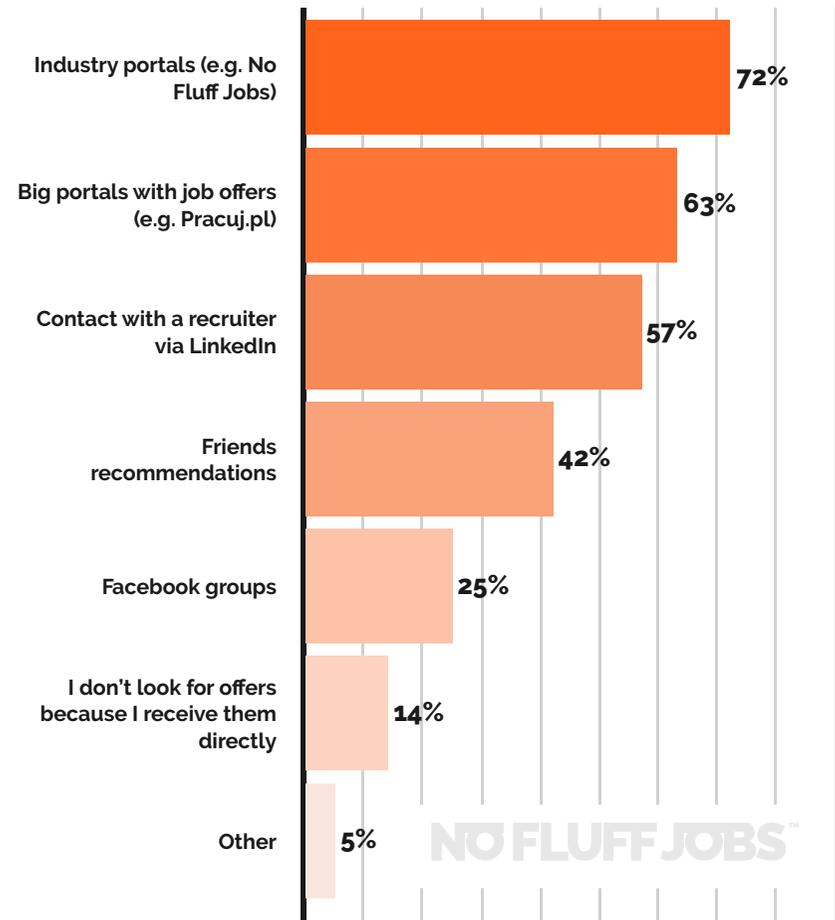
It specialists look for job offers mainly via industry portals - 3 out of 4 respondents indicated such services as No Fluff Jobs as their first sources while job hunting.

Results indicate that it is worth it to take care of building a coherent brand not only on the “career” page on the company’s website or job boards. Contact with a recruiter through LinkedIn or thematic Facebook groups is important to more than half of all respondents as it influences their decision about taking part in the recruitment process.



Only 14% of respondents declared that they are not looking for employment because employers contact them directly.

What sources do you use while searching for a new employer?



I want to know everything about you

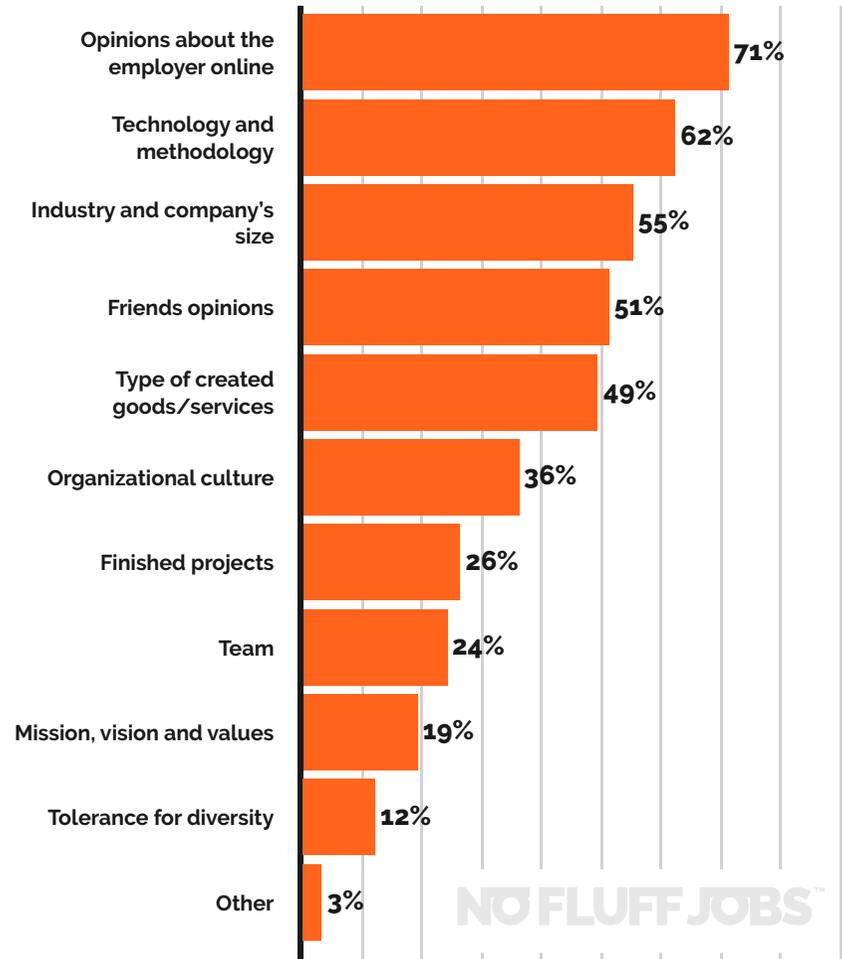
More than 70% of respondents check opinions about the company online before they decide to apply for the offer. Every other respondent asks their friends for an opinion.

Additionally, from the analysis of user behaviour on nofluffjobs.com, it appears that candidates want to know as much as possible about a potential employer. **Employers who can present themselves coherently and comprehensively get 27% more applications than those who don't publish enough information.**

Lack of opinion about the company online or it's negativity influences the results of recruitment. It should be noted that the opinion of potential candidates is created already during job hunting..

*No Fluff Jobs' internal data (2019)

What information do you look for before deciding to apply to a specific company?



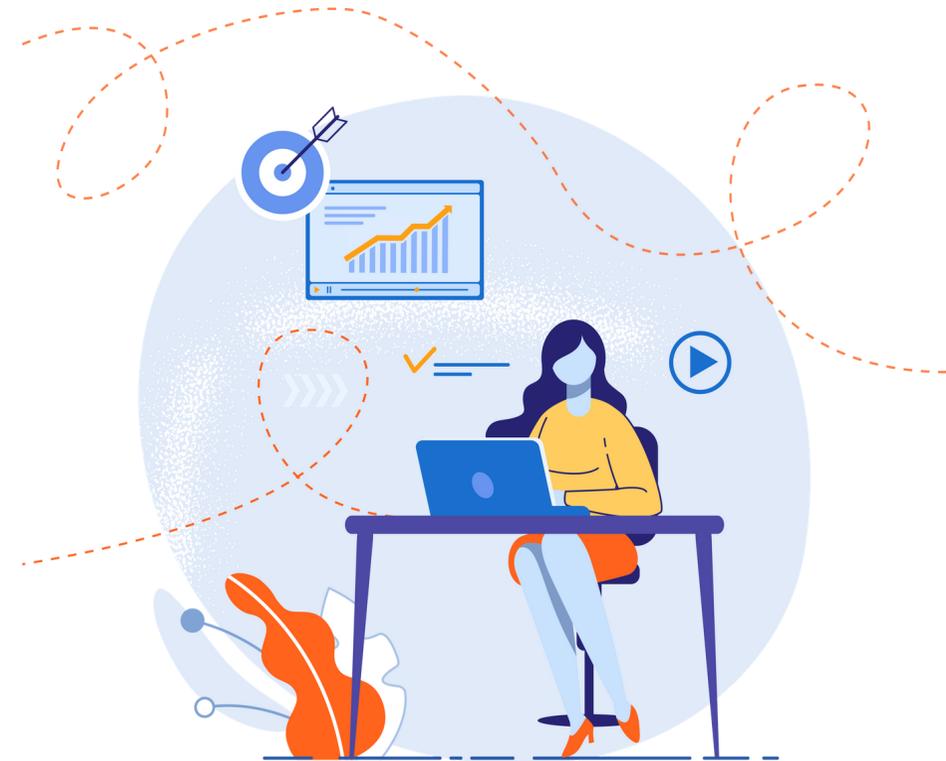
Recruitment is not fast food,
SLOW DOWN!



