



Improve Hiring Through Candidate Care, EVP and Automation

Research Summary



Brandon Hall Research Team
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Demographics - 2018 Candidate Experience Study

347 Total Responses

 **48** Countries

- **72%** US/Canada
- **21%** EMEA
- **4%** APAC
- **2%** Caribbean/South America

 **32** Industries

Top 5: Technology/Software (14%),
Manufacturing (9%), Healthcare (9%),
Consulting (7%), Education (7%)

Small, Mid-Size, and Large Organizations



29%

Less than 500
employees



25%

501-4,999
employees



46%

5,000+
employees

- 23%** HR/Talent Management Head or Professional
- 20%** Learning/Leadership Development
- 15%** Talent Acquisition Head or Professional
- 13%** Executive/Senior Leadership
- 12%** Non-HR/Individual Contributor
- 10%** Head of Learning/Learning Development
- 7%** Business Unit Operations Management

Key Findings



- Effective candidate experience drives improvement in the number of quality hires.
- An ineffective experience contributes to candidate drop-offs.
- Organizations seek to improve candidate experience but are short on metrics.
- Technology makes a positive impact on candidate experience.

Overview

Candidate experience is a critical proficiency for most organizations and it is easy to see why: competition for talent is high and candidates make informed decisions about an organization based on information from social sites and other sources

Brandon Hall Group's 2018 Candidate Experience Survey shows that 73% of organizations realize that candidate experience is essential but slightly less than half (48%) believe their practices are effective.

Almost all organizations (95%) face significant challenges in managing their candidate experience, especially with communications, hiring agility and complicated, lengthy hiring processes. Those challenges differ by hiring volume. For instance:

- High-volume hiring organizations (501+ new hires in the past year) are more likely than their cohorts to indicate the challenge of too many applicants (39% vs. 16%) and a lengthy time-to-hire (47% vs. 36%).
- Conversely, low-volume hiring organizations are more likely than their counterparts to cite low levels of employer brand awareness as a challenge (25% vs. 18%).



A significant part of candidate communication is the extent to which the organization conveys authentic employer brand messaging that reflects its EVP (Employee Value Proposition). The EVP is an alignment of the organization’s and employees’ values. It informs the candidate about organizational culture, growth opportunities, innovation, collaboration, values, benefits and other important standards. The more authentic the EVP, the more likely the candidate will know whether he/she should consider working for the organization.

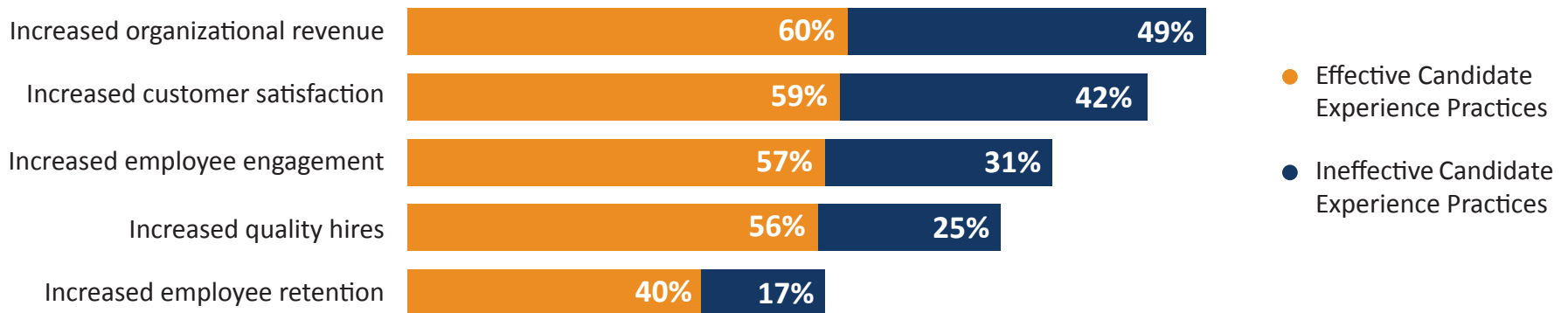
To avoid a disconnect between candidate expectations and reality, authentic EVP messaging (or employer brand messaging) must be consistently conveyed externally throughout the candidate experience and internally to employees.

