# A Picture of the Hourly Workforce



## Welcome to the 2023 Edition of a Picture of the Hourly Workforce.

Hourly workers make up over **60% of the Canadian workforce.** Do we - as recruiters, managers, and leaders - *really know them*?

At FindWRK, we spend every day talking with workers. We know how challenging the job search is. In conversations about their experience and a recent indepth survey, our mission was to find out why?

Much of what we learned stems from the intersection of technology and the recruiting process. Done right, recruiting balances the digital and the human. But increasingly that human connection was being lost.

Again and again, we saw that the emphasis on technology and efficiency- online job boards, applicant tracking systems, and Al-resume reviews - has hurt the candidate experience. What does that mean for success rates? Is the quest for efficiency making it harder to generate human connections?

This report will explore the biggest trends in hourly work and offer solutions to these complex problems.

Thanks for reading. We hope it makes things simpler.

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#### [Section 1]

# Understanding the Canadian Hourly Workforce

The Canadian hourly workforce is a large and diverse group. Great employment relationships start with gaining a deeper understanding of the candidates whom you target.



#### The Size of the Hourly Workforce

StatsCan estimates the Canadian workforce at roughly 18,000,000 workers.

#### Over 60% are paid hourly, versus by an annual salary.

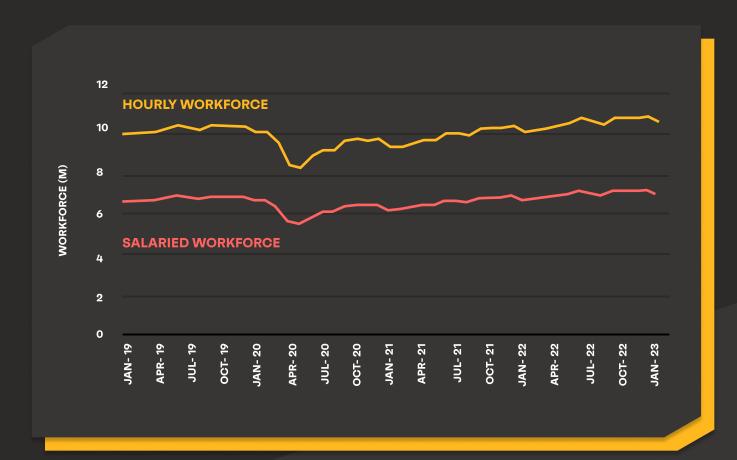
Demographic realities mean many nations throughout the entire Global North will shift from labour surpluses to labour shortages around the same time... The reason? Population ageing.



#### Arnine Yalnizyan,

Canadian economist and writer

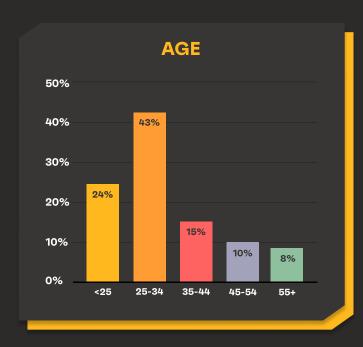
The size of the hourly workforce has rebounded to pre-COVID levels, but continues to shrink relative to the size of the population. That means competition for great talent will continue and understanding your target candidate audience will be more important than ever.

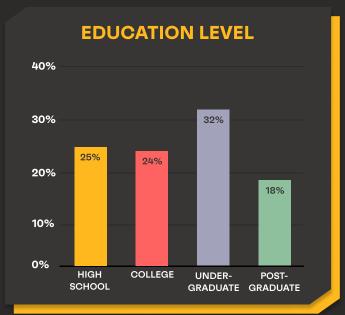


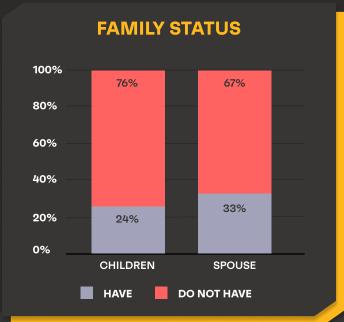


#### **Hourly Worker Demographics**

When it comes to hiring and retention, your focus must be on the individual. A one-size-fits-all approach will be inadequate to manage your hiring needs. Our survey data starts by breaking down demographics: the **majority are under 35, most are well-educated,** and they are **more likely to be single and without children.** But of course, each worker has their own story.







#### **Breaking the Workforce into Segments**

More valuable than summary-level demographic data is connecting that to what drives candidates. Looking at details about **career motivation**, how workers structure their careers, and how they search for jobs allows us to break the workforce into three segments.



