

greenhouse

2025 Workforce and hiring report



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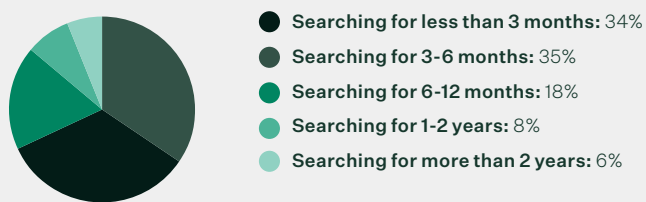
The job search reality

Greenhouse surveyed 6,000 workers across the US, UK and Ireland and found 37% are job searching. In contrast, 32% are not actively job searching or are focused on their current job and casually reviewing opportunities (31%).

The report's findings focus on the 2,200+ workers who were actively job searching.



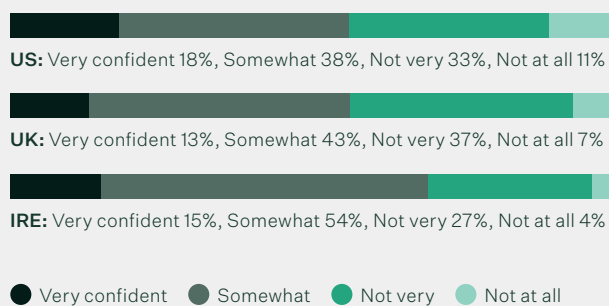
Length of job search among active job seekers



Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

Two-thirds of active job seekers (69%) have been looking for less than 6 months.

Candidate confidence in the current job market



Ireland leads: 69% confident in the job market vs 56% in the UK and the US.

The US is most pessimistic: 44% lack confidence (highest of the three countries).

Winning in a cutthroat market

7 in 10

Despite continued confidence, nearly 7 in 10 candidates across all markets say the job market is extremely or very competitive (US: 66%, UK: 68%, Ireland: 63%), with more candidates than available positions.

7%

Across all three markets, only 7% of job seekers think the market favors candidates - the rest face increasing competition for roles.

Job seeker sentiment on job market competition



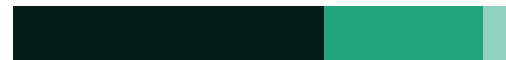
United States:

High competition 66%, Moderate 27%, Low 7%



United Kingdom:

High competition 69%, Moderate 25%, Low 6%



Ireland:

High competition 63%, Moderate 32%, Low 5%

● High competition ● Moderate ● Low



Global economic uncertainty

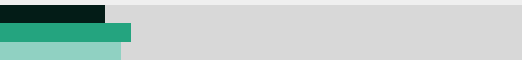
1 in 5

Only 1 in 5 US workers feels secure in their job as economic uncertainty spreads across industries.

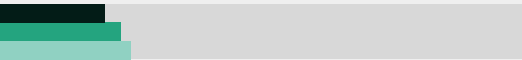
3 in 10

Nearly 3 in 10 face direct job threats in the US: 28% have either been told their role may be affected (15%) or have already faced elimination/reduced hours (13%). Only 1 in 4 Irish (25%) and British (23%) employees feel they have job stability in current economic conditions.

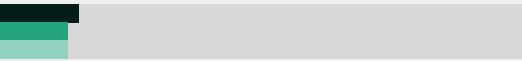
How economic uncertainty has impacted the employment situation of workers



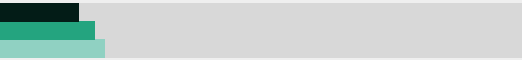
Industry showing signs of potential change:
US 20%, UK 25%, IRE 23%



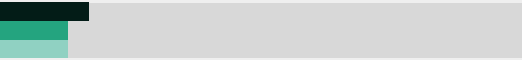
Position appears stable at this time:
US 20%, UK 23%, IRE 25%



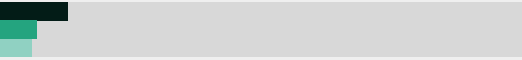
Role has benefited from recent economic conditions: US 15%, UK 13%, IRE 13%



Employer indicated role may be affected:
US 15%, UK 18%, IRE 20%



Can't assess job situation:
US 17%, UK 13%, IRE 13%



Position eliminated or faced reduced hours:
US 13%, UK 7%, IRE 6%

● US ● UK ● IRE

Job market obstacles

United States

42% of US candidates cite salary differences as their biggest job search challenge. In the US, a primary challenge for Gen Z (44%) was the skills gap, while the leading challenge for Boomers is discrimination (44%).

United Kingdom

Misalignment over salary is also the biggest challenge in the UK, with 43% of candidates stating that pay expectations didn't match the salary range offered. This challenge was significant for Gen Z (49%), Millennials (45%), Gen X (40%), and Boomers (37%).

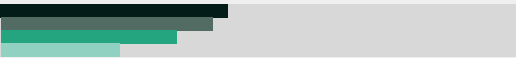
Ireland

For men in Ireland, the top challenge in job searching is the skills gap (40%).