Many organizations say they are ready to address their challenges, but most still do not measure the effectiveness of their candidate experience practices and their impact on talent acquisition. Consequently, those organizations fail to address serious problems. The consequences can be significant:

- Organizations can experience significant candidate drop-off rates and may be unable to hire quality talent.
- A poor candidate experience can lead to negative brand perceptions, especially when former candidates post their experiences on social sites.

On the bright side, an effective candidate experience improves levels of quality hires, engaged employees, employee retention and revenue. And technology, such as video interviews, can not only improve the candidate experience but facilitate the management of the different hiring practices.

Organizations Seeing Improvement in Talent Metrics over Past Year

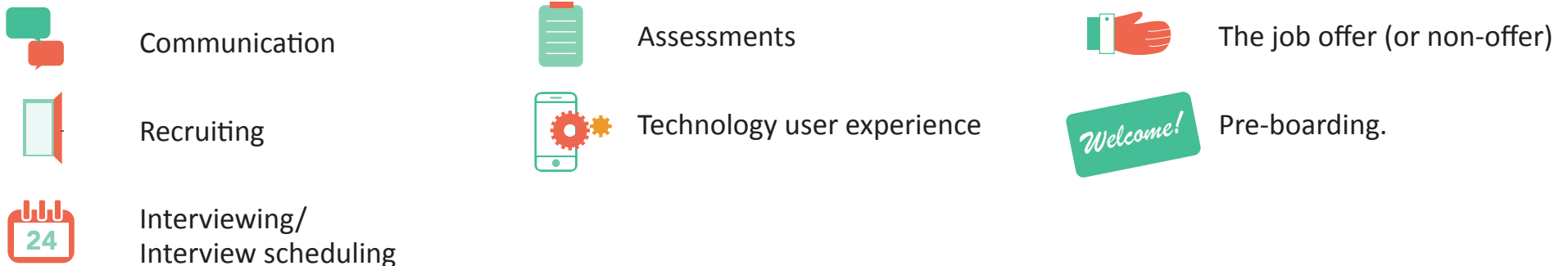


Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n = Effective, 98 to 100; Ineffective, 117 to 119)

ANALYSIS

An Ineffective Candidate Experience Contributes to Candidate Drop-Offs

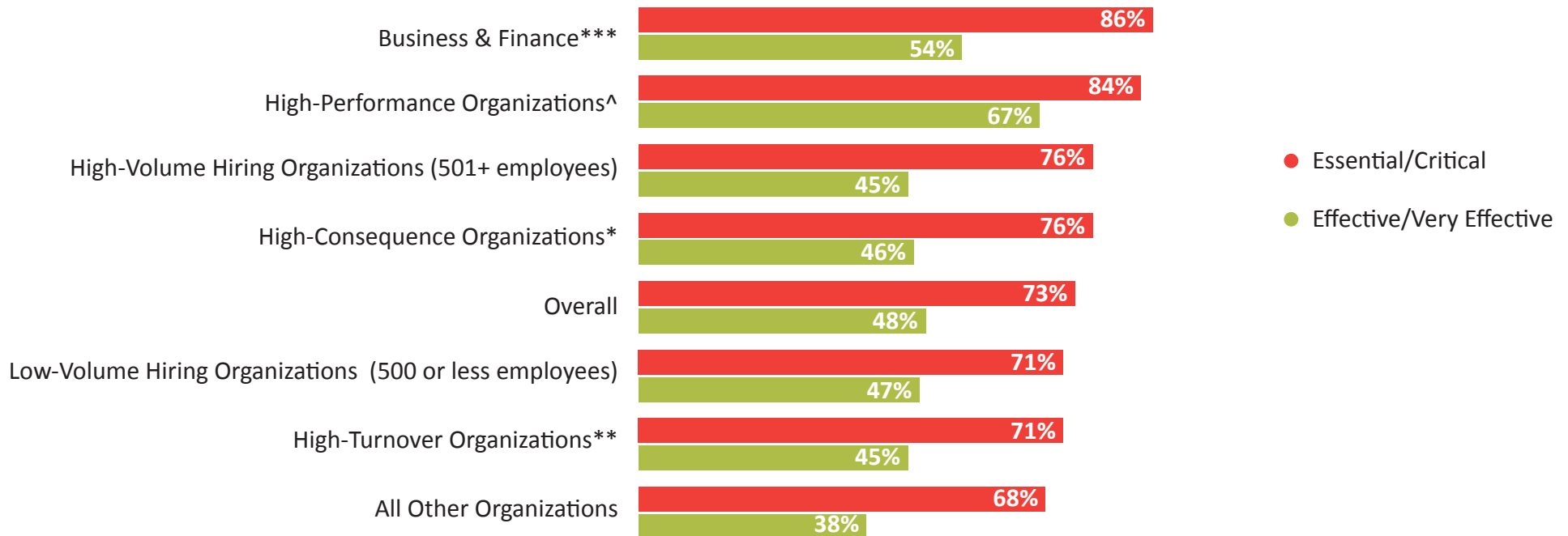
How organizations manage the candidate experience determines their success in attracting, engaging, and hiring quality talent. This is especially difficult because the candidate experience encompasses the sum of candidate impressions of the organization as an employer resulting from all types of candidate-employer interactions including:



Overall, the majority of organizations realize that effective candidate experience practices are essential to their organization, but less than half have effective candidate experience practices. The only industry segments that perform somewhat better are business and financial* organizations (54% effective, very effective) and high-performance organizations (67% effective, very effective).*



Importance vs. Effectiveness of Candidate Experience Practices



Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n total =296 to 298)

*High-consequence industries include aerospace, banking, chemicals, energy, finance, healthcare, insurance, manufacturing, utilities

**High-turnover industries include technology/software, retail, manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, food and beverage

***Business and financial services industries include business services, finance, banking, insurance, real estate, consulting, advertising

^High-performance organizations demonstrates a year-over-year increase in Key Performance Indicators such as employee engagement and retention, revenue, productivity, market share, customer satisfaction and retention, and quality of hire

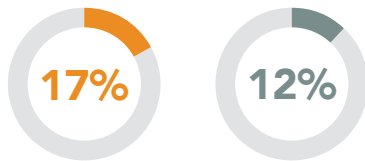


This struggle to manage the candidate experience has a substantial impact on hiring success, limiting the number of candidates an organization can evaluate and hire. High-volume hiring organizations lose from 31% to 44% more candidates through each point of the hiring process than low-volume hiring organizations.

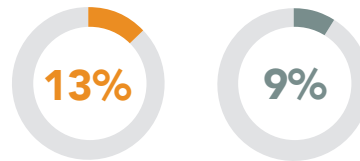
Candidates drop out of the process for any number of reasons. First, they might not complete the online application because it is too long or complex. Or the entire process might be too lengthy, or when the organization offered the position to them, they did not like the offer or did not feel it was a good fit.

Average Percentage of Candidates Lost in Past Year

Did Not Complete Online Application

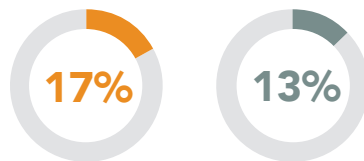


Declined Offer



- High-Volume Hiring
- Low-Volume Hiring

Dropped out of Recruiting/Interviewing



Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey
(n High-Volume 36 to 55, Low-Volume 81 to 144)



Challenges

Almost all organizations, except for 5 percent, face many challenges managing the candidate experience. Those challenges are in three major areas:

- Complicated, lengthy hiring processes
- Lack of hiring agility, or not being able to move fast enough to hire top talent before the competition
- Ineffective communication; whether it is for a job description, interviewing practices or providing feedback to candidates on their status.

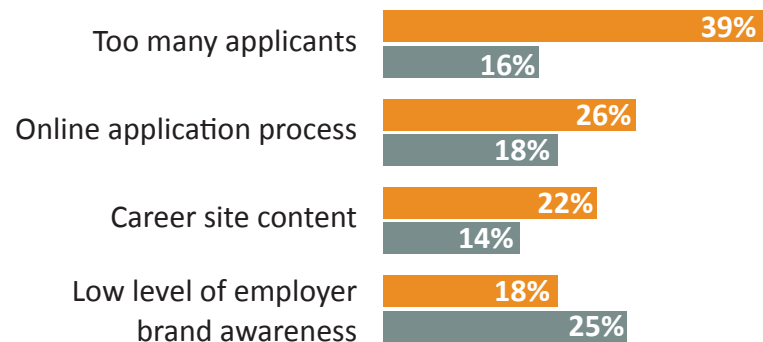
These three main challenge areas affect the organization through each stage of the hiring process:

- Exploratory (up to application completion)
- Evaluation stage (interviews, screening, assessments)
- Offer (includes pre-boarding).