#### **The Career Hourly**

- Primarily motivated to maintain employment to pay the bills
- Generally older, with more than half over 35
- More likely to stay longer in a role and prioritizes good management

#### **The New Canadian**

- Primarily motivated to gain Canadian experience and establish themselves
- Generally younger, with three quarters under 35
- More likely to hold a single job while getting established



25%



#### **Career Discoverer**

- Primarily motivated to try out different career paths and opportunities
- Generally younger, with three quarters under 35
- The highest percentage of Ghosters



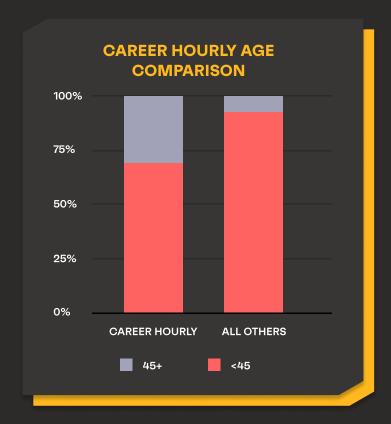
#### **Deep Dive: Career Hourly**

For the past 30 years, Steve has worked as a line cook at the local pub. He's 59. His hands are steady, but his back isn't what it used to be. He's not one for change. He likes the same old crew and his morning routine. He smokes half a pack a day (which Cheryl hates) and buys a daily breakfast sandwich at Tim's. He's a man of routine and keeps his wallet tight.

Times are changing, and most days, he feels like he can't keep up. Most folks are using their job as a stop-gap rather than a way forward. Some days he thinks of leaving it all behind. The thing Steve wants most is solid management. He's a Career Hourly worker.



#### **Career Hourly Age Comparison**



I started bartending when I started working at Swiss Chalet, and then I worked at a couple of bars [...] I did another job for a couple of months that was more upscale at the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, which is where I got my start in fine dining, and then I worked at a bistro, [...] Most of my experience is neighbourhood places, regulars, and people that like what they like.

**Christing,** Career Hourly



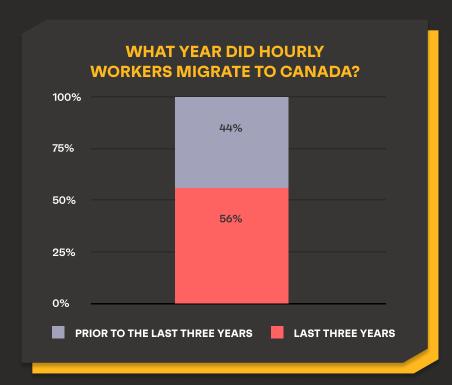
#### **Deep Dive: New Canadian**

Rahul is a **New Canadian**. Along with 56% of this group, he moved to Canada in the last three years to open up his opportunities and advance his career as a business analyst. There were high points in his first few months —a Blue Jay's Game, Pride, and the CNE—but it was challenging.

He was without work and in a crowded basement apartment with three roommates. After what felt like 100's of resumes, he landed a position at Walmart. It wasn't his first choice but he was getting the Canadian experience he needed and taking next steps to build a new life.



#### What Year Did Hourly Workers Migrate to Canada?



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I needed an increase in wage to pay for my new rent. I wanted to live with fewer people, so I took the first job I was offered.
I made the move from Domino's Pizza to Eataly.
But I'm still waiting to get back into my field as an analyst. I'm lucky to have the job, but it's been hard going.



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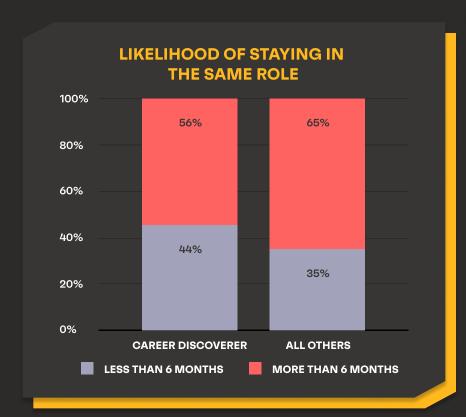
#### **Deep Dive: Career Discoverer**

For nine months after graduation, Lexa was unemployed. At first she enjoyed her free time, but then worry set in. Her goal had been to go to grad school for psychology. She had worked a couple of jobs, but her next steps weren't clear. She was a Career Discoverer.

A friend mentioned she had been doing brand ambassador work and Lexa started applying to roles. She put in over 80 applications and the inefficiency of the process made her lose trust in the employers, such that she ghosted a couple of times. The first point of connection sets the relationship between employer and employee, determining trust and longevity.