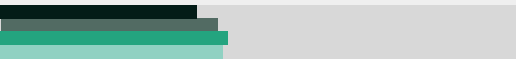


Job market obstacles

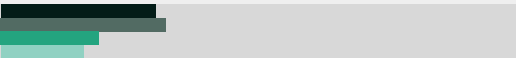
The challenges facing Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X and Boomers across the US job search



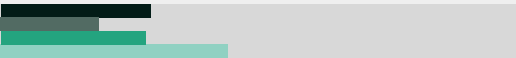
Skills gaps:
Gen Z 44%, Millennial 41%, Gen X 34%, Boomer 23%



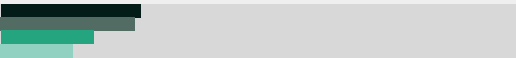
Salary discrepancies:
Gen Z 38%, Millennial 42%, Gen X 44%, Boomer 43%



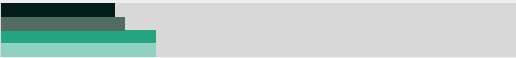
Limited industry knowledge:
Gen Z 30%, Millennial 32%, Gen X 19%, Boomer 16%



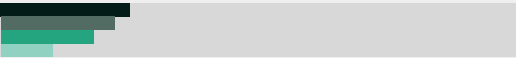
Discrimination:
Gen Z 29%, Millennial 19%, Gen X 28%, Boomer 44%



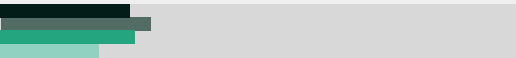
Family concerns:
Gen Z 27%, Millennial 26%, Gen X 18%, Boomer 14%



Lengthy application process:
Gen Z 22%, Millennial 24%, Gen X 30%, Boomer 30%



Insufficient experience:
Gen Z 25%, Millennial 22%, Gen X 18%, Boomer 10%



Misaligned work flexibility:
Gen Z 25%, Millennial 29%, Gen X 26%, Boomer 19%

● Gen Z ● Millennials ● Gen X ● Boomer

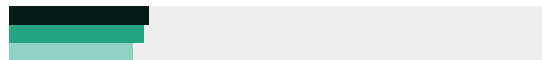
AI's impact on job hunting

26%

Over one-quarter (26%) of US job seekers say AI has increased competition, making it harder to stand out.



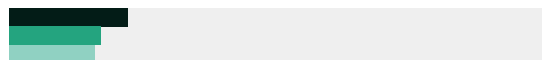
AI impact on job search



Made it harder to stand out due to increased competition: US 26%, UK 25%, IRE 23%



Use AI for interview prep: US 45%, UK 50%, IRE 42%



Use AI agents to submit applications:
US 22%, UK 17%, IRE 16%

● US ● UK ● IRE

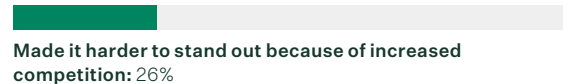
How AI has affected job search experience in the US



Provided tools that assist their job search process: 31%



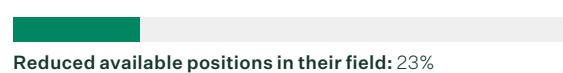
Helped discover job opportunities they wouldn't have found otherwise: 27%



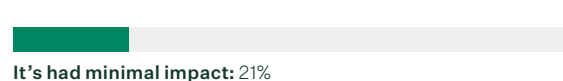
Made it harder to stand out because of increased competition: 26%



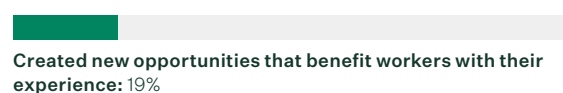
Made job searching more stressful due to new skill expectations: 25%



Reduced available positions in their field: 23%



It's had minimal impact: 21%



Created new opportunities that benefit workers with their experience: 19%



Other: 1%

Candidates turn to AI tools

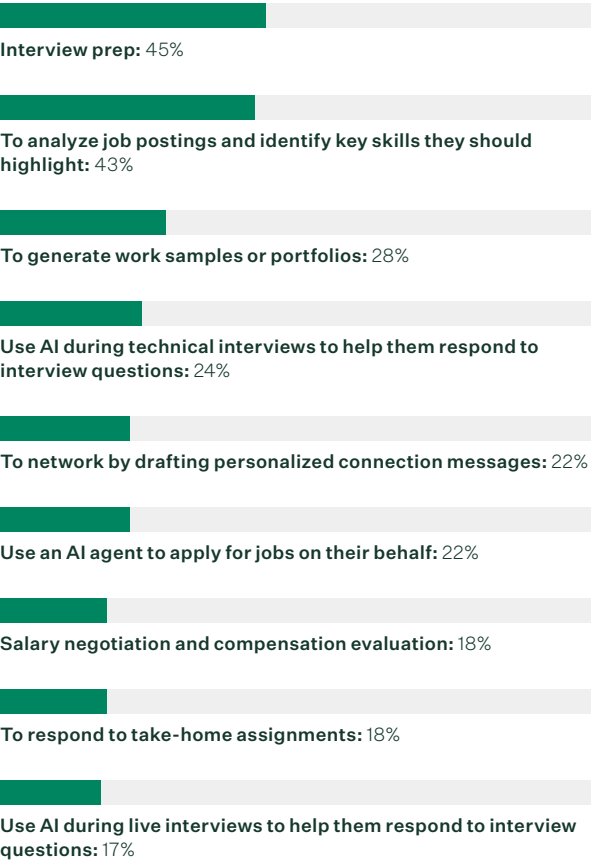
22%

Simultaneously, 22% of job seekers in the US are using AI agents to submit applications on their behalf.