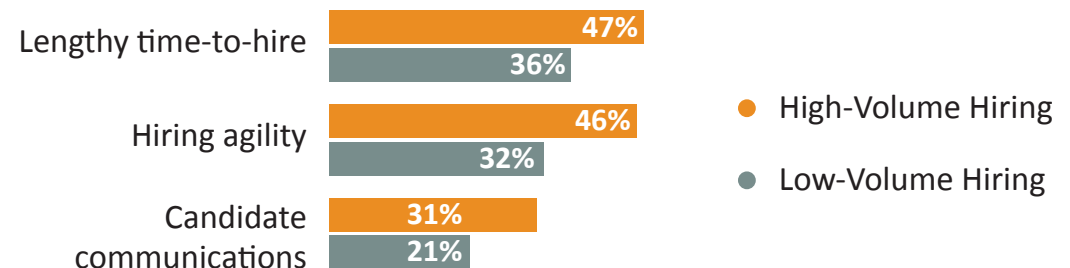
The graphic below shows just a sampling of the challenges faced by organizations throughout the three stages of the hiring process. They differ substantially between high-volume and low-volume hiring organizations. Obviously, a greater percentage of high-volume hiring organizations than low-volume hiring organizations face challenges related to managing the flow of candidates filling out the application and proceeding throughout the hiring process. Low-volume hiring organizations face challenges in raising brand awareness, lengthy hiring processes, and, of course, communication.

Challenges Through the Recruitment/Hiring Stages

Exploratory Stage (up through application completion)



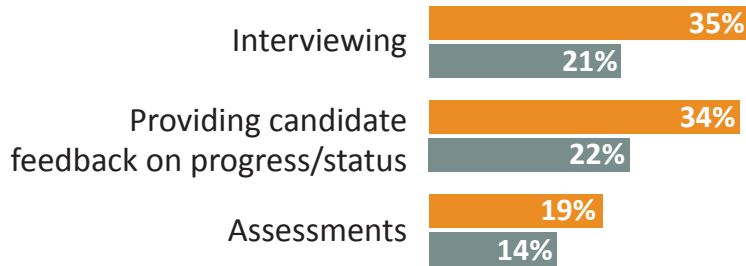
Impact All Stages



Source: Brandon Hall Group Candidate Experience Survey (n High-Volume 74, Low-Volume 151)

Challenges Through the Recruitment/Hiring Stages

Evaluation Stage (Interviewing, Assessments)



Offer/Pre-boarding Stage



- High-Volume Hiring
- Low-Volume Hiring

Source: Brandon Hall Group Candidate Experience Survey (n High-Volume 74, Low-Volume 151)

Technology solutions can help both high-volume and low-volume hiring organizations:

- Predictive analytics functionality can help recruiters prioritize candidates to screen first and estimate time-to-hire.
- Chatbots can answer candidate questions about the recruiting/interviewing process and/or schedule interviews.
- Gamification can improve the candidate experience in completing assessments.
- Natural-language processing can provide organizations with suggestions to make job descriptions gender neutral.
- Online surveys can facilitate the candidate feedback process.



Candidate Experience Variations

Organizations do not manage all candidates the same way. There are differences, depending on the position the candidate seeks. Nearly one-third of the organizations indicate that executives receive the highest level of candidate care. In terms of job function (technology, finance, customer service), only a small percentage of organizations (10% or less) give the highest level of candidate care to a specific function. More than half (56%) indicate that all functions receive about the same level of candidate care.

When strategizing about the level of candidate care offered, organizations should consider the scarcity of the talent needed and the needs of the candidate. For example, a pharmaceutical company could assign a person to shepherd a scientist through the hiring process because there are so few scientists available to meet their needs. While most organizations may be unable to devote that amount of attention to each candidate, they still should ensure all candidates are treated appropriately and in a consistent, effective manner.