#### Likelihood of Staying in the Same Role



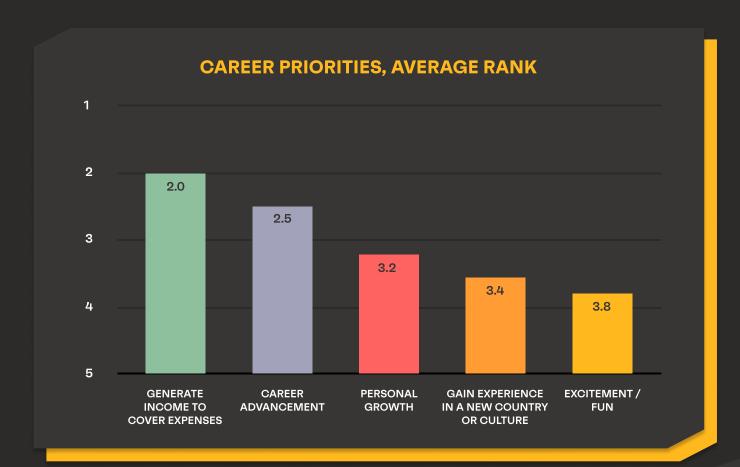
I've been doing brand ambassador work. I really enjoyed it; it was a lot of fun. But then I got a job as an operations manager, [...] I was hired full-time, but then, I didn't even like that job. I was working afternoon Monday to Friday, I felt like my summer was gone just dealing with the drivers. And then they called me and said we really like you, and we have another contract in September. So, I quit and took the field manager job and travelled around; it was great.



💫 **Lou,** Career Discoverer



If you want to secure talent, you have to **understand the priorities of the hourly worker**. This helps you define your approach from the day you write the first draft of your job post to your first days of mentoring and fostering trust with an employee. Generating incoming to cover expenses and career advancement are the highest priorities of the hourly workforce.





## Takeaways

The 10,000,000+ hourly workers in Canada are a diverse group. Dig into what differentiates specific segments of the population to better connect with candidates and employees.



- 1. Career Hourlies, New Canadians, and Career Discoverers each have different motivations. Understand who you are looking to hire and target accordingly.
- 2. A majority of the hourly workforce is under 35. With that comes changing ways to communicate and engage. We'll dig into this more throughout the rest of this report.
- 3. Income security is the highest priority of the hourly workforce, followed by career growth. As you build roles, schedules, and processes, be empathetic of how these impact the priorities of your team.



#### [Section 2]

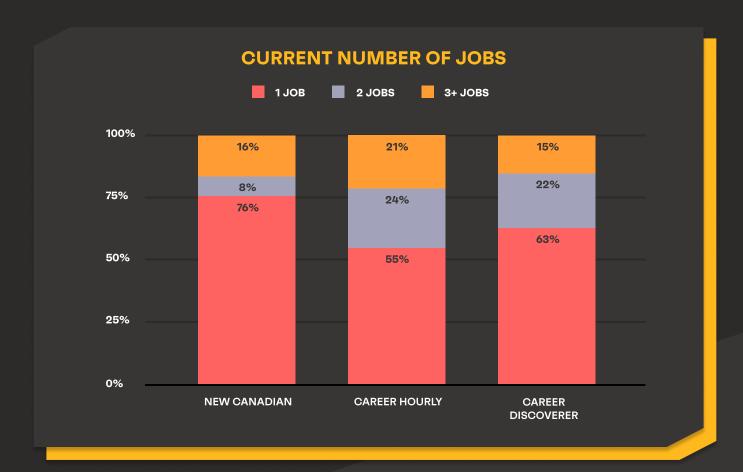
## Career Structure and Mobility

Knowing how candidates structure their career - the number of jobs they have, how often they move, what drives them to leave a job or select their next one - will help you design your roles to increase hiring yield and limit turnover.

## Multiple Jobs Are More Common Than You Think

More than **one third of workers work more than one job**, particularly **Career Hourlies** and **Career Discoverers**. As an employer, this directly impacts the flexibility of your team and your ability to hire and schedule.

Be specific about the nature of the role you're looking to fill, when you need availability, and what degree of flexibility you can offer those that work multiple jobs. Be aware of how many of your team work multiple jobs. Developing flexibility in staffing and scheduling can be a major differentiator in the hiring market.



