

A guide to reducing candidate drop-off



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Candidate drop-off measures the number of candidates who leave your application process before they have completed it. It's a critical metric for talent acquisition professionals in today's candidate-short market and must be a top priority for those serious about winning the talent war.

So, here is our guide to reducing candidate drop-offs in your recruitment process.



Benchmark your current state

The first step in addressing candidate drop-offs is understanding the current state to create your baseline. Review your recent recruitment processes and calculate the difference between the number of candidates who initiated the recruitment process and the number of applicants onboarded.

You want a decent sample size to provide this indicative data, but the actual number will depend on your recruitment volume. Aiming to review about 30–40% of your recent recruitment efforts will give you a solid picture.

A candidate drop-off rate of 80% is not uncommon.¹ It is, however, worrying. How many quality hires are you potentially missing out on if 80% of your applicants don't even complete the process?



Aim to reduce, not eliminate

It's important to understand that some organic drop-off is normal and even healthy. Some candidates will self-select out of your process because they discover that it's not the right role for them, and that's perfectly fine.

While these applicants will count towards your overall drop-off rate, it is a net positive, enabling your team to focus on those candidates who are genuinely interested in your role.

So, aim to reduce, not eliminate drop-off.



Understand the drivers

When it comes to reducing candidate drop-off, the power is in your hands.

Here are some areas you should look at to ensure you are attracting, engaging, and hiring the best candidates for the job.

The Job Description

Having a realistic and accurate job description is a must to attract and retain the most suitable candidates. But unfortunately, it's an area that derails many hiring processes before they even begin.

A realistic and accurate job description should convey more than just a laundry list of tasks. It should highlight the skills required, the opportunities for growth and development, and the culture on offer.

It should also be targeted to your ideal candidate, so it's a good idea to think carefully about who this person is, what they want out of a role and how you can help them achieve their career goals when writing the description.

60% of candidates have abandoned a job application due to its length or complexity.²



The Application Process

It's not unreasonable to expect candidates to put a little effort into their application. After all, it's their chance to showcase why they want to work for you. But it should be efficient and not cause frustration.

Taking the time to complete your own application process can be a good exercise to help you identify any possible frustration points first-hand.

Some key areas to consider are:



Efficient data entry

If a candidate is submitting a detailed resume, asking them to upload all their experience again in another format is probably unnecessary and a point of frustration. It's an area where recruitment automation platforms like impress.ai can help.

With intelligent resume parsing, the platform can take the details in candidates' unstructured resumes and parse them into a structured, storable, and consistent format that also sets you up for automated screening and assessment.



Device compatibility

Today's candidates complete applications from various channels, including social media, tablets, smartphones, and desktops. Therefore, ensuring your application and careers pages are compatible with most of the communication devices out there is critical to reaching the broadest possible talent pool.

“Promoting a job opening as mobile-friendly can increase the number of job applicants by 11.6% at the expense of jobs from other employers that aren’t mobile-friendly. In a tight labor market, having a mobile-friendly job application process can be a powerful way for employers to compete for talent.”³



The Hiring Process

A lengthy hiring process is one of the leading causes of candidate drop-off, and this is heightened when supply outstrips demand for candidates. Of course, this isn't always easy when resources are stretched, but there are some steps you can take to increase efficiencies.

Structuring your hiring process

A structured process will enable you to deliver a consistent candidate experience while saving you time and money. Today's recruitment technologies enable you to automate repetitive manual work, pre-screening candidates and keeping them in the loop with seamless automated communications. It will also lead to more accurate hiring, so it is a win-win.

Increasing collaboration between hiring managers and recruiters

It's not uncommon for recruitment responsibilities to be shared between central recruitment or HR functions and hiring managers, which can work effectively. However, setting some ground rules for how the process will work is essential.

A shared hiring platform that allows visibility and dashboarding for hiring managers and recruiters is a must. Keeping everyone in the loop in real time without the need for meetings, emails or phone calls will speed up the process and reduce the time to hire.

Understanding and setting shared goals, timeframe and criteria for hiring is a must. Getting the team together before the vacancy goes live can help ensure everyone is on the same page.

Consider building these agreed requirements into pre-screening and assessment phases with an intelligent recruitment platform. This way, you'll highlight the best talent fast.

Using video and virtual assistant interviews can save a lot of time here, allowing you to effectively interview a wider pool of candidates to get to a refined, accurate shortlist in a fraction of the time.

75% of candidates report never hearing back after submitting a job application, and 60% report not hearing back after an interview.⁴



Candidate Engagement and Communication



Being left in the dark about their progress is a leading cause of drop-off. However, it is prevalent in recruitment processes today.

With hiring challenges on the rise and limited resources, it can be hard to find time to communicate with candidates, particularly in high-volume recruitment processes. It's another area where investment in the right technologies can help.