Candidate Experience Drives Improvements in Quality of Hire

Organizations with effective candidate experience practices are more than twice as likely than others to see improvement in the number of quality hires made in the past year and in employee retention levels. They are also 27% more likely to see a decrease in candidate drop-offs throughout the hiring process compared to organizations with ineffective practices (33% vs. 42%).

Since candidate communication is a substantial part of candidate experience practices, the better the organization is at conveying realistic portrayals of the organizational culture, the job itself, and providing and getting candidate feedback, the more likely the candidate will be aligned with the culture, have the skills needed for the jobs, and want to work for the organization. That communication pays off in terms of quality hires, engagement and retention levels.



Great candidate care also contributes to successful metrics. Organizations with effective candidate experience practices over the past year are more likely than those with ineffective candidate experience practices to see improvement in customer satisfaction (59% vs. 42%), customer retention (45% vs. 33%) and revenue (60% vs. 49%).

Organizations Seeing Improvement in Talent Metrics over Past Year



Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n Effective 98 to 100, Ineffective 117 to 119)

Effectiveness of Candidate Experience Practices vs. Candidate Drop-offs

	Effective Practices	Ineffective Practices
Dropped out of application process	↓ 13%	↓ 15%
Dropped out of recruiting/interviewing process	↓ 12%	↓ 16%
Declined offer	↓ 8%	↓ 11%
Total percentage of candidates lost	33%	42%

Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n Effective 60 to 94, Ineffective 61 to 97)

Organizations Seek to Improve Candidate Experience But are Short on Metrics

31%

Nearly
one-third

Either will just collect anecdotal feedback or simply will not measure that experience.

48%

About
half

Are starting to identify performance indicators or gathering data at a variety of points through the hiring process.

20%

Regularly measure candidate experience and its impact on talent acquisition.

How Organizations Plan to Measure Effectiveness of Candidate Experience in 12-18 Months



Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n = 243)

To holistically understand the candidate experience, it is necessary to:

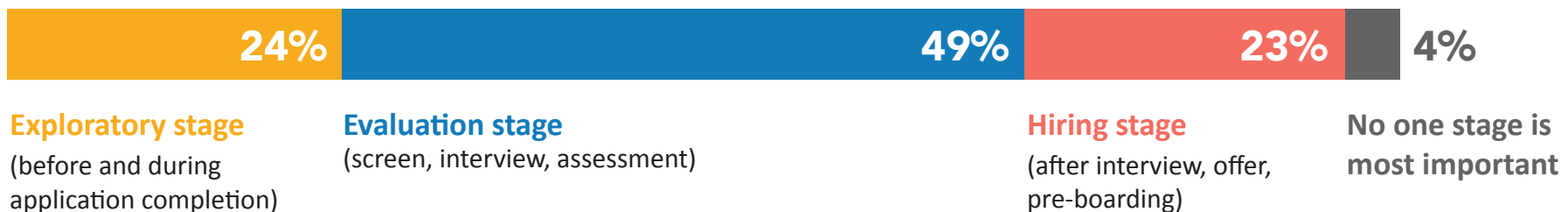
- Assess candidate engagement with the organization’s career site.
- Assess the online application experience.
- Evaluate all messaging.
- Conduct candidate surveys (interviews) throughout the hiring process.
- Speak to recruiters and interviewers.
- Benchmark the level of quality hires made and the time-to-hire.

Organizations should survey a sampling of all candidate types, including those who did not accept an offer; recent new hires, interviewed candidates and those not selected for an interview. While those who did not receive an offer may be disappointed, they can still offer valuable insights on improving candidate experience.

Candidate Experience Variations

Another way to improve candidate experience is identifying the stage of the hiring process that is the most important impact point. About half the organizations believe it is the evaluation stage, when interviews and assessments are conducted. That is the point the hiring decision is seriously contemplated and when the candidate can ask direct questions about the company to the interviewer. However, candidate perceptions begin to form before the interview experience. And organizations can influence those perceptions by their brand messaging and how they recruit candidates.

Most Important Impact Point for Candidate Experience



Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n = 246)

Action Areas

Organizations indicate that they are ready to act in 12 to 18 months to improve their candidate experience. For high-volume hiring organizations, the most-cited action areas are:

- Improving the interview experience
- Candidate communications
- Diversity and inclusion
- Career site content
- Pre-boarding experience

This makes sense as interviewing is seen by many as a major impact point. Overall communications and career site content affect candidates' perceptions of the organization as an employer. Diversity and inclusion practices ensure a fair candidate experience. Lastly, improving pre-boarding ensures that the recruitment and employment experiences are aligned.