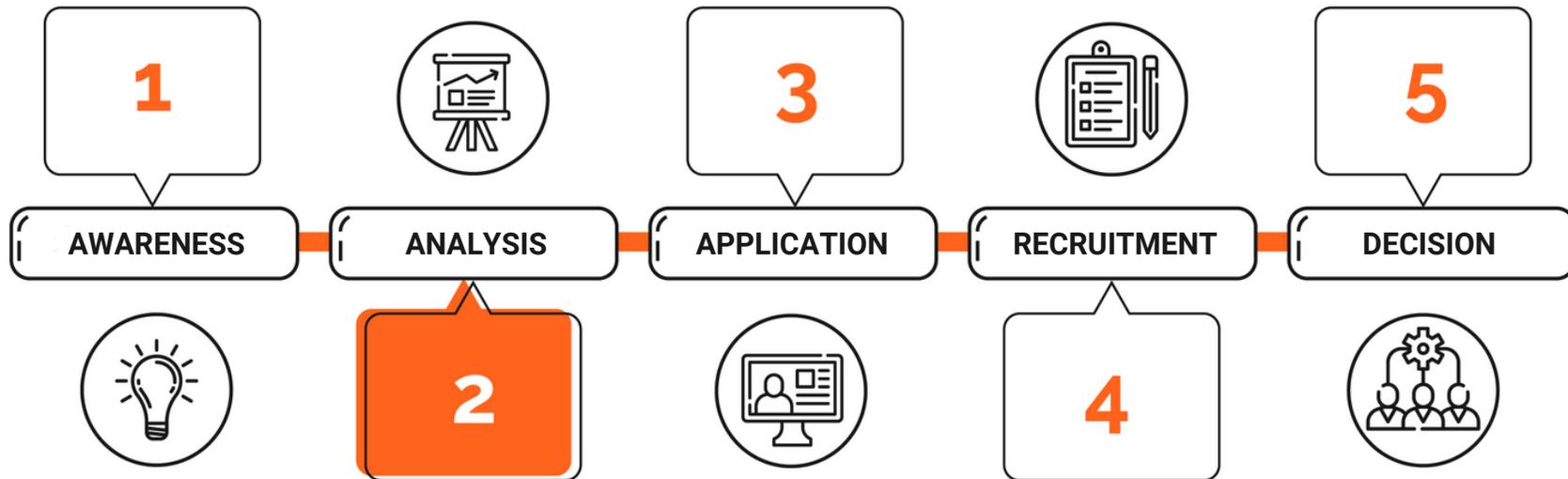
IT candidates are drawn to valuable content

The awareness that candidates check information about the employer online is not enough. It should cause activation of employers in two areas. Firstly, the brand should be consciously positioned on Google but also Youtube which is the second biggest search engine when it comes to the number of users. Secondly, employers should put more care into content marketing. It is a direction worth undertaking because, on one hand, it translates to the promotion of employer branding and brand awareness building among candidates. On the other hand, it fulfils education function and increases the credibility of the content creator and results in generating leads which are real and spontaneous candidate's applications. What form can content marketing take in the actions of employers in IT? The attention of candidates will be drawn by articles on the company's blog or other outside platforms, published reports and e-books, webinars, podcasts and thematic Youtube channels.

Maja Gojtowska, author of Gojtowska.com blog
and a book "Candidate experience. Still a candidate or already a client?"



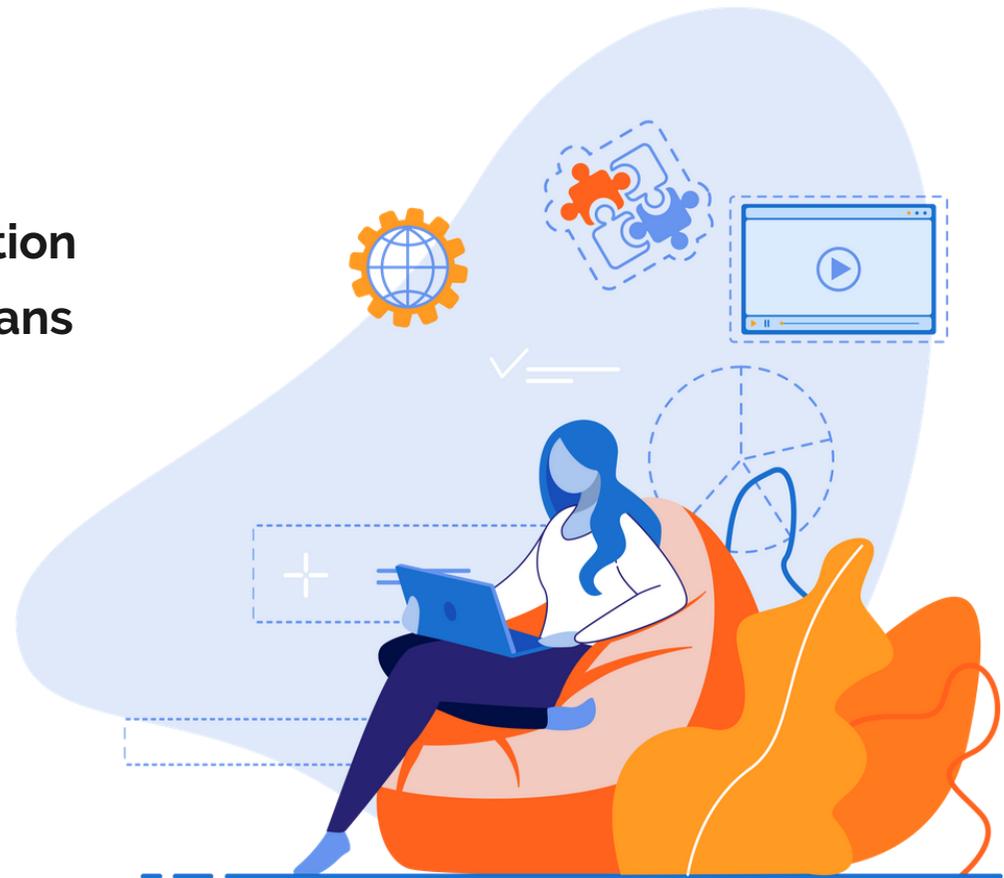
Stage 2. Analysis | What can you offer me?



“Candidates in the IT sector expect truth and concrete information from the employer. Marketing slogans are not a treat for us.”

KASIA, FRONTEND DEVELOPER

Quote from developer’s recipes created by IT specialists for a survey
“Candidate Experience in IT”



I want to know how much you'll pay me...

¾ of respondents stated that most job offers lack information regarding salary.

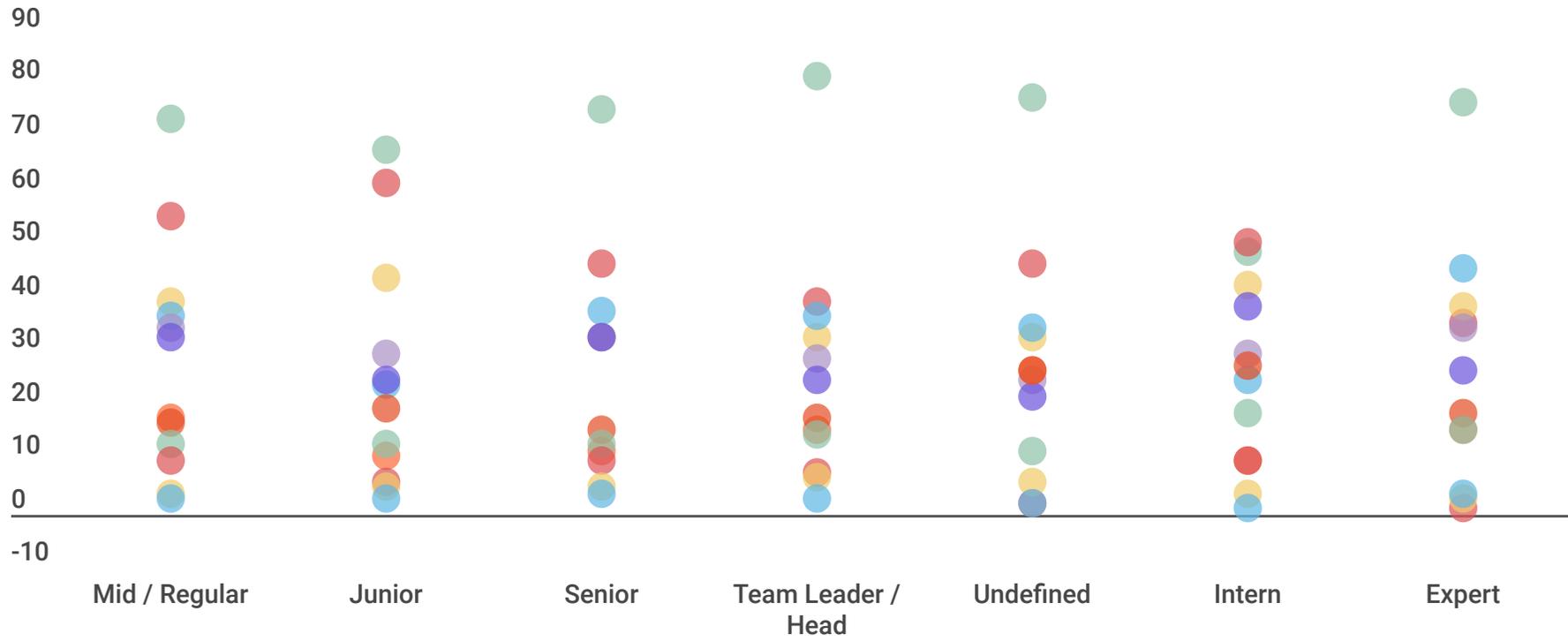
It's the salary that is regarded by respondents as the most important element of a job offer. It has a direct influence on the candidate's decision to start the applying process.