## Why do workers hold multiple jobs?

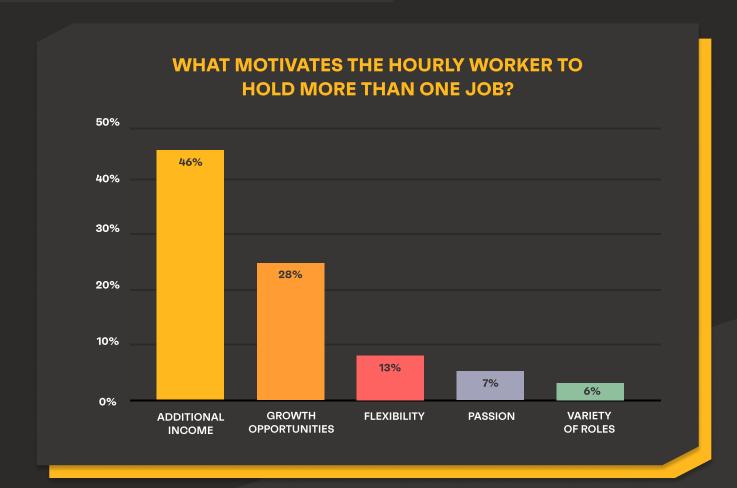
Not surprisingly, additional income is the primary reason that individuals work multiple jobs. There is some nuance by segment: New Canadians are more likely to value growth opportunities and Career Discoverers are disproportionately motivated by flexibility. But the clear driver for most is income.



I don't want to hold more than one job, you know? But it feels like to have any security, that's just the way it is these days. I took on a second role because I needed the income and there wasn't enough room to grow in my primary role.



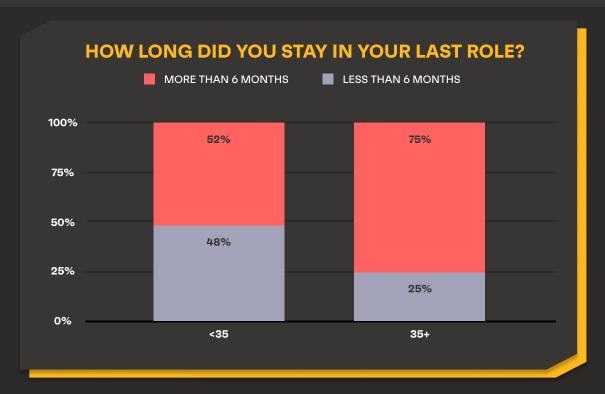
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#### **Hourly Workers Move Roles Frequently**

Average job tenure among our survey population was approximately **12 months.**Not surprisingly, those under the age of 35 were almost twice as likely to stay for a shorter period of time. Our data suggests that there is a degree of optimism that tenures will be longer. ~40% of people spent less than 6 months in their last role, but only ~20% expect to spend less than 6 months in their current role.