The top action areas for low-volume hiring organizations are:

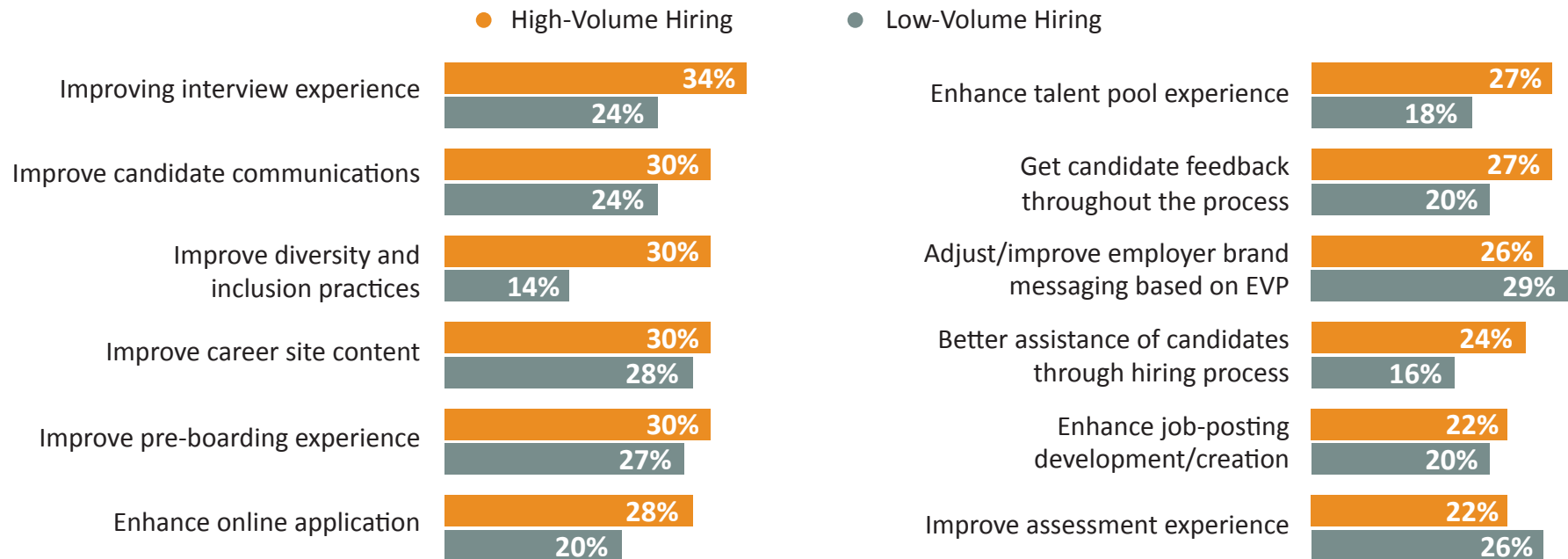
- Employer brand messaging that reflects the organization's employee value proposition
- Career site content
- The pre-boarding experience



Because one-quarter of the low-volume hiring organizations are concerned they have low brand awareness, it is important to revisit their employer brand strategy to ensure it reflects their authentic employee value proposition.

An employee value proposition is the alignment of employer and employee values. It expresses the true nature of the employer's employment experience. Candidates who feel they are aligned with the organization's culture/experience are more likely to consider working for the organization than those not aligned with the organization's EVP.

Readiness to Improve Candidate Experience (Next 12-18 Months)



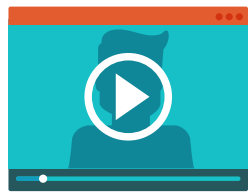
Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n High-Volume 74, Low-Volume 152)

Candidate Experience Drives Improvements in Quality of Hire

Candidates drop out of the online application experience for a variety of reasons, such as the application process being too long or not accessible via a mobile phone (48% do not feel their online application can be easily completed via a mobile phone). There are additional solutions to boost candidate experience, such as video interviewing, text messaging and chatbots.