40%

Notably, 40% of US Gen Z candidates use AI to generate work samples or portfolios compared to Millennials (30%), Gen X (22%) and Boomers (21%).

How candidates are using AI in the job search in the US



The AI ethics problem

1 in 10

More than one in every ten US job seekers (13%) views AI use in live job interviews as acceptable, regardless of company policy. Over one-fifth (21%) of Gen Z candidates share this view.

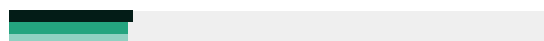
27%

Despite companies being worried about AI cheating, over one-quarter (27%) of US candidates say they've never seen or received an employer policy on using AI tools.

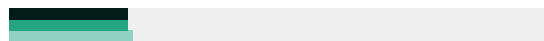
How candidates view using AI to help during live job interviews



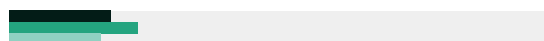
Completely acceptable in all circumstances:
US 13%, UK 9%, IRE 12%



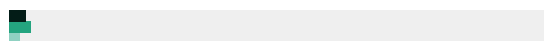
Acceptable only when employers explicitly permit it: US 23%, UK 22%, IRE 22%



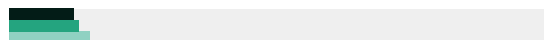
Theoretically acceptable, but choose not to use it: US 22%, UK 22%, IRE 23%



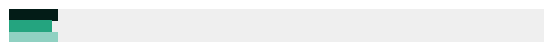
Unacceptable - it's dishonest, and they don't engage in this practice: US 19%, UK 24%, IRE 17%



Have used AI assistance during interviews despite ethical concerns: US 3%, UK 4%, IRE 2%

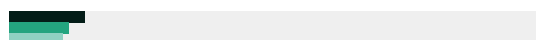


Undecided about the ethics of using AI during interviews: US 12%, UK 13%, IRE 15%

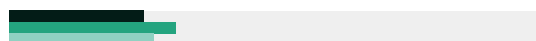


Job candidates should have the same tech options as employers: US 9%, UK 8%, IRE 9%

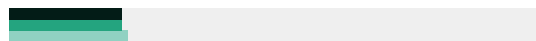
Candidates' experience with AI policies in the job interview



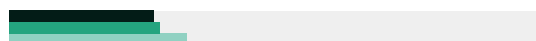
Most employers have explicit, clear policies:
US 14%, UK 11%, IRE 10%



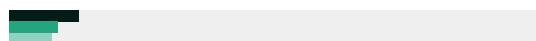
Some employers have vague policies:
US 25%, UK 31%, IRE 27%



Few employers address AI at all:
US 21%, UK 21%, IRE 22%



No, they've never seen an employer policy on this: US 27%, UK 28%, IRE 33%



Not applicable to their experience:
US 13%, UK 9%, IRE 8%

● US ● UK ● IRE

Candidate tricks

45%

Nearly half of US (45%) job seekers embellish their qualifications on resumes to improve their chances of getting noticed.

One-third (32%) of candidates have added AI skills they haven't actually mastered.

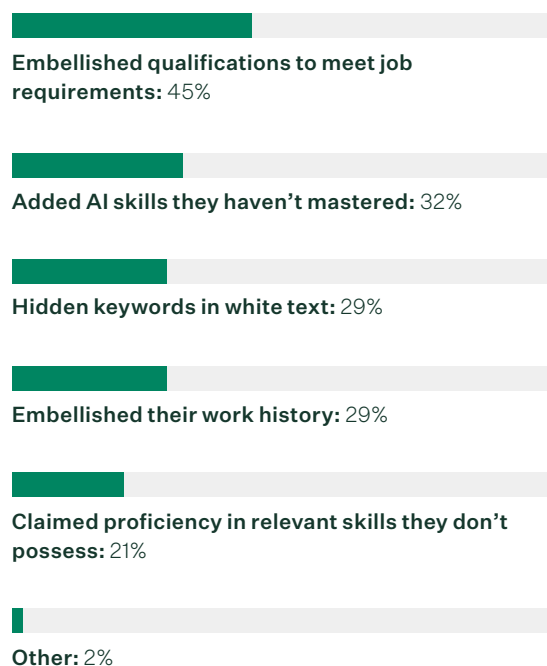
29%

29% have exaggerated their work history, while the same percentage use hidden keyword tactics to game ATS systems.

36%

Gen Z leads the deception with 36% of US candidates using the white font trick to bypass applicant tracking systems.

How US job seekers have altered skills on their resumes



Resume alterations

59%

Over half (59%) of US candidates have altered their resumes with age-related modifications like removing older work experience (57%) being the most common tactic.

30%

Nearly one-third (30%) of candidates from historically underrepresented groups in the US modify their name to sound less ethnic.

