US Survey: HR Professionals' Recruiting Habits & Trends

2015

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Personal Website Gives Job Seekers an Advantage in a Competitive Job Market

Recent reports indicate the job market is improving, but the riper market doesn't mean necessarily that securing a dream position is getting easier. Candidates need to stand out – a feat that becomes increasingly challenging as technology plays an ever-growing role in the recruiting process. Human resource professionals receive an average of 100 applications for every job opening on the market, and as of this spring, the National Center for Educational Statistics reports another 2.8 million college graduates have joined the ranks of job seekers. The goal of this study was to take guesswork out of finding a job by going directly to HR professionals and inquiring about their recruiting habits and evaluation criteria.

Key Findings

HR industry was significantly impacted by the development and increased use of ICT. Recruiters are relying on online content to screen and find potential candidates.

- More than half of those surveyed admit to screening candidates on Google at least sometimes.

- Surprisingly, Twitter is the least utilized among social media for candidate screening.

While a number of job seekers have expressed their dissatisfaction with the traditional recruiting process, which they claim "dehumanizes" candidates, personal websites appear as an answer. HR professionals believe that personal websites help humanize the candidate and determine a candidate's cultural fit.

- 67% of those surveyed claim that a personal website provides more insight than a resume alone.

- 59% of HR professionals believe that personal websites provide a dynamic representation of personal and professional qualifications.

Personal websites leave a positive impression on HR professionals and can be distinct competitive advantage.

- For 55% HR professionals personal website increases their interest in learning more about the candidate.

- Between two candidates with seemingly equal qualifications, 39% of recruiters would be more inclined to contact the candidate with the personal website.

Low prevalence of personal websites represents an easy opportunity for job seekers to stand out.

- Proactive recruiting has been evaluated as one of the most influential trends in recruiting process. More than half of recruiters conduct an active online search in addition to considering online resume submissions.

- 42% of recruiters say that less than 1 in 100 job seekers are utilizing personal websites as a leverage to enhance their candidacy.

"This new research confirms that we are moving beyond the age of 'be careful what you post' and into an era of digital presence and savvy to differentiate yourself in the job market. While recruiters continue to scan social posts for red flags, they view digital assets as tools to better understand candidates and to help them make more informed hiring decisions. The candidate who offers that content has an advantage in telling their personal story."

Predrag Lešić, CEO of domain.ME

69%

of recruiters think that Online content has made it easier for them to screen potential candidates before initial contact.

When it comes to using social media for screening candidates, HR professionals mostly rely on LinkedIn.
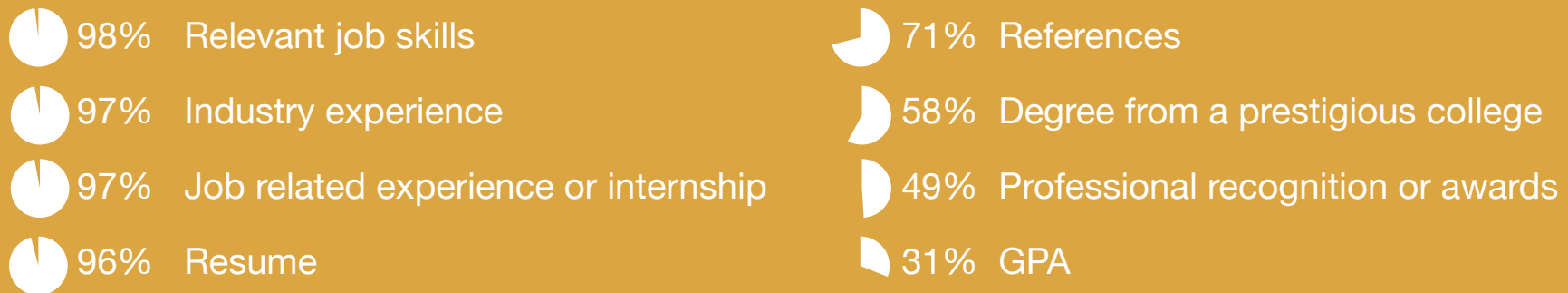
How often do you conduct a search on candidates using this network/service?