However, this information has different importance depending on the seniority level of a candidate. Seniors and team leaders were as interested in remote work possibility as they were in salary and **recruitment stages**.

For junior and mid specialists the most important information is salary, recruitment stages, development possibilities.



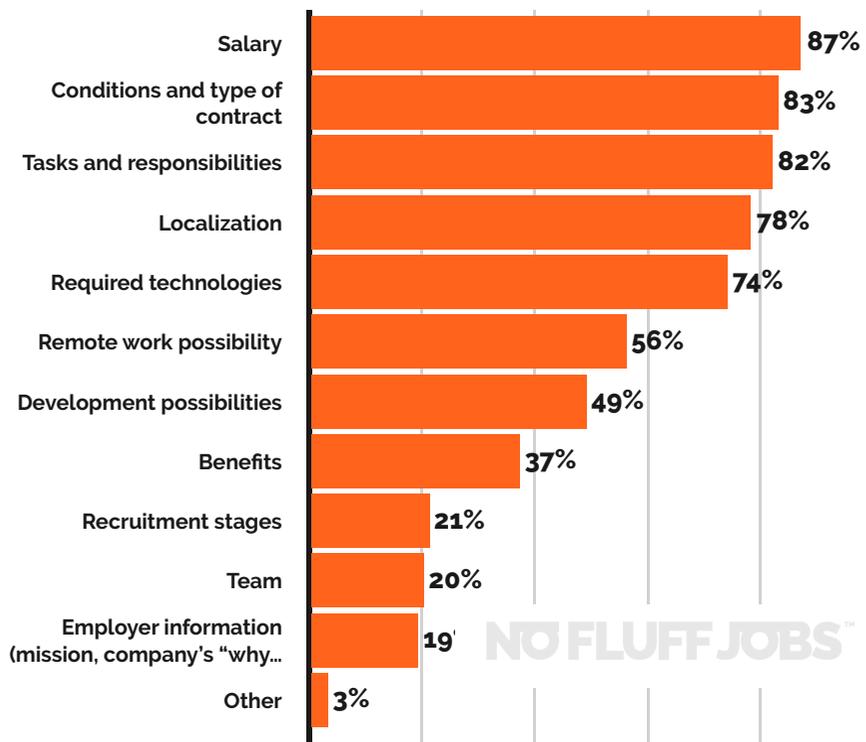
What information are you looking for before deciding to apply to a specific company?



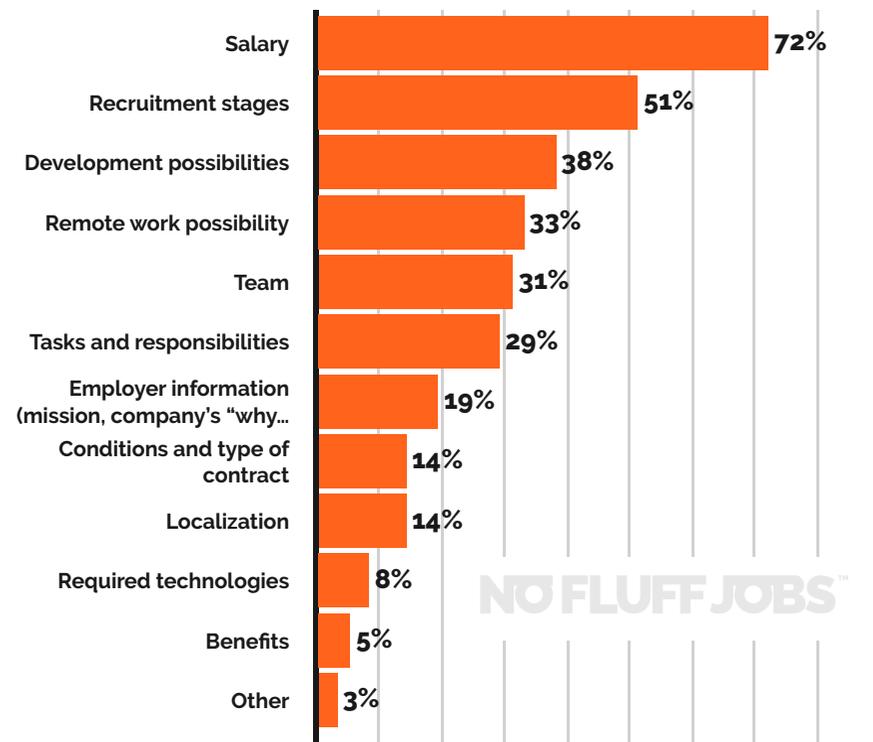
- Salary ● Recruitment stages ● Development possibilities ● Remote work possibility ● Team
- Tasks and responsibilities ● Localization ● Employer information (mission, company's "why", team)
- Conditions and type of contract ● Required technologies ● Benefits ● Other

... and what do I get?

What information do you look for in a job offer?



What is most often missing in a job offer?



There are more important things than a list of benefits

Benefits are relevant mostly to juniors, but **only 5% of mid and senior specialists appreciate them in a job offer**. However, for all (irrespectively of seniority level) the most important are: **information about conditions and contract (83%), specified job tasks (82%) and information regarding required technologies (74%)**.



“Tasty coffee, Fruit Thursdays, Multisport card, nice atmosphere and people. These won’t impress anybody - you could as well say that there is a place to hang your jacket during the winter. Nice atmosphere sounds as if everywhere else companies are still using medieval-style corporal punishment.”

ANTONIO REKRUTERRIO

Quote from developer’s recipes created by IT specialists for a survey “Candidate Experiences in IT”



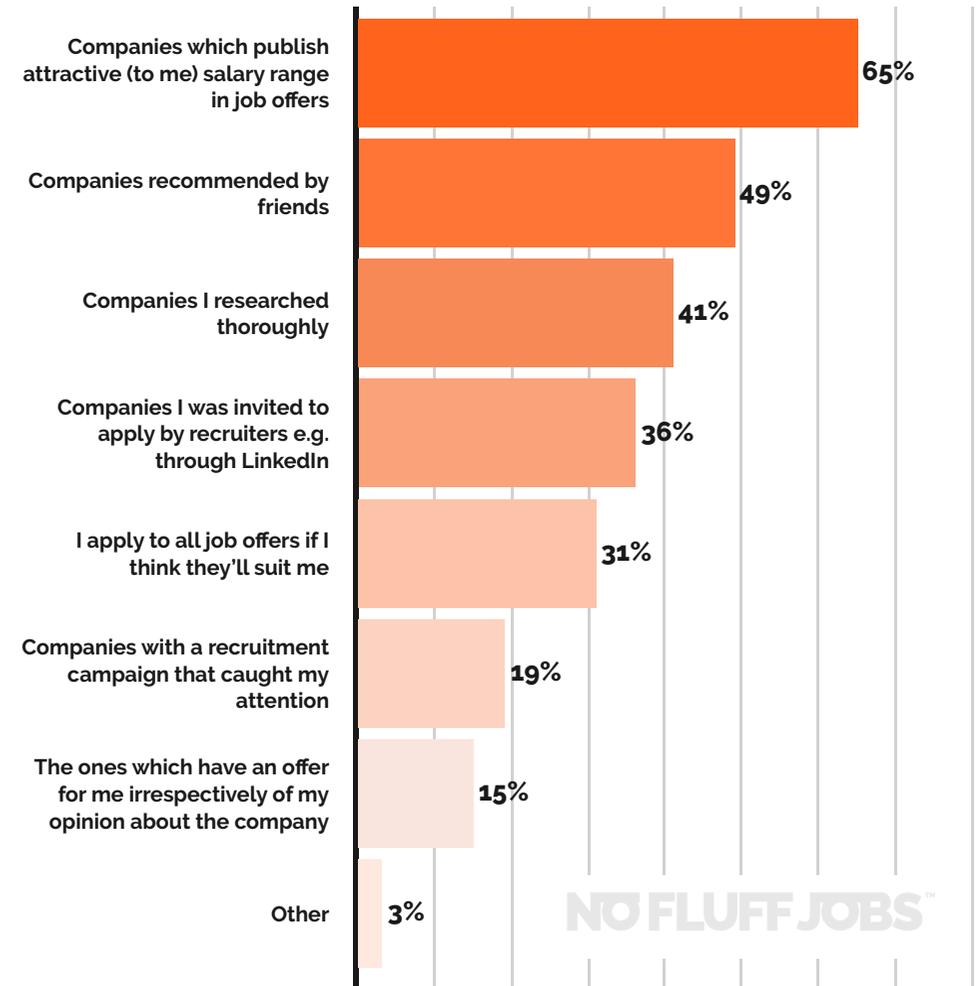
I want to get to know you

For the vast majority of candidates, the most important information in a job offer is the salary. Additionally, specialists on medium experience level indicate a bigger inclination to apply to offers they got invited to, however seniors check companies before sending their CVs. Interns and juniors declare that they apply to all job offers that may fit their skills.