Overall, organizations are positive about the impact of these three functionalities — video interviewing, text messaging and chatbots — for improving candidate experience. However, each organization looks at the functionality through their own lens or needs. For instance, high-volume hiring organizations are much more likely than their counterparts to view each of the solutions as a better experience: video interviewing; text messaging and chatbots. High-volume hiring organizations need automation to make the process efficient and effective.

Favorable Perceptions about How Technology Impacts Candidate Experience by Hiring Volume



80%
High-Volume
Hiring

59%
Low-Volume
Hiring

Video interviewing provides candidates with an engaging interview experience



62%
High-Volume
Hiring

51%
Low-Volume
Hiring

Text messaging provides a faster, easier and better candidate experience than email communication



76%
High-Volume
Hiring

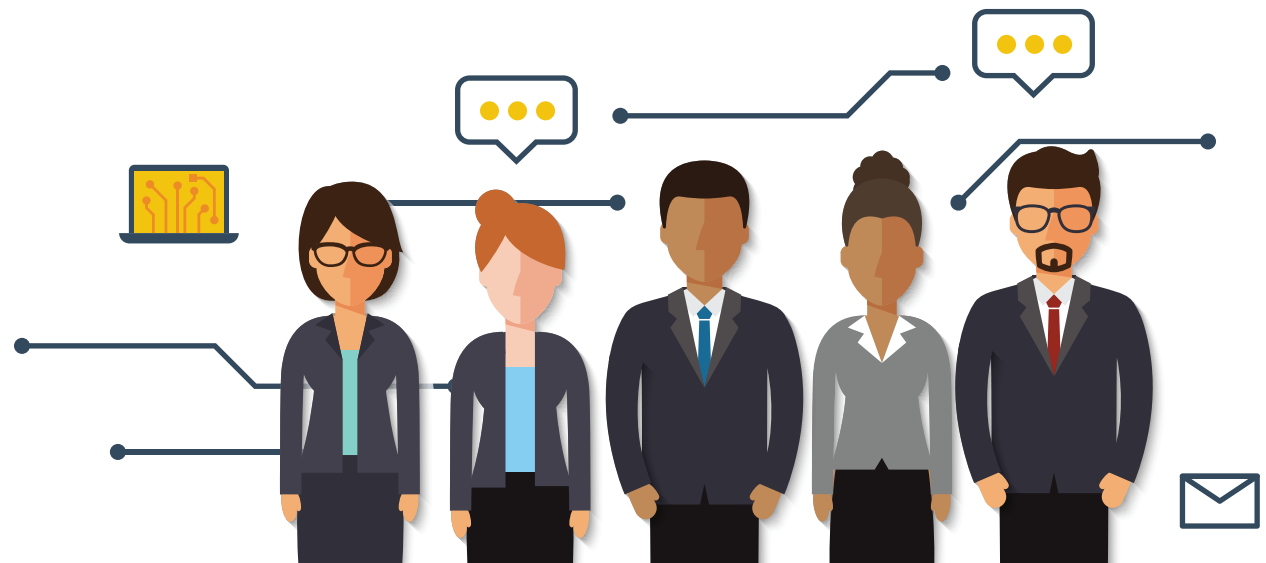
54%
Low-Volume
Hiring

Chatbots engage candidates by answering questions and making it easier to complete the online application

Source: Brandon Hall Group 2018 Candidate Experience Survey (n High-Volume 74, Low-Volume 152)

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Effective candidate experience practices reduce candidate drop-off rates and favorably impact the organization's level of quality hires, employee engagement and retention.
- ✓ Organizations must focus on these areas to improve candidate experience throughout the hiring process: candidate communications, complicated and lengthy hiring processes, and hiring agility.
- ✓ Organizations should consistently convey authentic brand messages based on their EVP to ensure expectations match reality once the candidate starts working for the organization.
- ✓ To overcome candidate experience challenges, organizations must assess how their practices impact candidate perceptions and the hiring experience. Obtaining feedback throughout the process and measuring the impact on the level of quality hires and time-to-hire provide a roadmap for improving candidate experience.
- ✓ Technology, including video interviews, chatbots and more can improve the candidate experience and improve the hiring process.



Brandon Hall Group Research Methodology



About Brandon Hall Group

Brandon Hall Group is a HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management.

With more than 10,000 clients globally and almost 25 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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