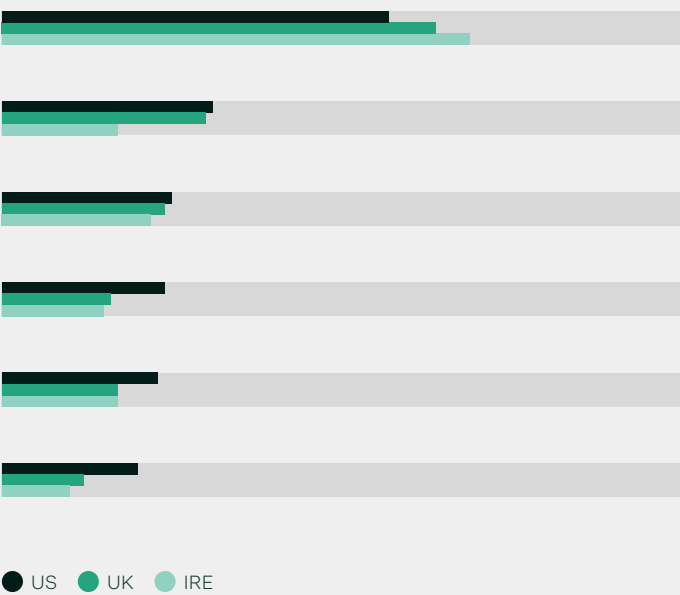
UK

UK candidates remove older work experience at higher rates, with around two-thirds of Irish (69%) and UK (64%) candidates taking this step compared to 57% in the US.

2x

US candidates hide employment gaps at nearly double the rate, 31% compared to just 17% in Ireland, suggesting different labor market pressures.

How candidates are altering their resumes by market



Removed older work experience:

US 57%, UK 64%, IRE 69%

Hide employment gaps:

US 31%, UK 30%, IRE 17%

Downplayed senior responsibilities to avoid overqualification:

US 25%, UK 24%, IRE 22%

Modified name to sound less ethnic:

US 24%, UK 16%, IRE 15%

Removed address to hide location/neighborhood:

US 23%, UK 17%, IRE 17%

Hidden graduation dates to mask age:

US 20%, UK 12%, IRE 10%

● US ● UK ● IRE

The friction driving application abandonment

Nearly half (46%) of US candidates abandon job applications because they're forced to manually re-enter resume information.

In the UK, application friction drives widespread abandonment, with 42% citing manual re-entry, 41% frustrated by multi-page apps that don't save progress and 30% deterred by strict formatting requirements.

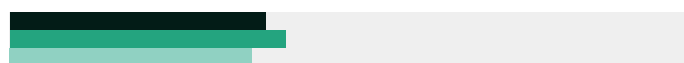
In the US, one-third (31%) of job seekers abandon applications with no autofill, with Gen Z leading the exodus at 44% abandonment rates.

In Ireland, the same pattern emerges - 42% abandon due to manual re-entry, 36% due to unsaved progress and 29% due to broken autofill features.

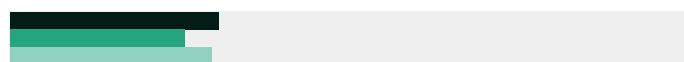
What makes job seekers abandon applications?



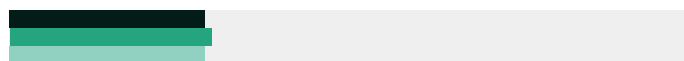
Re-entering resume information manually:
US 46%, UK 42%, IRE 42%



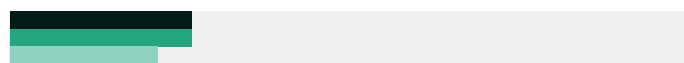
Multi-page applications that don't save progress:
US 38%, UK 41%, IRE 36%



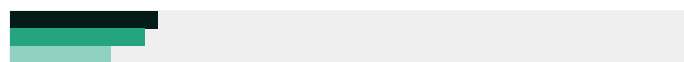
Broken autofill features:
US 31%, UK 26%, IRE 30%



Reformatting info to meet strict requirements:
US 29%, UK 30%, IRE 29%



No application status tracking:
US 27%, UK 27%, IRE 22%



Creating duplicate profiles on platforms:
US 22%, UK 20%, IRE 15%

● US ● UK ● IRE

Employers cut communications without warning

Nearly 2 in every 3 US candidates (63%) were ghosted after a job interview.

Two-thirds (66%) of job seekers from historically underrepresented groups in the US experience post-interview ghosting compared to 60% of white candidates.

Among those who've been ghosted in the UK, the most common points are after one-way interviews (25%), after final interviews (24%) and after an interview with a hiring manager (24%).

In the US, over three-quarters (78%) of Gen Z have been ghosted, significantly more compared to Millennials (65%), Gen X (58%) and Boomers (55%).