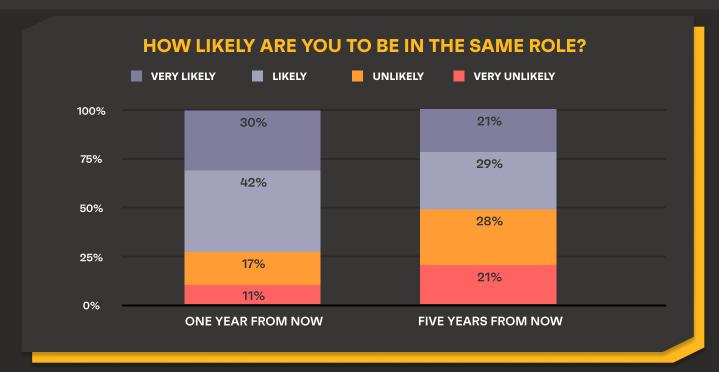


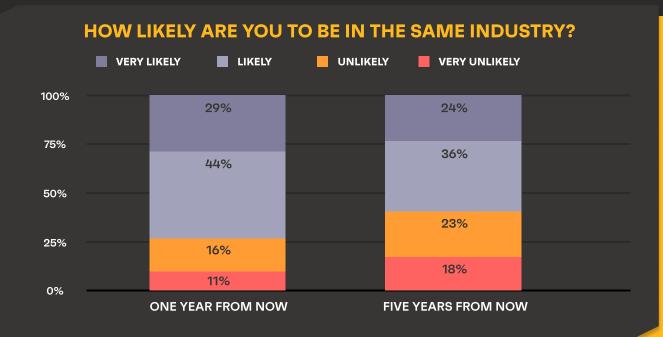




## **Movement Across Industries** is Less Common

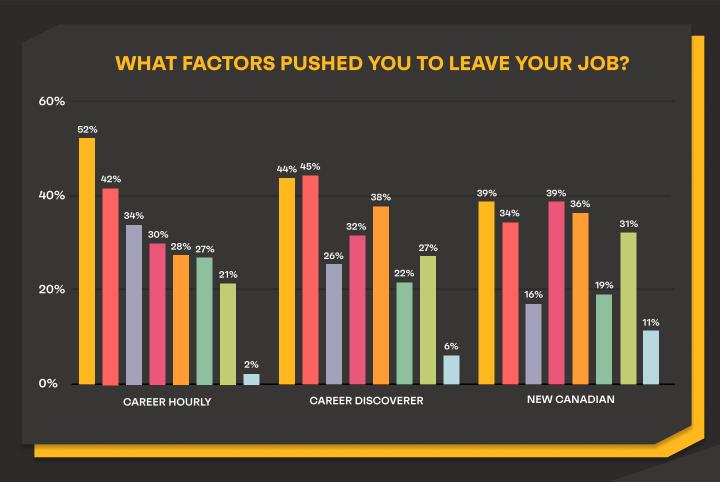
It is worth trying to understand the magnitude of movement in this segment. Only ~\frac{1}{2} expect to be in the same role in 1 year. Only half expect to be in the same role in 5 years. And this movement extends beyond just the role. Over 25% say it's unlikely they will be in the same industry in 1 year, while ~40% expect to be in a new industry 5 years from now.





## The Final Straw: What Pushes Workers to Leave?

Workers across all three segments leave jobs for similar reasons. **Most commonly: management. Compensation** is a close second, and a more important factor for those early in their careers. **Career growth** also played a role for those early in their careers. And no surprise that **location** was a driver for New Canadians.







#### **The Carrot: What Draws Workers In?**

When workers begin looking for a job, the four factors that are most important to them include **career growth, compensation, schedule flexibility, and location.** The Career Hourly and the Career Discoverer value compensation the most, while the New Canadian values career growth opportunities above all else.





## Takeaways

Understanding movement - how often workers move roles and why they move - allows you to better position your offering as an employer.



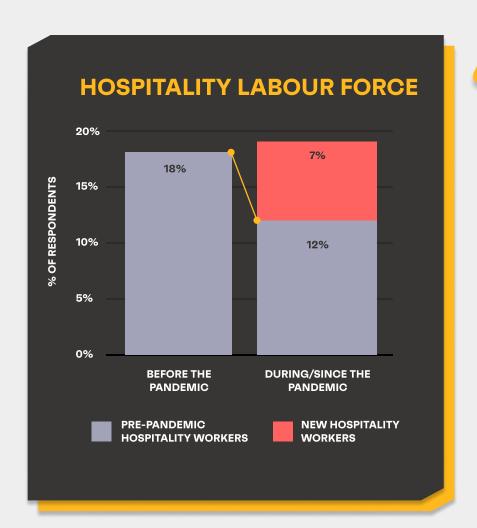
- Almost half of our population work multiple jobs, primarily driven by the need to generate more income. Differentiate yourself as an employer by addressing the core need (income) or being more flexible in scheduling.
- 2. Hourly workers move. Average tenure is only ~12 months. But there is a desire and expectation to stay longer.
- 3. Retain your team longer by building your management team's capabilities. It is true that people leave bosses, not jobs. Focus on career growth and competitive compensation to both retain and attract talent.

## Spotlight: COVID's Impact on Hospitality

Since the onset of the COVID pandemic, news coverage of the availability of labour has increased significantly. **The general consensus is that it is now more difficult to find staff.** But there isn't always a clear answer as to why. Is the workforce smaller? Have they just moved to other industries? This question has been particularly common in the hospitality industry.

Our data suggests that the overall size of the hospitality industry workforce is roughly the same. About 20% of our survey population indicated they worked in the industry prior to COVID and about 20% indicated they worked in the industry post COVID. But it's not the same group. Roughly 1/3 of post-COVID hospitality workers are new to the sector.

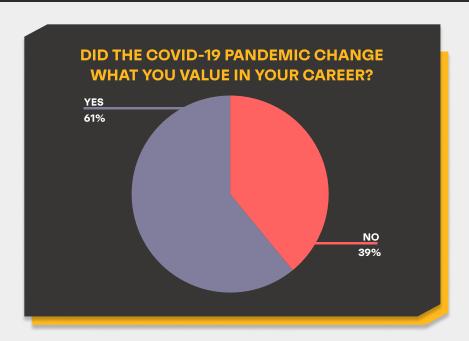
Anecdotally, of those that left the hospitality sector, trades and office work were the most common new sectors.



Before COVID, I was working as a barista in an office building. The pandemic wiped out a lot of jobs for people. They felt they had to start something new. I was stuck in the house for two years, just trying to get by, and I found something I liked, brand ambassador work, so why not do this instead.

#### Spotlight: COVID's Biggest Impact Was Mindset

The majority of workers changed their mindset due to COVID. They placed more emphasis on balance, family, and flexibility. Factors like management and job security - things they hadn't thought about as much or took for granted - became more important.





There was a real slowdown in the events job industry. I had more freedom working from home. The plan is to work remotely, anywhere and any time I like.