More than 70% of respondents look for job offers via industry portals

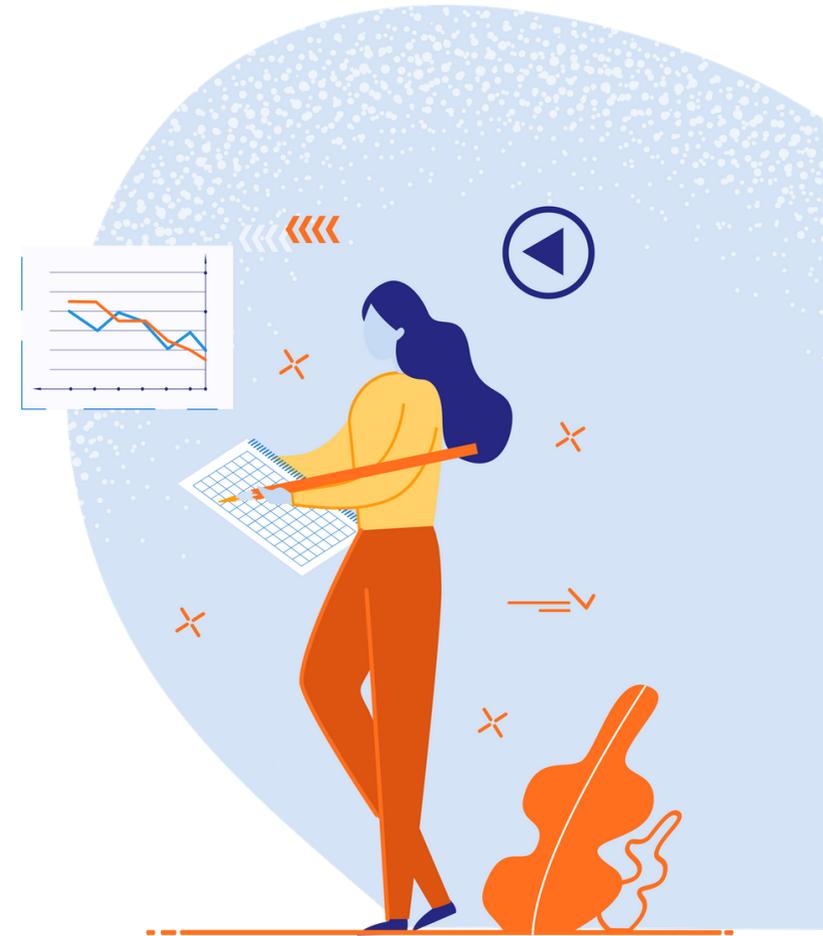
What companies do you apply to?



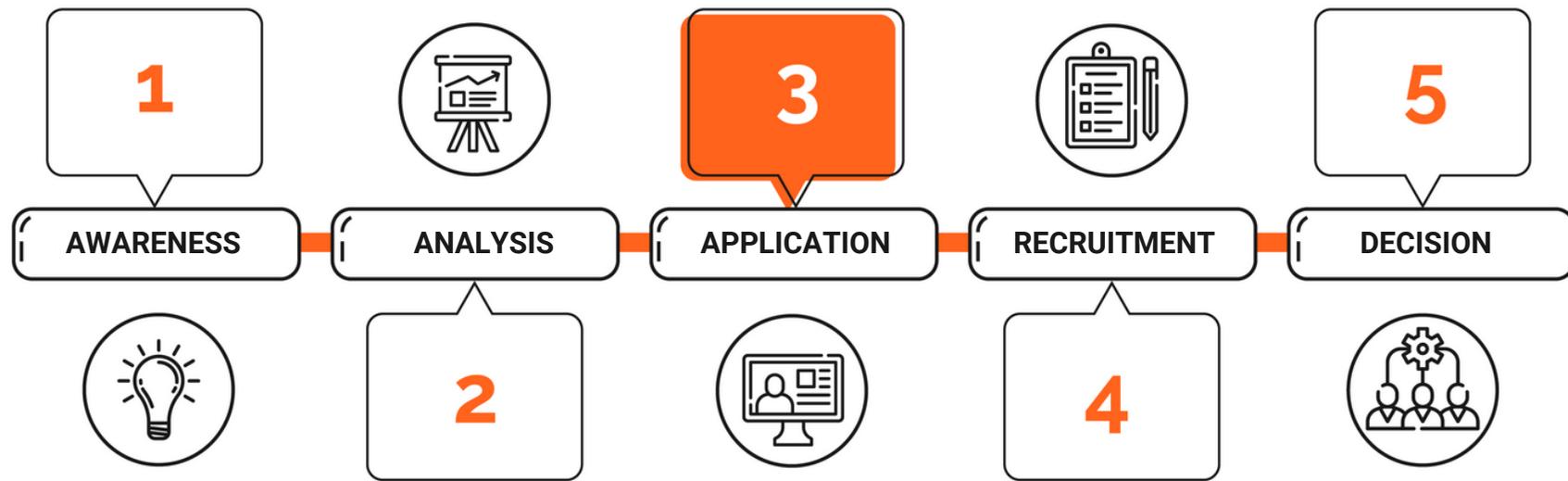
Don't talk about benefits, let me know the basics

9 out of 10 candidates state that they are looking for salary information in a job offer and 3 out of 4 indicate that this information is most often missing. This is still surprising to us that so many companies ignore the need of their target group for whose attention they have to fight over with different organizations that are looking for experts on the market. By deciding to reveal the salary on the initial stage of recruitment, we are going out to meet candidates' expectations, which may result in a positive image and solves a dilemma of "should I apply, or not?". Additionally, in this way, we optimize recruitment processes and save our and candidate's time. By presenting this information at the very beginning in a job offer or by sending it in a personalized message, we are doing a preselection of candidates and reducing recruitment costs.

Aleksandra Kubicka, HR Business Partner at No Fluff Jobs



Stage 3: Application | What forms of applying do you propose?



I want to apply through an online form.

Candidates prefer to apply via an online form, however, attaching a CV file to a form is not a problem for them.

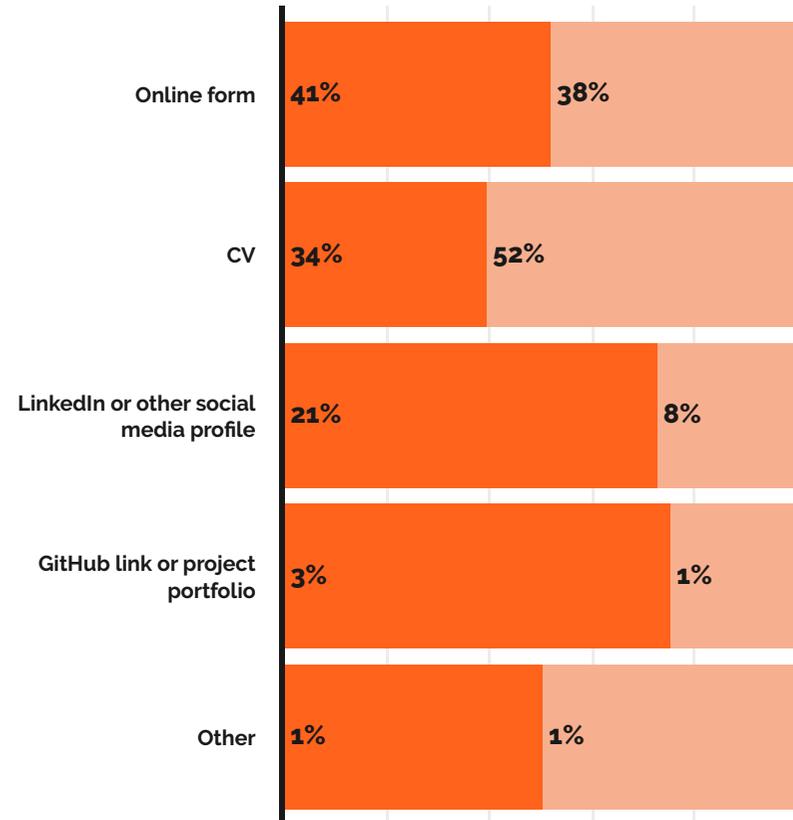
What applying forms do employers propose?
Almost half of our respondents stated that they encounter forms asking for CV files.

Only 8% of answers indicated a possibility to apply via social media.



Every 5th respondent would eagerly apply through LinkedIn or other social media platforms.

Preferred applying forms



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- What is your preferred form of applying?
- What type of application is most often suggested by the employer?