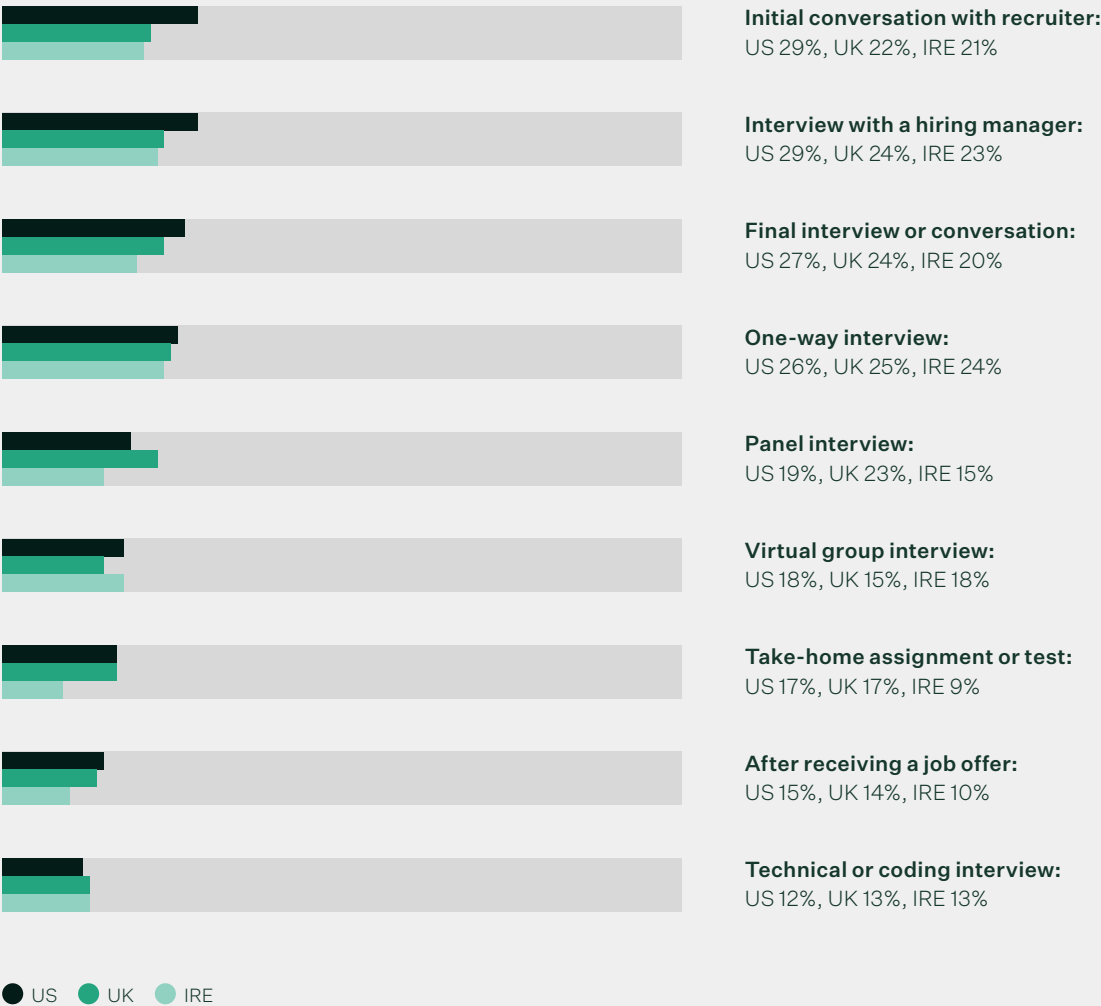
In the UK, 56% of candidates have been ghosted after a job interview, whereas 66% of candidates have been ghosted post-interview in Ireland.

The generational disparity in who gets ghosted and who doesn't also exists in the UK: 71% of Gen Z have been "left on read" – or completely ignored – by prospective employers compared to Millennials (59%), Gen X (49%) and Boomers (54%).



Employers cut communications without warning

Where in the hiring process job seekers say they've been ghosted



Applicants walk away frustrated

50%

50% of US candidates have ghosted employers during the hiring process, a 14 percentage point increase since October 2023.

24%

The most common stages US candidates ghost employers were after poor communication or long delays from the employer (24%), after a poor interview experience (23%) and after being told the salary (22%).

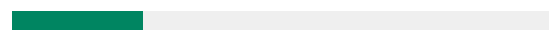
73%

73% of Gen Z candidates in the US have ghosted employers.

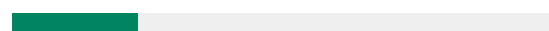
51%

Over half (51%) of Irish candidates have ghosted an employer.

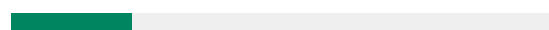
The stages where US candidates have ghosted employers



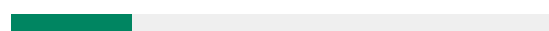
After poor communication or long delays from the employer: 24%



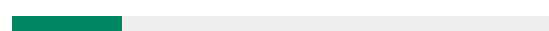
After a poor interview experience: 23%



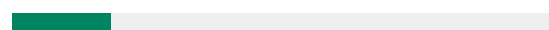
After they were told the salary: 22%



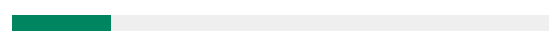
After finding a better opportunity elsewhere: 22%



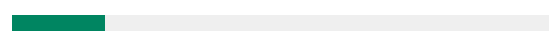
After receiving a job offer: 20%



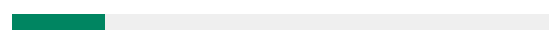
After discovering information about the company's culture: 18%



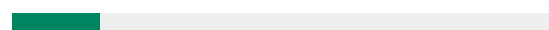
After learning about an inadequate benefits package: 18%



Upon learning the scope of work: 17%



Upon being told the work model (hybrid, in-office, remote) was different from what was advertised: 17%



After receiving a take-home assignment: 16%

The referral edge

Application method

In the age of AI, US candidates rank direct company applications as the most effective way to job search, closely followed by referrals as the second most effective method, while cold email outreach and mass applications are the least effective strategies.

Referral benefits

Speed and success are the top referral benefits - around 40% of candidates across all markets report faster response times and higher interview success rates when using referrals.

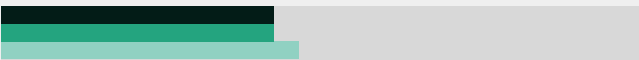
Salary offer

In the US, Gen Z say referrals lead to higher initial salary offers (35%) compared to Millennials (29%), Gen X (21%) and Boomers (15%).