	in	f	▼	g
Always/Frequently	43%	21%	8%	24%
Sometimes	27%	24%	13%	28%
Rarely/Never	31%	56%	68%	48%
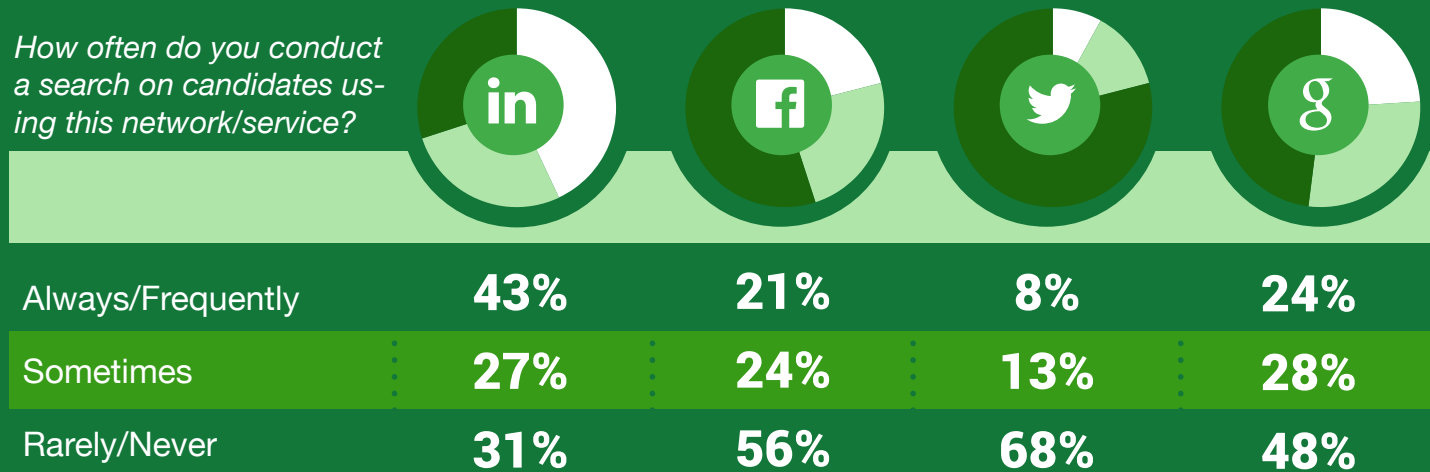
About a quarter of recruiters always or frequently conduct a Google Search on candidates – more than half do so at least sometimes.

3

57%

*The amount of information about candidates online
has made it easier for me to find qualified candidates*

98% Relevant job skills

97% Industry experience

97% Job related experience or internship

96% Resume

71% References

58% Degree from a prestigious college

49% Professional recognition or awards

31% GPA

*When screening candidates for an initial contact recruiters value
relevant skills and job experiences much more than GPA or degree
from a prestigious college.*

62%

*Online content helps me identify **red flags** with candidates.*

In general, content that could be found on a candidate's social sites has more of a role in jeopardizing a job seeker's candidacy than enhancing it.

Conversely, content that could be featured on a personal website, such as self-authored articles about one's profession or involvement with community activities is viewed as content that could enhance candidacy.

Q. What impact does the following types of content found on social media channels have when considering a candidate?

Content that Enhances Candidacy	✔
Self-authored articles relevant to profession.	26%
Involvement with community activities.	26%
Interaction with/following of influencers.	11%
Commentary related to industry topics.	16%

Content that Eliminates Candidacy	✘
Risqué photographs.	71%
Negative comments about work in general.	69%
Negative comments about current/former employer	66%
Inappropriate language/cursing.	65%
Pictures of partying – including alcohol consumption	60%
Controversial political or social opinions.	31%

Technology and the Internet are Top Trends Impacting HR Recruiters.

78%

In an open-ended question, **78%** of the respondents noted that better technology, the use of online sites and increased avail-ability of information online were the factors most influencing the HR profession.

83% Over the next five years, the recruitment process is going to be more reliant on online content and informa-tion than ever.