Application form with the **X factor**

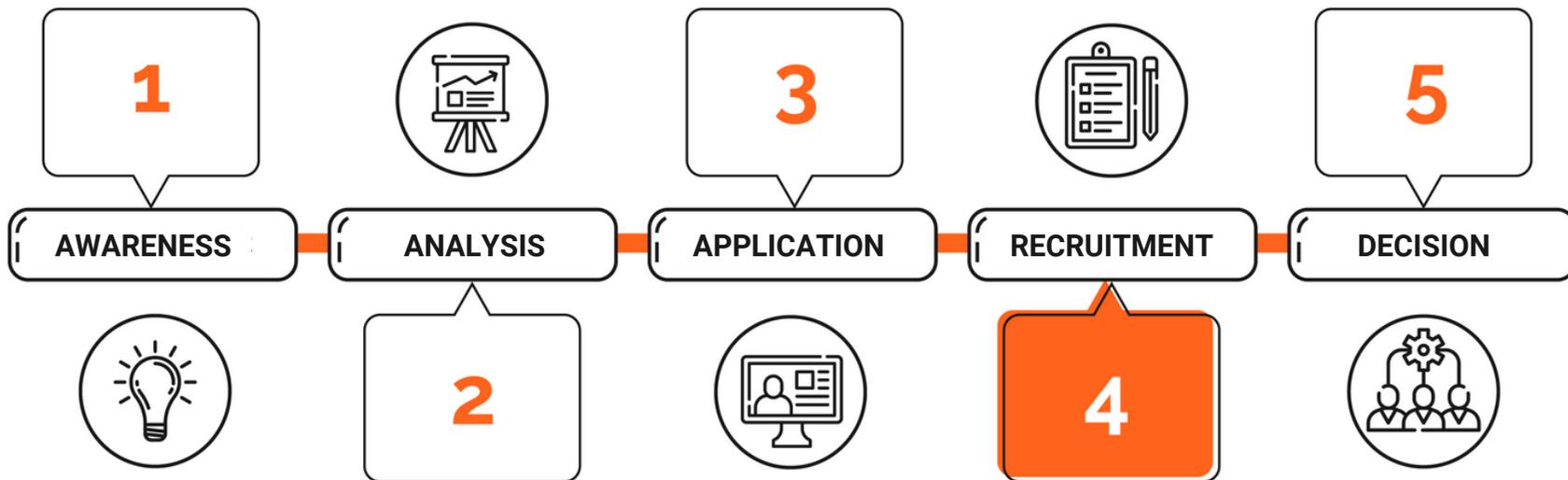
An application form is most often the first stage at which the employer (un)consciously sabotages their recruitment process. 1 out of 5 candidates prefers to apply in the shortest form possible which is a link to their LinkedIn or other social media profile.

However, only 1 out of 10 employers enables them to do so. It is worth remembering that the application process should be guided by the necessity of getting an intel valid for recruitment. They should allow further processing of someone's candidature.

The more accessible it is for the potential employee the better.

Maja Gojtowska, author of Gojtowska.com blog and a book
"Candidate experience. Still a candidate or already a client?"

Stage 4: Recruitment | How will you contact me?

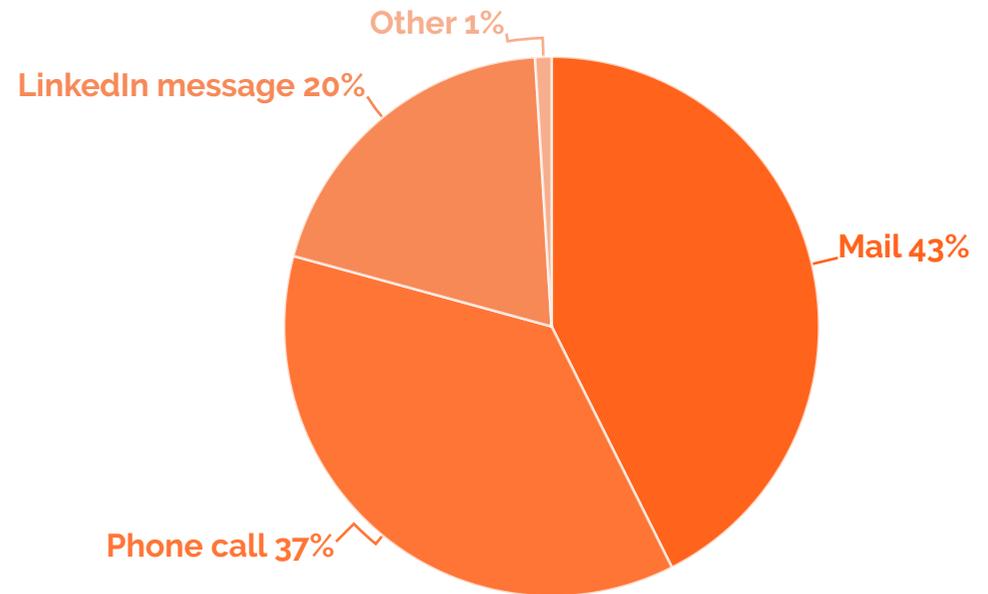


I'd prefer to get a message first

43% of respondents answered that the best form of the **first contact** is receiving **an e-mail**.

Every third respondent chose a phone call, and every 5th preferred a LinkedIn message. In additional answers, respondents indicated that it's not the form that is important but the timing and conditions in which it happens.

What form of the first contact with a recruiter do you prefer?



I want to know my role in a team

During the first phone call with a recruiter, 86% of candidates want to hear information regarding the position. Next when it comes to relevance are **information about a salary and recruitment stages**.

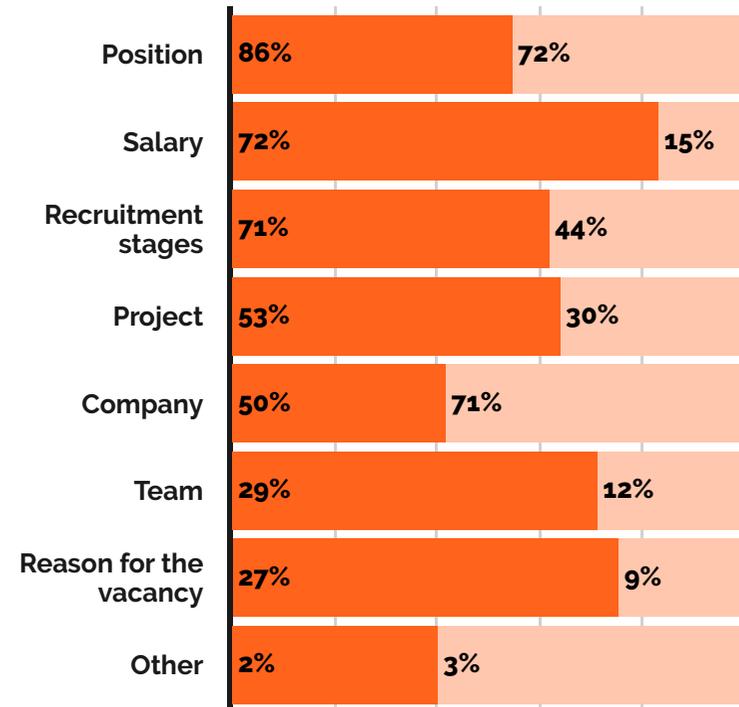
Although recruiters do pass the information regarding the position during the first contact, they do not always meet the candidate's expectations with the rest of the topics.

Only 15% of candidates receive information about the salary, even though 5 times more of them expect it. Less than a half of respondents declared that they receive information about recruitment stages during the first contact.



Every other respondent states that the first-contact information from a recruiter is insufficient.

Information during the first-contact about:



What information do you expect from the recruiter during the first contact?



What information is most often given to you during the first contact with a recruiter?

Candidates want to know who they will be in a team and what will their role be

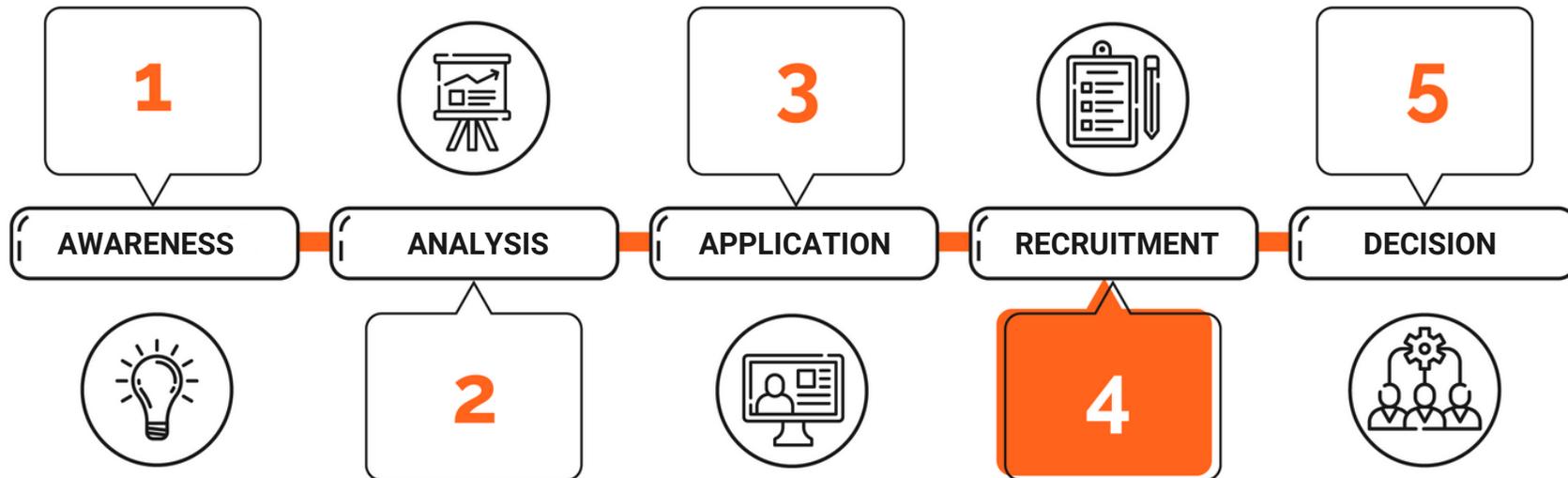
“Recruiter! Recruit people, not positions. Think who you really want to employ and if you can picture me sitting next to you at the company's cafeteria.”