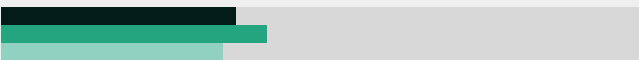


The referral edge

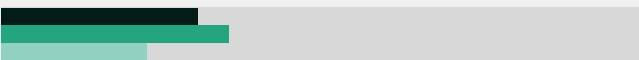
How candidates have benefited from referrals by market



Faster response times:
US 43%, UK 43%, IRE 47%



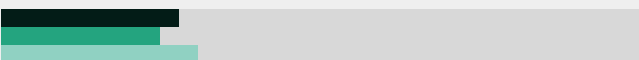
Higher interview-to-application success rates: US 37%, UK 42%, IRE 35%



Better role information upfront:
US 31%, UK 36%, IRE 23%



Higher salary offers:
US 28%, UK 27%, IRE 28%



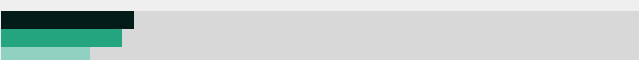
More personalized experience:
US 28%, UK 25%, IRE 31%



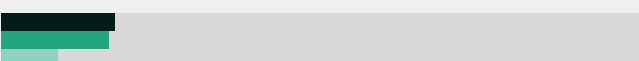
Access to unpublished jobs:
US 27%, UK 25%, IRE 16%



Direct hiring manager contact:
US 27%, UK 21%, IRE 16%



Simplified applications:
US 21%, UK 19%, IRE 14%



Better feedback:
US 18%, UK 17%, IRE 9%

● US ● UK ● IRE

Mismatched compensation expectations

In the US, over one-quarter of Millennials (28%) and Boomers (29%) who received job offers said they were for roles matching their experience but with lower compensation.

Gen Z gets the best deal in the US - 26% receive offers matching their experience with higher pay, outpacing all other generations.

Boomers face the worst lowball tactics in the US, with 21% receiving offers below their experience level with reduced pay, compared to just 11-14% of other generations.

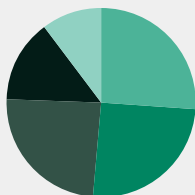
Pay compression hits experienced workers hardest. While 25-29% of Millennials, Gen X and Boomers get underpaid for experience-appropriate roles, only 24% of Gen Z face this issue.



Mismatched compensation expectations

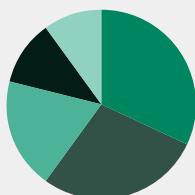
How compensation for offered roles stacks against each generation in the US

Gen Z



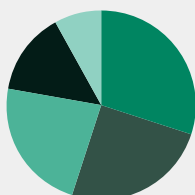
- Below their experience with lower pay: 14%
- Matches their experience with lower pay: 24%
- Matches their experience with similar pay: 25%
- Matches their experience with higher pay: 26%
- Above their experience with higher pay: 10%

Millennial



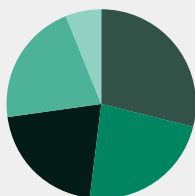
- Below their experience with lower pay: 11%
- Matches their experience with lower pay: 28%
- Matches their experience with similar pay: 32%
- Matches their experience with higher pay: 19%
- Above their experience with higher pay: 10%

Gen X



- Below their experience with lower pay: 14%
- Matches their experience with lower pay: 25%
- Matches their experience with similar pay: 30%
- Matches their experience with higher pay: 23%
- Above their experience with higher pay: 8%

Boomer



- Below their experience with lower pay: 21%
- Matches their experience with lower pay: 29%
- Matches their experience with similar pay: 23%
- Matches their experience with higher pay: 21%
- Above their experience with higher pay: 6%

Job postings that don't match reality

United States

Nearly three in every four (72%) job seekers in the US have experienced a “bait and switch” during the hiring process.

In the US, over one-third of Millennials (36%) and Boomers (35%) say the salary range advertised was significantly higher than what was offered.

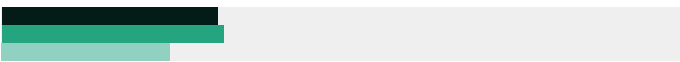
Ireland

In Ireland, nearly half (46%) of Gen Z candidates report that the benefits package was less comprehensive than initially presented, highlighting how younger workers face systematic overselling.

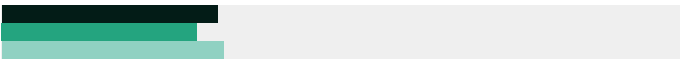
All markets

Salary deception spans all markets, affecting 32% of US candidates, 33% of UK candidates and 25% of Irish candidates.

Top “bait and switch” tactics job seekers faced in the hiring process



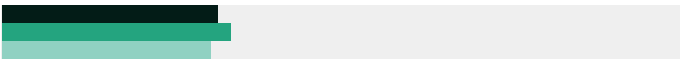
Salary range higher than actual offer:
US 32%, UK 33%, IRE 25%



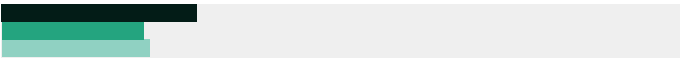
Job duties different from what was advertised:
US 32%, UK 29%, IRE 33%



Benefits package less comprehensive than promised:
US 32%, UK 34%, IRE 28%



Work hours or travel requirements changed:
US 32%, UK 34%, IRE 31%



Job title or level downgraded:
US 29%, UK 21%, IRE 22%



Remote work flexibility limited or withdrawn:
US 28%, UK 30%, IRE 30%

● US ● UK ● IRE

Discrimination persists in the workplace

Questions

Half of candidates face discriminatory questions during the interview process - the US leading with 53%, followed closely by the UK and Ireland, which both sit at 49%.