Career Discoverer



I worked in my field for over eight years, but COVID changed my mind. I'm studying right now and I'm going to make a change.



**Career Hourly** 



I want to work for better management, a better boss.



Career Hourly



It taught me to spend time with and value my family.



Career Discoverer



Health and safety became the priority along with covering expenses.



Career Hourly



I was scared to lose my job. More was expected of me for the same pay. It really gets to you.



New Canadian





#### [Section 3]

## **Recruiting and Hiring**

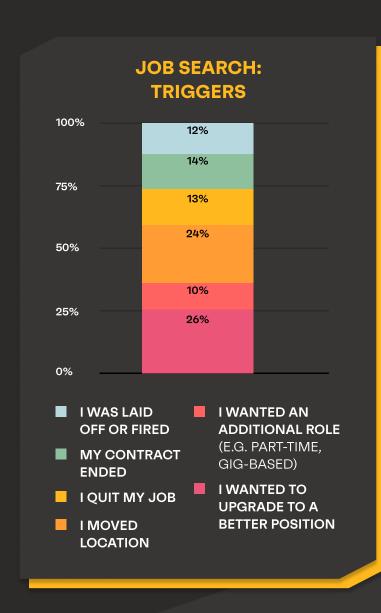
Great recruiting means engaging your candidates where they are. Start with an understanding of what the job search actually feels like, then identify ways to differentiate yourself.

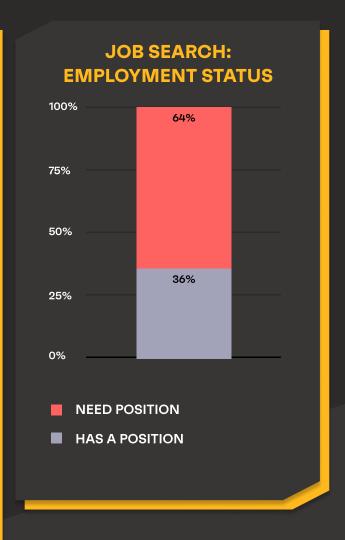


#### The Spark That Starts the Job Search

There are a variety of reasons someone might start a job search. **Two thirds** of workers in this segment of the market don't look for a job when they have one, they look for a job when they need one.

This has significant implications on the recruiting process. Speed is important, your candidates won't wait to compare multiple opportunities. And many candidates will be searching during a period of stress. **Strong communication and empathy go a long way to differentiate you as an employer.** 

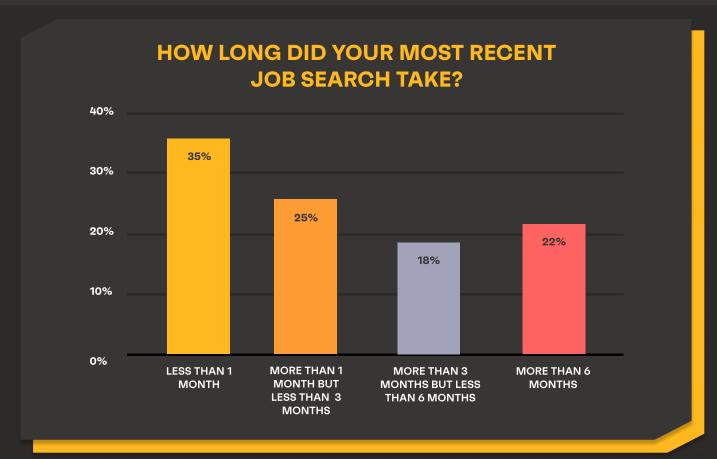






#### **Job Seekers Need to Move Fast**

Hourly workers don't spend long securing a job - remember, most are looking when they are in need of one. ~1/3 spend less than a month looking. Almost two thirds find a job in less than 3 months. The longer your recruiting process, the more likely you are to lose great candidates.



When you've been looking for months, it's something like fight or flight mode that takes over. You don't have time to process an offer. You just take it and maybe that's because of all the stress that has mounted—paying your bills, and putting in endless applications. You just want some peace of mind.



When I was looking for the job, I guess I applied for around six or seven months. I used to apply every day to numerous firms, some used to reply, some used to ignore it. So I guess, yes, it was difficult for me to find work here, to find a job.



Zee, Worker

#### \$

#### **The Job Search is Grinding**

## What does the job search feel like day-to-day?

Christina left her job after several months of struggling to deal with management, who she felt would not invest in her willingness to grow. The job search was frustrating from the start. She didn't hear back from a single employer after her first 25 applications, and she met the qualifications for each of the roles she applied for. She knew the job platforms didn't bring out the best in her. After a while, she didn't scan a job post for more than 30 seconds. Partly, she was frantic to get a role, and they were all lengthy and looked the same. She uploaded the same resume with a click without tailoring her skills or experience for a specific role. When Christina finally received an interview and an offer, she took the first one she could.