PAULO

Quote from developer's recipes created by IT specialists for a survey “Candidate Experiences in IT”



Stage 4: Recruitment | Will the job interview fulfil my expectations?



I like traditional interviews and... online interviews!

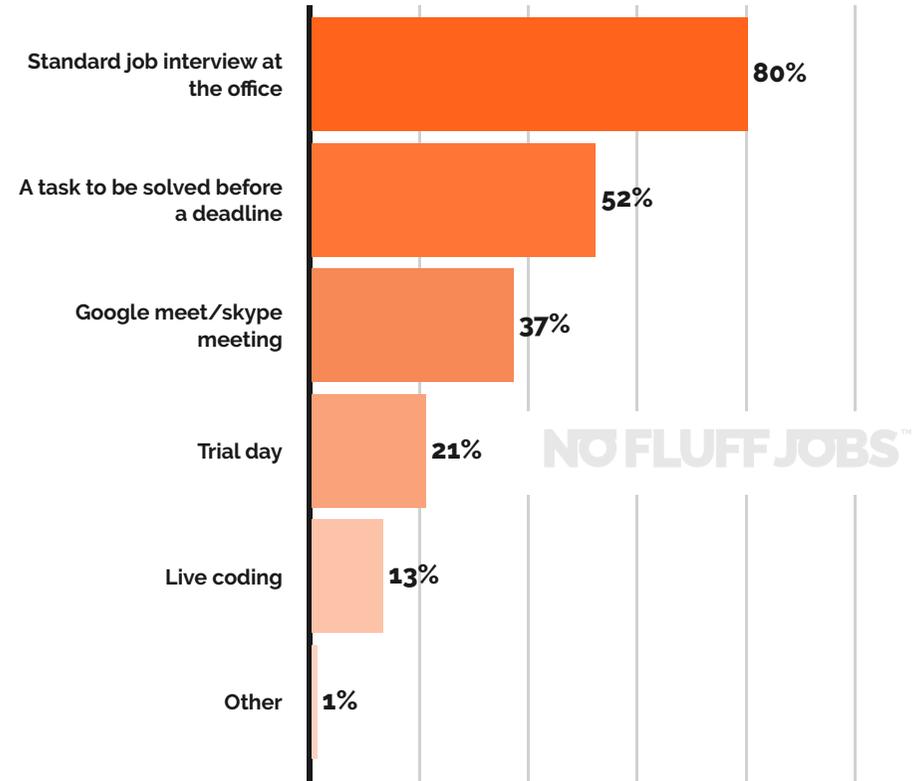
Almost 40% of IT specialists expect that the employer will meet and talk with them via one of the popular online communicators.

Respondents most often are invited for a skill-check during a job interview at the office. Only 10% of them indicate that their employer offered an online meeting.



80% of respondents state that they prefer job interviews at an office.

What forms of skill-testing do you prefer?



I want to know as much as possible about our meeting

Almost 90% of respondents pointed out that the form of the meeting is the most important information before the interview.

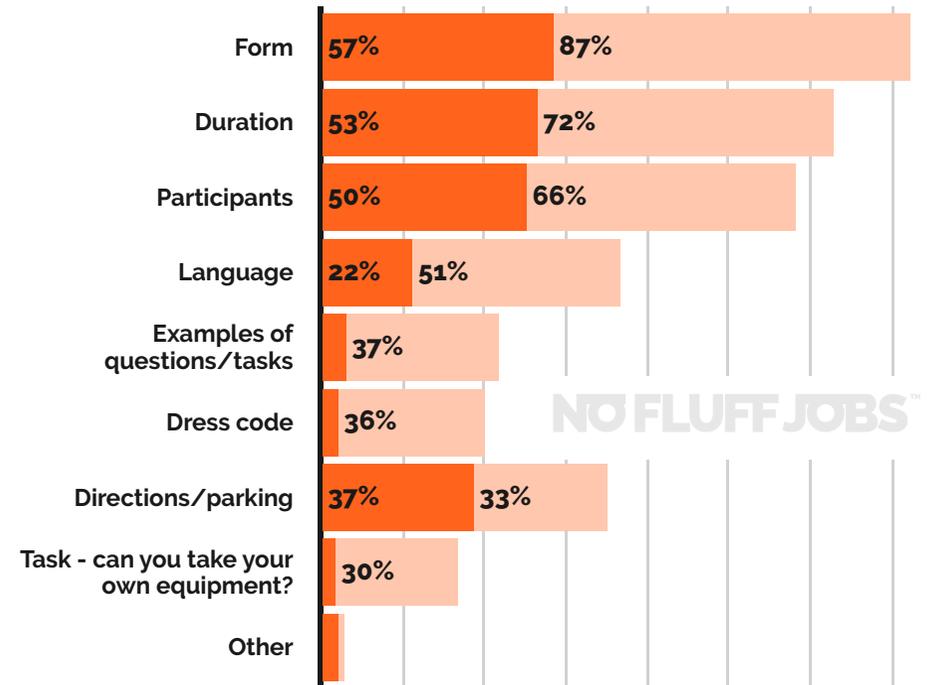
Candidates receive information about the form of the meeting from recruitments but it's not the norm. Respondents answered that they would like to know who will be participating in the meeting, how long will it last and what language will be spoken.

It appears that candidates with few years of experience (team leaders, mid and senior specialists) value the information about participants of the meeting along with its length and form.



What's interesting, every 3rd respondent would like to receive information regarding the dress code during the interview..

Relevant information in an invitation to a job interview.



What information are you given in an invitation to a job interview?



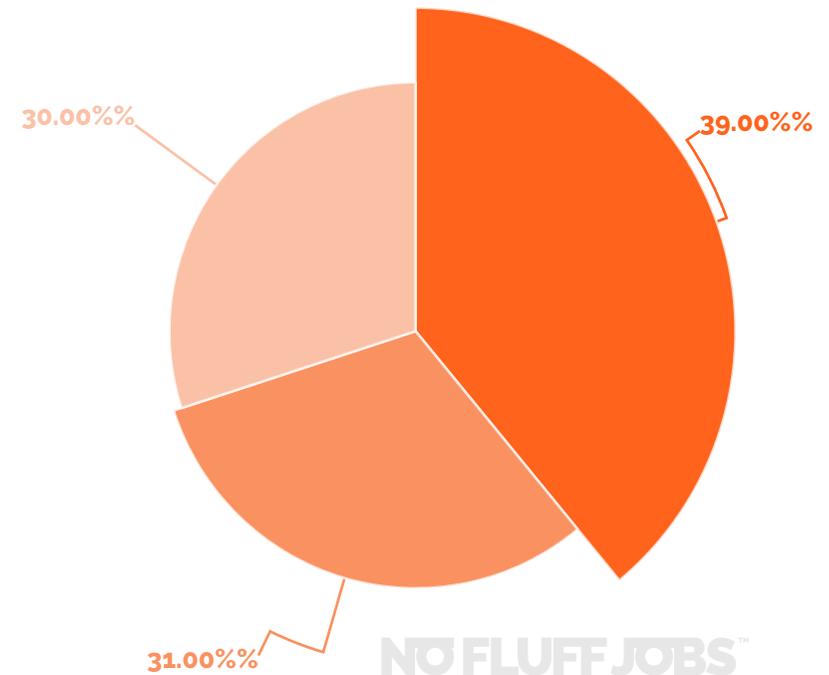
What information do you expect in an invitation to a job interview?

Put the same amount of effort into a task that I have to while solving it

Every other respondent thinks that a good way of testing skills is a homework followed by a discussion about.

1 out of 3 respondents evaluated the complexity and time-consuming aspect of tasks during recruitment as inadequate at a given recruitment stage.

How would you evaluate recruitment homework tasks?