**Q. How would you rate the following trends for how influential they are in your recruiting efforts?**

35% Increased focus on proactive recruiting techniques versus reviewing passive online submissions.

34% Increased emphasis on "cultural fit"/personality within the hiring company.

30% Increased sourcing of candidates from online searches of social professional networks like LinkedIn.

26% Focus on recruiting non-active candidates (not currently seeking employment but open to conver-sation) versus active job seeking candidates.
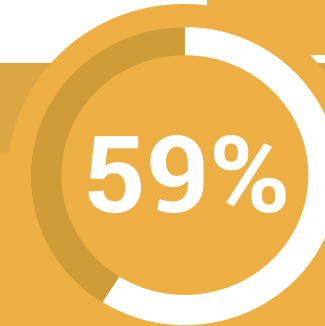
6

50%
THINK

*Personal website humanizes the candidate.*

52%

Candidates have expressed frustration about the lack of human contact in the job search process.

67%
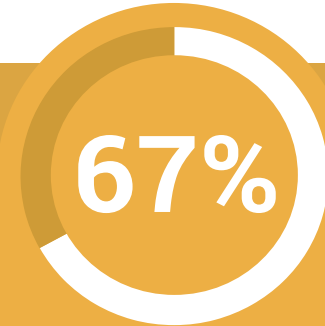
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60%
THINK
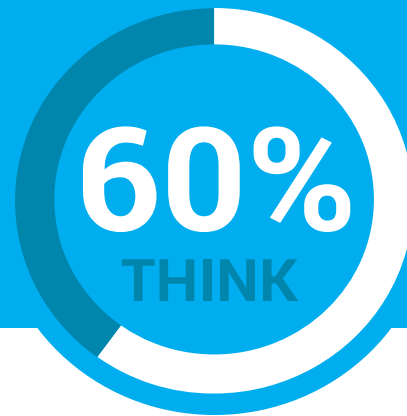
Personal website makes a positive, professional impression.

A personal website that showcases candidate's professional achievements demonstrates:

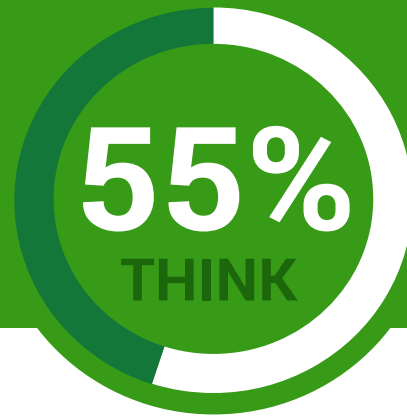73% Creativity

72% Ambition

69% Innovation

68% Marketing Savvy

63% Visual thinking

61% Awareness of Branding

60% Digital acumen

50% Leadership

55% THINK

Personal website increases my interest in learning more about the candidate.

The most valuable content a candidate could feature on his or her website:

78% Traditional resume (chronological description of work experience)

57% Interactive resume with links to work samples and case studies

57% Work related published articles/blogs

49% Volunteering/non-profit activities

48% Awards/Honors

48% Portfolio samples

41% Biographical information

21% Blog

21% Personal interests/hobbies

NEARLY 1/3

of HR professionals agreed that a personal website can provide a competitive advantage…

4 in 10

of recruiters would be more inclined to contact the candidate with the personal website, between two candidates with seemingly equal qualifications.

Despite the benefits, not many job seekers are utilizing this leverage to enhance their candidacy.

Q. In your experience, what percent of job candidates have a personalized, professional website to support their job search?

None	12,60%	4 to 5%	12%
Less than 1%	**42,20%**	6 to <10%	8,30%
1 to 3%	23,30%	10% or higher	1,70%

About The Study

The survey was conducted amongst 301 Human Resource (HR) Professionals with a departmental or functional role as HR in their organization. These respondents regularly perform staffing and recruiting in their HR role. The survey was conducted in the U.S. between June 11 and July 9, 2015 by the market research firm Research Now for .ME Registry, company that operates .ME domain names.

About Domain.ME

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