Age

Age discrimination dominates across all markets, affecting 31% in the US, 28% in the UK and 18% in Ireland.

Generation

Boomers in the US face nearly six times the age discrimination (61%) compared to Gen Z (11%), highlighting a critical generational bias gap.

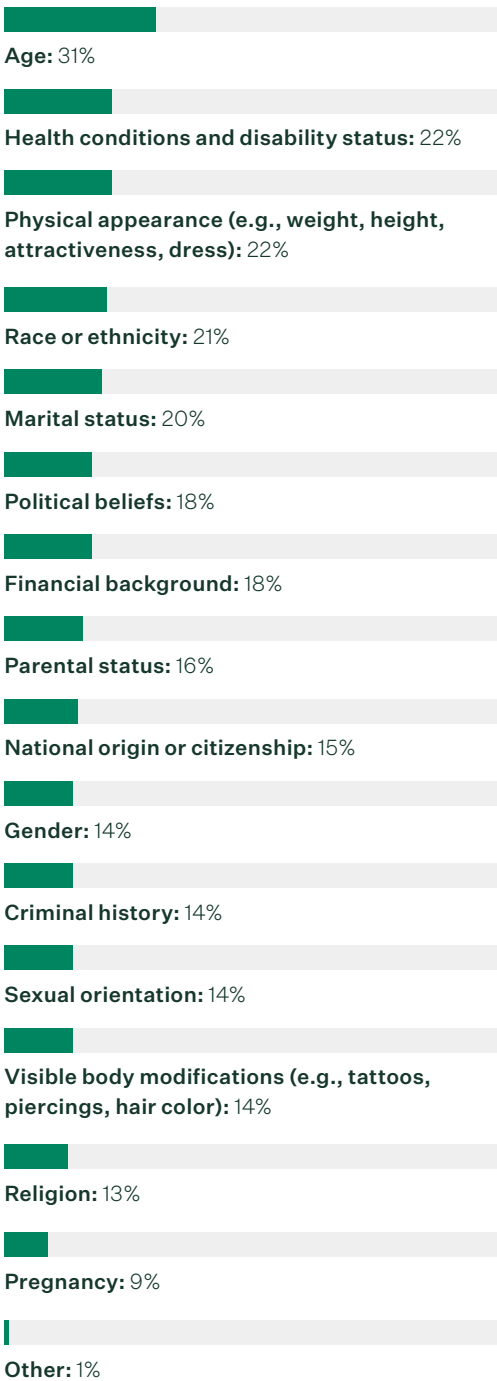
Appearance

Physical appearance and health status questions are pervasive, with 22% of US candidates being asked inappropriate questions about appearance and disability status.

Ireland

Ireland shows unique patterns with health/disability questions (21%) being most common, while parental status questions (19%) rank higher than age discrimination.

The top discriminatory and biased interview questions candidates in the US face are based on:



Skeptical interview topics raise questions

Over one-third (36%) of US candidates say employers have been concerned about their work history, revealing widespread employer skepticism about candidate backgrounds.

In the US, Boomers (47%) and Gen X (39%) face scrutiny over technical competence, while Gen Z (39%) and Millennials (36%) are questioned about work-life balance expectations, highlighting how different generations face different types of interview bias.