- nie mam zdania
- wysiłek zbyt wielki w stosunku do etapu
- wymagają wysiłku adekwatnie do etapu

I would like to be taken seriously

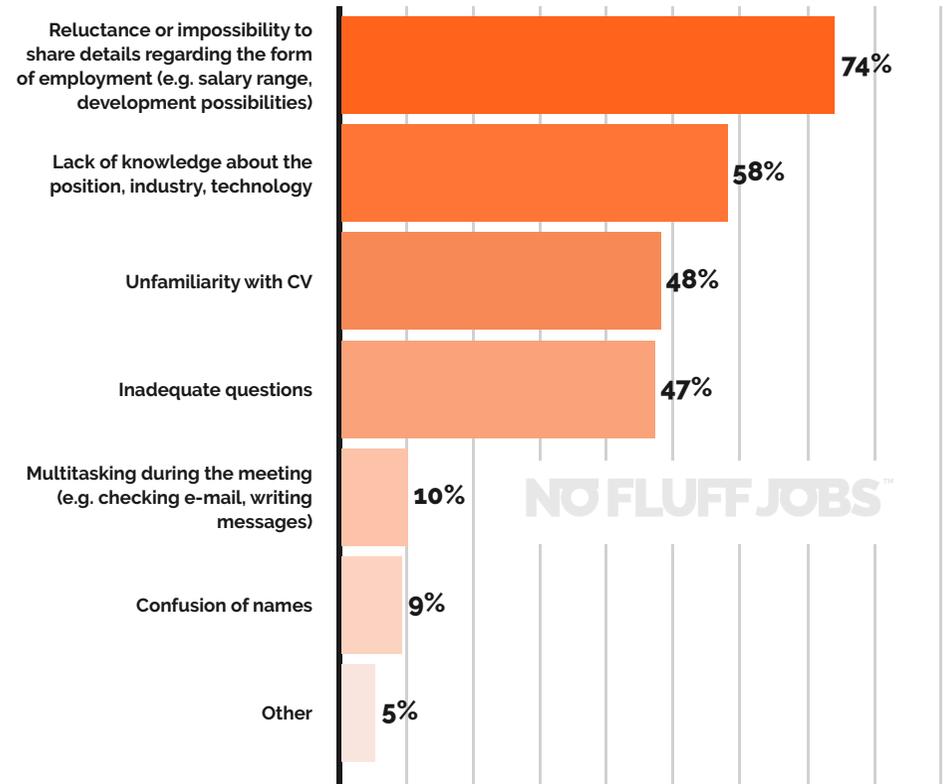
¾ respondents feel reluctance or impossibility to share details regarding employment during the interview. It concerns especially the salary and specific information about development possibilities.

More than half of respondents point out that recruiters do not know the specifics of a position or the market and thus they don't have enough knowledge about requested technologies.

Respondents have used one word to describe recruiters - **negligence**. This term covers unfamiliarity with CV, inadequate questions, multitasking during the meeting, confusion of names or genders (e.g. in an e-mail after the meeting).

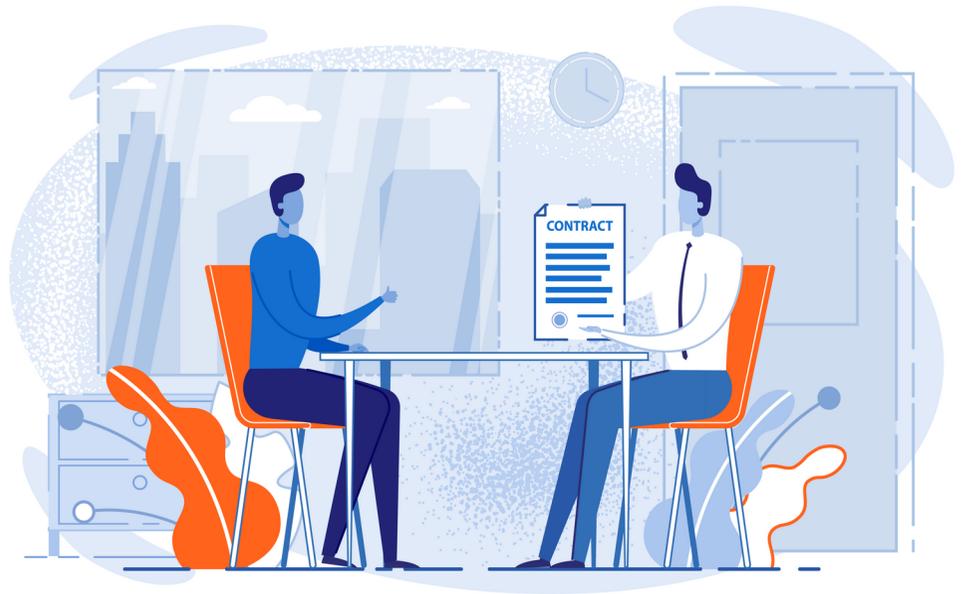
Respondents also have reservations regarding offers sent with an invitation for recruitment. They lack information and are often inadequate to the skills of a potential candidate. Moreover, they noticed inaccuracies regarding the working conditions and empty promises. Despite legal restrictions, questions about pregnancy happen as well.

The most frequent recruiters' mistakes are:

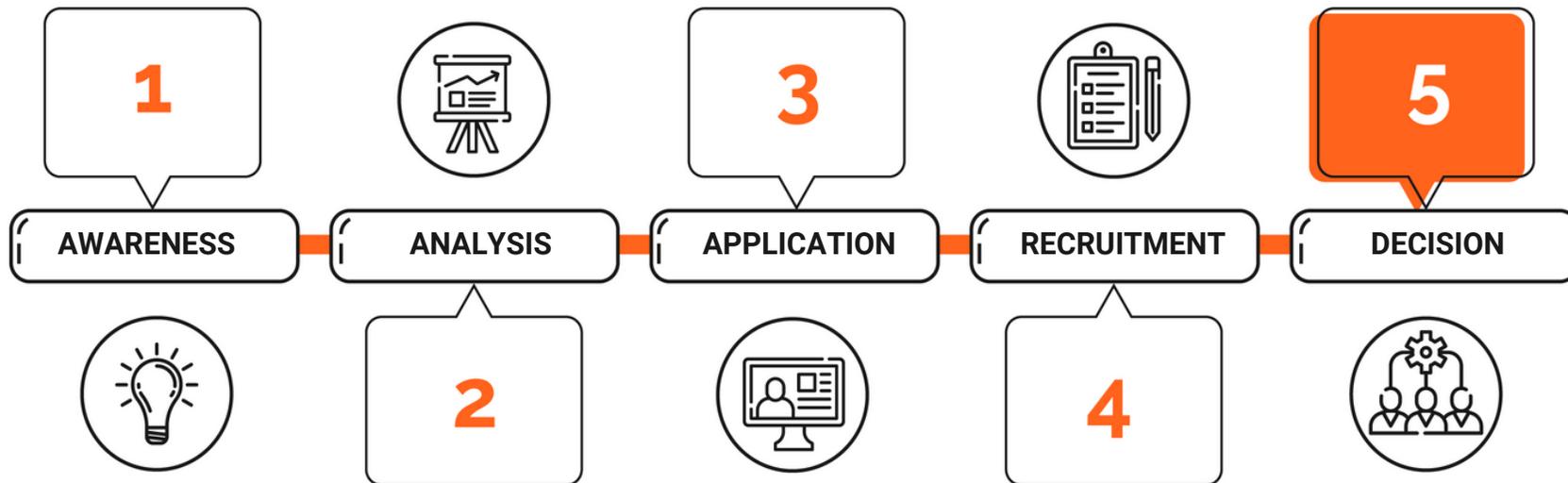


**“Without beating about the bush!
From the start to the finish line we are equal
partners. During recruitment nobody is better -
both recruiter and candidate are playing
for the same team”**

Quote from developer's recipes created
by IT specialists for a survey
“Candidate Experience in IT”



Stage 5: Decision | Give me feedback!



I'm hoping to get feedback from a recruiter!

1 out of 2 candidates on the IT market doesn't get any feedback.

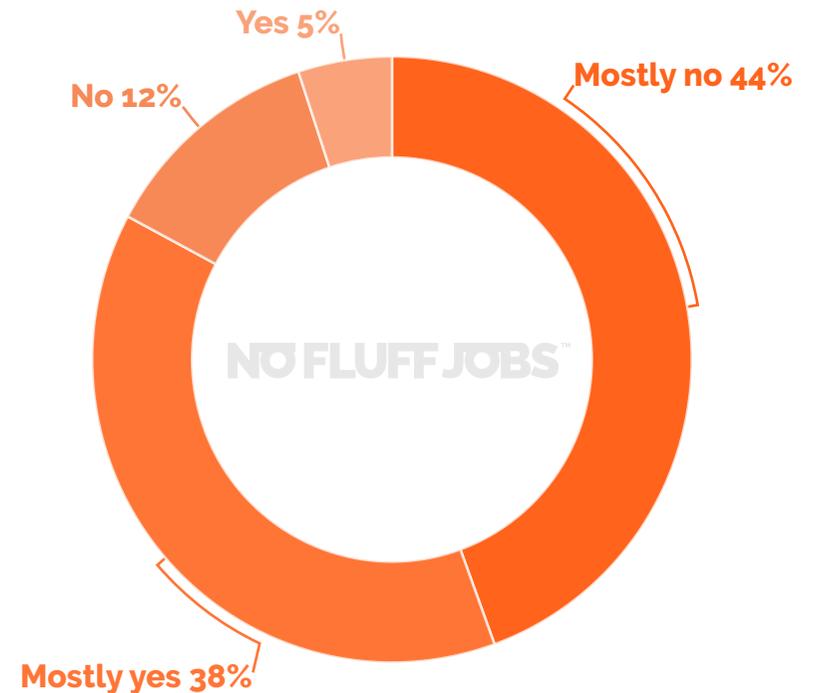
This trend is visible in every group irrespective of function and experience! Moreover, candidates don't get information about reasons for rejecting their candidature.

77% of candidates would like to know more about why their candidature was rejected.

Employers should without a doubt still work on the timely delivery of post-interview feedback.