Automating candidate communication

Look for solutions that offer quality, automated communications at key points in your process to keep everyone abreast of their progress and maintain engagement. It also pays to let unsuccessful candidates know as soon as possible. It allows them to move on to other opportunities and doesn't leave things on a sour note.



Guiding candidates through the process with intelligent virtual assistants

Today's chatbots are intelligent virtual assistants that guide candidates through the application and assessment process, answering candidate FAQs along the way. Leveraging virtual assistants ensures your recruitment process is always on, responding to candidates in real time whenever they have a question. This keeps your recruitment process moving, and your candidate engaged intelligently from start to finish.



Meet JIM, Asia's first virtual recruiter who is reimagining the candidate experience for DBS Bank, reducing time to hire by 75% and saving up to 40 staff hours each month.



Providing candidate feedback

Candidate feedback is another key area to consider. While you can't give feedback to every single applicant, you should be looking to provide it to those who are shortlisted but ultimately unsuccessful. Not only does this support the candidate's growth, but it also immediately boosts their engagement with your organization.

52% of candidate given job-related feedback by the end of the day they interviewed said they were more likely to increase their relationship with the company.⁵



Employer Branding

Employer branding has become a hot topic in recruitment and HR circles in recent years, and for good reason. Today's candidates want to know about your organization, its culture, and its values before applying.

A strong employer brand can reduce the cost per hire by as much as 50%, and a negative reputation can cost a company as much as 10% more per hire.⁶

And this is important for the hiring organization too. Alignment across culture and values is critical to finding and retaining the best-fit candidates.

Almost 30% of job seekers have left a job within the first 90 days of starting (indicating misalignment between the candidate and the employer brand).⁷

Some areas to consider:

- Brand visibility: Prospective applicants should be able to find out more about your brand online easily before they apply.
- Social media: Your social media properties should be talking to your prospective employees as well as your customers.



**68%
of Millennials,**



**54%
of Gen Xers**



**and 48%
of Boomers**

indicate they visit an employer's social media properties specifically to evaluate the employer's brand.⁸

- Culture insights: Every major touchpoint with prospective employees, from the job advertisement to company career pages and social media sites, should tell a consistent story, and employee voices can amplify your message.

Employee voice is three times more credible than the CEO's when it comes to talking about working conditions in that company.⁹



The time to act is now



With little sign that the talent shortage will end any time soon, savvy organizations must act now. A positive candidate experience is a must to reduce candidate drop-off and increase competitive advantage in a challenging recruitment market.

So start now, taking these proactive steps to reduce your candidate drop-out:

1. Audit your existing candidate experience to identify bottlenecks and frustration points, paying close attention to the drivers listed above.
2. Commit to continuous improvement. Your candidate experience can't be set-and-forget if you want to get the most out of it.
3. Leverage insights to redesign your process, considering the role intelligent recruitment platforms can play in improving outcomes while saving time and money.

Need expert advice?

Talk to the team at impress.ai. We've reimaged the end-to-end recruitment process for organizations of all sizes and industries, from large public sector clients to agile consultancy firms, helping them source, engage, and hire top talent accurately.

Resource Links:

1. Glassdoor, <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/5-keys-driving-candidate-experience/>
2. Society of Human Resources Management, <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/technology/pages/study-most-job-seekers-abandon-online-job-applications.aspx>
3. Glassdoor, <https://www.glassdoor.com/research/app/uploads/sites/2/2019/06/Mobile-Job-Search-1.pdf>
4. Human Capital Institute, <https://www.hci.org/blog/statistics-rethink-your-candidate-experience-or-ruin-your-brand>
5. Talent Board research as quoted by LinkedIn, <https://www.linkedin.com/business/talent/blog/talent-acquisition/strategies-to-improve-candidate-experience#:~:text=important%20for%20candidates%3A-,52%25,-who%20were%20given>
6. Glassdoor, <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/resources/hr-and-recruiting-stats/>
7. Glassdoor, <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/resources/hr-and-recruiting-stats/>
8. Glassdoor, <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/resources/hr-and-recruiting-stats/>
9. Glassdoor, <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/resources/hr-and-recruiting-stats/>



About **impress.ai**

impress.ai is a leading end-to-end recruitment SaaS platform provider with a focus on making accurate hiring easier. Powered by AI, impress.ai's platform enables businesses to streamline their end-to-end recruitment process. impress.ai helps enterprises screen, engage, and hire the best talent with accuracy, consistency, & efficiency. We have partnered with leading businesses globally, offering 24/7 recruitment capability, helping them qualify the best candidates, increasing their hiring efficiency, and improving employee retention while consistently delivering superior candidate experience.

Headquartered in Singapore, impress.ai has a regional presence in the USA, Australia, India, and Indonesia. impress.ai was accredited by IMDA under the Accreditation@SG:D programme and has won 'Silver' in the Most Promising Innovation category at SG:D Techblazer Awards 2020.

Interested in more information?

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