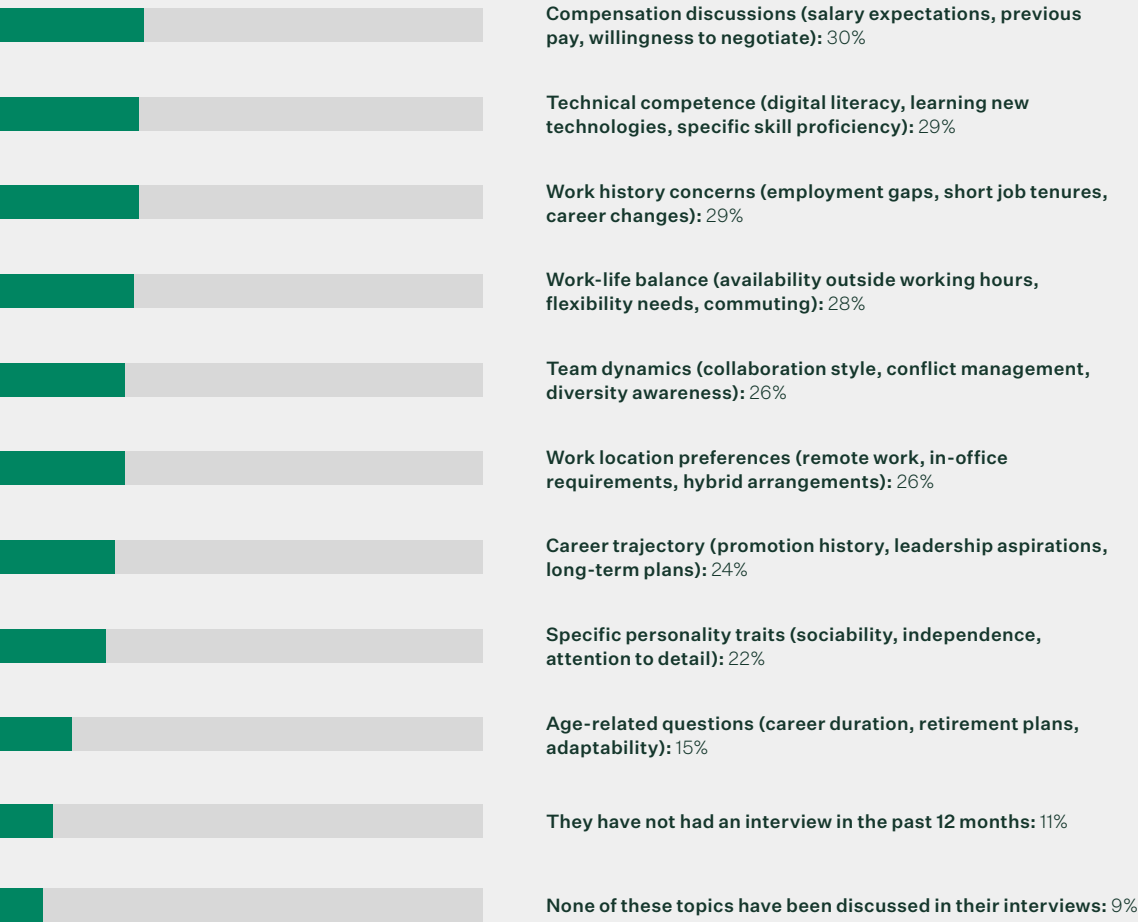
In the UK, work-life balance expectations (42%) top the list of most common interview questions, followed by technical competence (40%) and compensation expectations (35%).

In Ireland, generational interview focus varies - Gen Z faces technical competence questions (43%), Millennials get compensation discussions (43%) while Gen X experience more work history concerns (39%).



Skeptical interview topics raise questions

The most common job interview topics in the U.S.



What workers prioritize today

41%

In the US, 41% of women consider remote work a major factor or a deal-breaker, compared to 30% of men.

32%

In Ireland (32%) and the UK (30%), the largest preference is for hybrid arrangements.

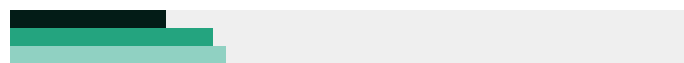
15%

Gen X (15%) and Boomers (23%) prefer working in the office with colleagues more than Gen Z (10%) and Millennials (8%).

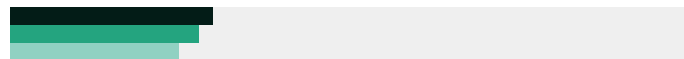
9-12%

In all three markets, the majority of candidates want some form of remote flexibility, with only 9-12% preferring full in-person work.

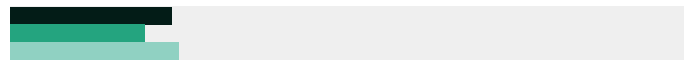
How candidates view remote work preferences by market



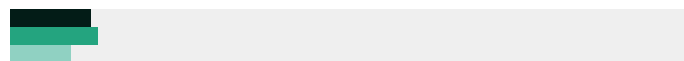
Prefer a hybrid model, a mix of remote and in-office work:
US 23%, UK 30%, IRE 32%



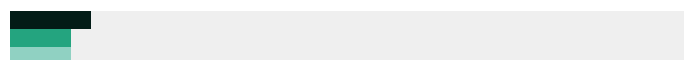
Appreciate remote flexibility, but it's not driving job decisions: US 30%, UK 28%, IRE 25%



Strongly prefer remote options, but might compromise for a role: US 24%, UK 20%, IRE 25%



Will turn down jobs that require full-time office presence:
US 12%, UK 13%, IRE 9%



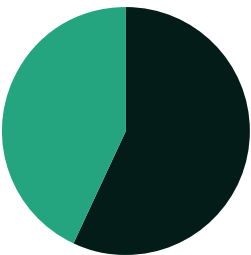
Prefer working in person with colleagues:
US 12%, UK 9%, IRE 9%

● US ● UK ● IRE

Survey methodology

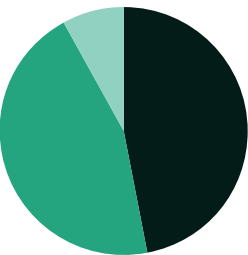
Greenhouse, the leading hiring platform, surveyed more than 2,200 full-time workers and temporarily unemployed job seekers from the United States, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Gender



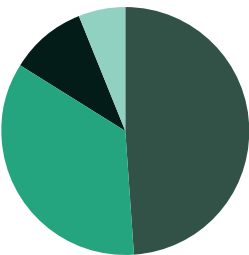
- Male: 57%
- Female: 43%

Country



- US: 47%
- UK: 45%
- IRE: 8%

Age



- 18-28: 10%
- 29-44: 49%
- 45-60: 35%
- 61-79: 6%





Greenhouse is the leading hiring platform to help companies get measurably better at hiring. Our AI-powered software supports every stage of the hiring process, from sourcing to onboarding, giving businesses everything they need to hire top talent quickly, consistently and fairly – today and as their business grows.

To learn more, visit
greenhouse.com