Only **1 out of 3** candidates declared that feedback during the recruitment process was sent to them within the set deadline.

Do you receive feedback after the rejection of your candidature?





| Task possible to be solved
in **1 day**

| Live coding lasting **1 hour**
or just a little bit longer

| Feedback about the acceptance
or rejection of candidature
1 day after the meeting

I want to give you feedback too

Although there is a growing discussion regarding research of candidate experience, employers know this area only from theory.

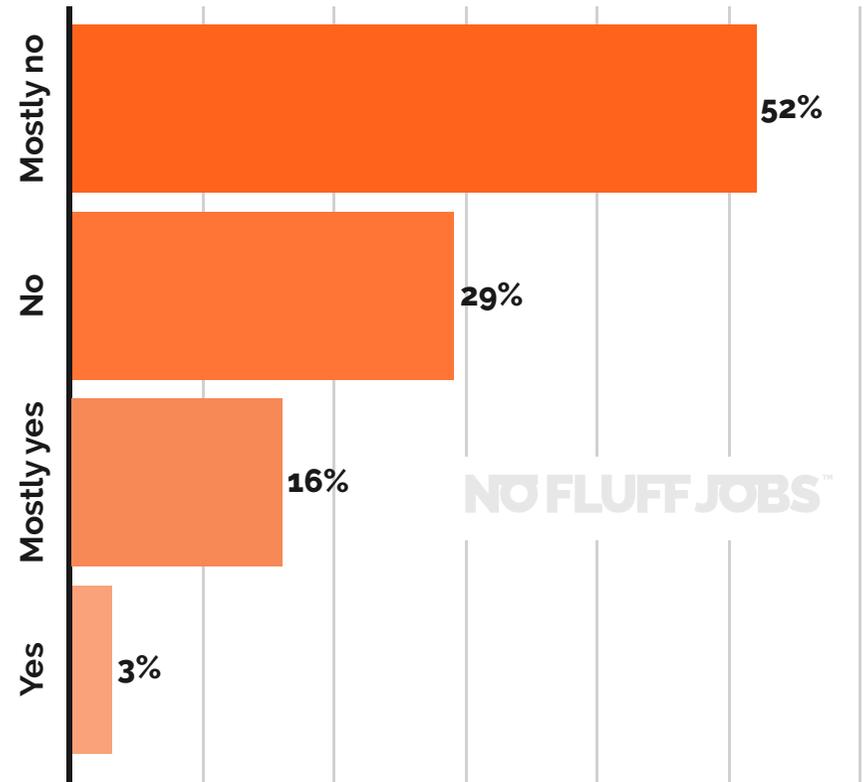
More than 81% of candidates admitted that they don't have a chance to pass their feedback regarding recruitment experiences to the employer in a structured way. When such a situation happens, respondents say that companies do not draw conclusions from this feedback.



“Feedback is a sign of respect toward candidates and allows them to prepare for further recruitments. I would like to know whether I've lost because there were candidates better than me, or whether I've missed the salary range.”

Quote from developer's recipes created by IT specialists for a survey “Candidate Experience in IT”

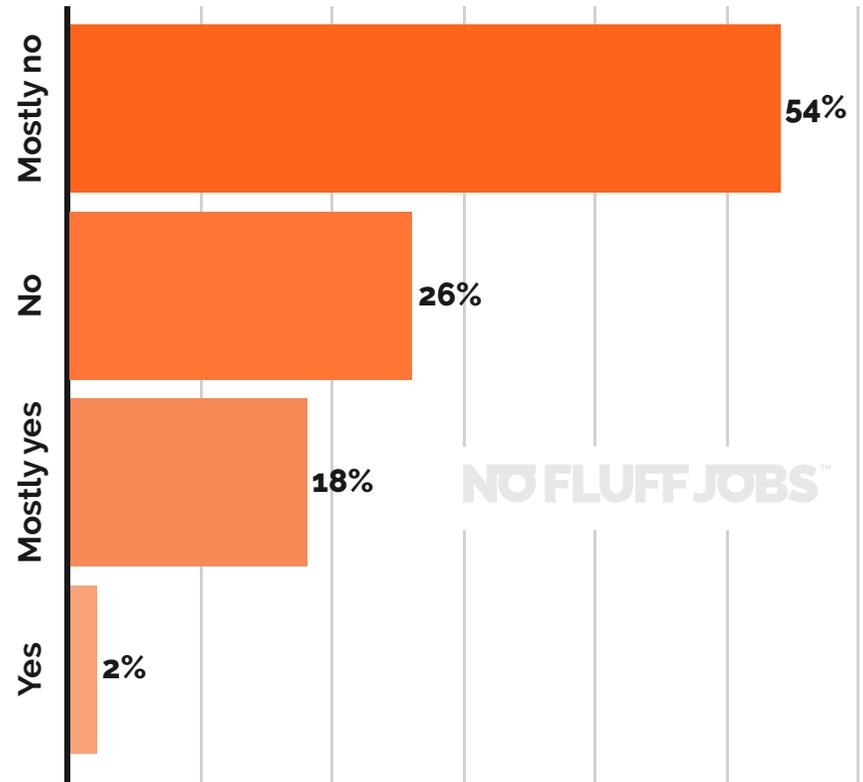
Do you have a possibility to pass feedback regarding your recruitment experiences to the company in a structured way?



I want you to draw conclusions from our recruitment

80% of respondents think that companies do not draw any conclusions from candidates' feedback and they don't optimize their recruitment processes based on such feedback.

Do you think that companies draw conclusions based on candidates' feedback and thus optimize their processes?



Without surveying recruitment experiences, you'll never make them better

8 out of 10 IT specialists declare that they can't pass feedback regarding their recruitment experiences to the employer. It is a sad proof confirming that employers do not measure and analyse recruitment experiences at their companies. How are they planning on improving them then? I think that the current state is caused most of all by the fear of evaluation and criticism from candidates. Can IT employers afford to repeat the same recruitment mistakes and lose not only current but also potential, future candidates? Even the hardest candidate's feedback should be received as the best gift. Only in this way will we be able to identify and eliminate stages or actions from the recruitment process or building candidate experience that acts to our disadvantage.



Maja Gojtowska, author of Gojtowska.com blog and a book
"Candidate experience. Still a candidate or already a client?"

You have 10 seconds to impress

It is said that a candidate has 10 seconds to impress recruiters. It appears that this rule works both ways. Companies should take care of their image all the time. It's the information about the company that candidates encounter that may be decisive for the whole recruitment process - more than 70% of candidates check opinions about the company online.

Analysis of No Fluff Jobs' user's behaviour seems to prove this tendency. Our users most often copy the name of the company or browse through the company's profile before they decide to apply for an offer. When it comes to the analysis of separate offers, it appeared that 27% more applications are sent to companies with good opinions than to those with the lack of or with negative comments. Additionally, potential candidates ask their friends about their opinion about employers.

Current employees and people who from various reasons were rejected during the recruitment process are a source of knowledge about the culture and the company for further potential candidates.

The results of the survey state clearly that the recruitment processes in IT still need some work. There is a lack of communication tailored to the level of experience of candidates and their needs. Companies try to outdo each other in the list of benefits almost in every offer, even though the candidates expect completely different data - mostly regarding salary, position, the team and development opportunities

Candidates who took part in this survey, with the use of recipes, comments and suggestions have shown their employees a clear message - "we expect respect, empathy and concrete and honest information on every stage of recruitment".

Clear information about how much they will earn, a thought-out and specified list of demands for the position, information about the structure of the team they'll join and their role in it. After analysing the experience of almost 2000 candidates from the IT market we know one thing - the effort from the employer that is put into the recruitment process will translate into the quality of received applications and the satisfaction from new employees.

Methodology and authors of the survey

Maja Gojtowska. HR Expert. She believes that companies should treat their employees as if they were their clients. From almost 12 years she advises and supports companies within the scope of image building and communication. She is a certified Design Thinking moderator. She designs image-building actions in the field of HR and employer branding. She provides strategic training and workshops for companies. She is the author of a popular blog Gojtowska.com. In September 2019, she published a book Candidate Experience. Still a candidate or already a client?

Marta Steiner. Head of Product & Marketing at No Fluff Jobs. She manages the Product, Performance and Marketing teams and conducts marketing campaigns aiming at building high standards in IT recruitment in Poland and Hungary. For 15 years she has been taking care of online products development as a Chief Product Owner in multiteam projects engaging Developer, UX, Design and other specialised teams.

Aleksandra Kubicka. HR Business Partner at No Fluff Jobs. From the start of her career, she is connected to the IT sector. She has practical experience in the field of conducting HR projects and introducing good practices to organizations. She is a big fan of decisions based on data, fluent in business language. She is dealing with soft HR daily and supports the growth of the organization by taking care of the biggest competitive leverage - people. She believes in the power of communication, trust and cooperation.

Metodologia: Based on the online survey "*Candidates' experience in IT*" created by No Fluff Jobs and Maja Gojtowska, the author of Candidate Experience. Still a candidate or already a client?, between January and February 2020. ***The number of respondents 1951.***

Analysis: Marta Steiner, Dominika Janecka,

Design and composition: Nataliia Tostanovska

Translation: Natalia Albecka

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