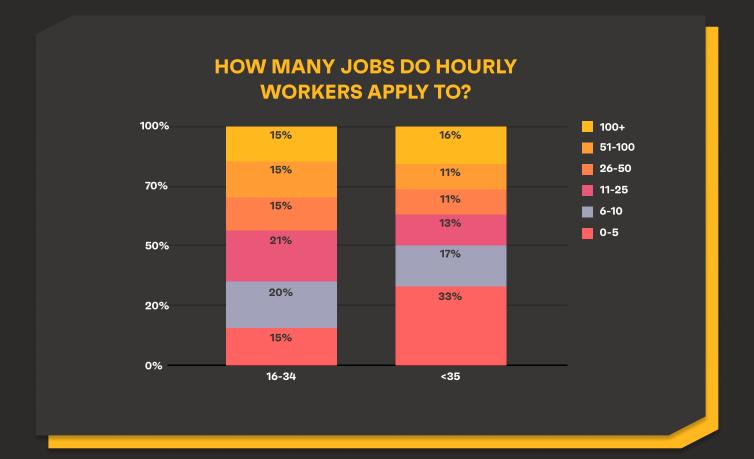
The job search is complicated and exasperating. It induces stress and encourages you to click on as many jobs as possible without doing research, or looking for best fit.



## **>**

## Applying for Jobs Has Become a Volume Game

The application process has become a numbers game. It's easy to one-click apply and attention spans are shrinking. This is even more true for those under 35, where almost half apply to more than 25 jobs during a job search. When candidates prioritize volume, building a connection becomes that much more difficult.



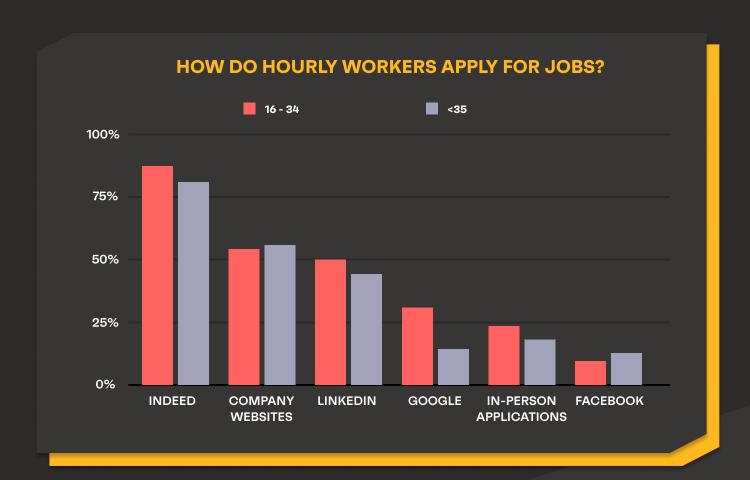
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Putting a resume into Indeed, is like throwing it to the wind. It's so ineffective, but you can't help but get carried away with it. In no time, you've put out over a hundred.



## Online Platforms Are by Far the Most Common

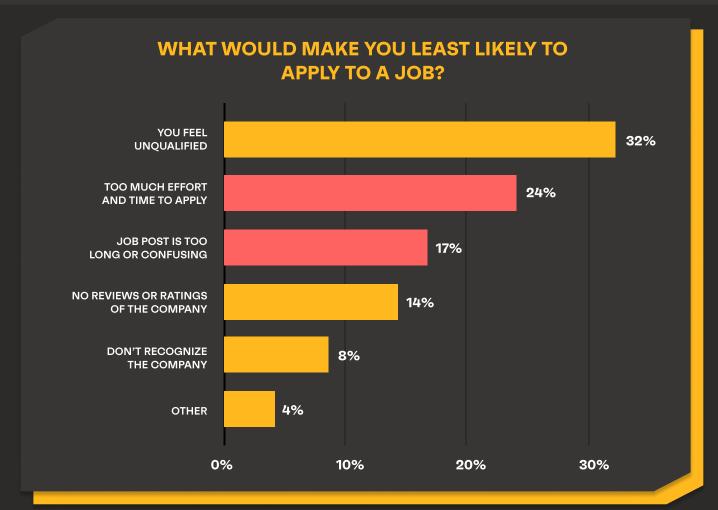
Applying for jobs via online platforms is second nature, it's by far the most common method. And that's true across all ages of workers. The ease of online applications has reinforced the volume nature of the process. **The result is a lack of human connection.** In many cases, a candidate will have to click through dozens of screens over multiple days before connecting with a human. It's easy to feel overlooked and move on.



### **>**

## The Current Process Deters Qualified Candidates

Over **40% of candidates** are discouraged from applying to a job because of the process. It could be that it takes too much effort and time or that the job post is too long or confusing. These candidates feel qualified but choose not to apply. Making improvements to your process will improve your flow of candidates.



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I think employers should take into account the difference between the nice-to-haves and the must-haves. When you're reading through a long list of criteria for a job that doesn't even pay that well, you start to question the effort and time to apply. Not to mention, it makes you feel unqualified for a job you're probably perfectly capable of.



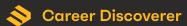
#### **Frustration in the Process Causes Ghosting**

We now understand more about the job search: candidates spend limited time reviewing job posts, they apply to a high volume of roles, and it's overwhelmingly digital. It's not a human process. And when candidates don't feel a connection, it's no surprise that they move on without communication. Ghosting is the symptom of underlying issues with the application and interview process. When we asked candidates about why they ghost, the underlying issues weren't surprising - lack of clarity (particularly around wage), lack of communication, and lack of empathy.

#### Lack of Wage Info in the Job Description



"I didn't like the wage and the workplace was not flexible enough."



"The job didn't pay enough, I didn't like his approach, and the location didn't work for me."



#### **Lack of Communication**

"Something came up and I feel bad about it but the role wasn't for me and I would be wasting both of our time."



"The process was long and unclear. We did a phone interview and then they asked me to watch a 1 hour session about the company and then they would let me know if we were moving to a Skype interview, and finally in-person."



#### **Lack of Empathy**

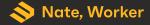
"First, I didn't like the wage. But then, the guy skipped my interview."

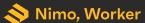


#### Career Discoverer

"I applied to so many jobs and you know what, ghosting was the problem. I got interviews, but then they would never write back to me, not even to say, 'hey, thanks for your time, we found another candidate. It's a two way street and it comes down to how you're treated and valued."

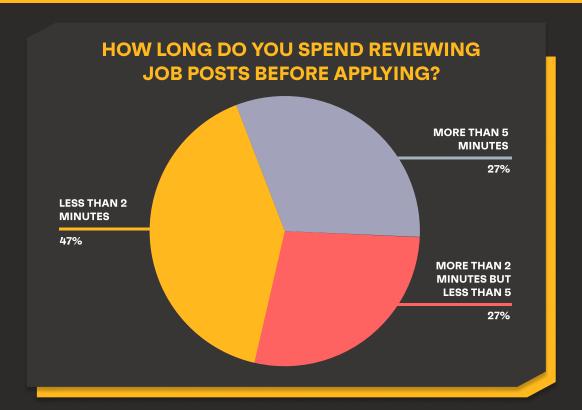
"Things have changed since COVID, but it's just as much an employee problem as an employer problem, and one feeds into the other. I think that plays into ghosting. I understand why it could happen, because communication isn't good. And you don't want to treat people as a number. Some of it is money, but people want to be treated nicely and empowered.."







#### **Almost Half Spend < 2 Minutes Reviewing a Job Post**



To be honest, the job posts don't really give me an idea of what I'm looking for. There is such a long description, so many qualifications, but after all that, it's not that clear what they're looking for.



If I can't look over a job post quickly and come away with an understanding of whether I have the skills needed for the role, I move on. That's another thing, if the wage isn't there, I skip over it.



Career Discoverer

Your job description should be so short that you can read it on your phone. Another thing, pay transparency is huge for Gen Z. They want that information in front of them.

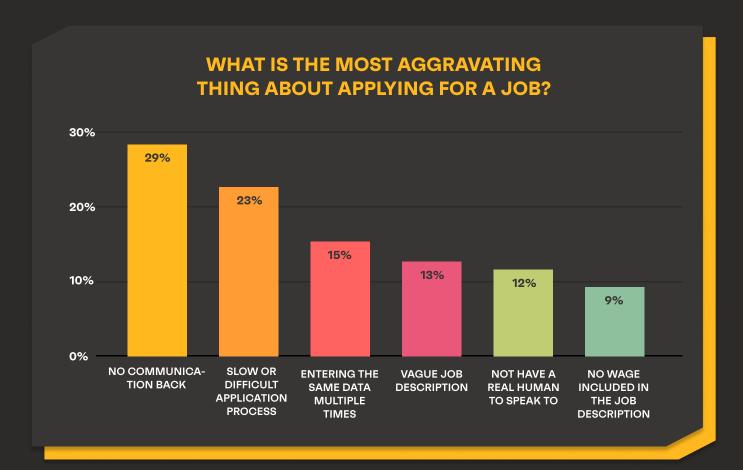


Val Upfold, Expert



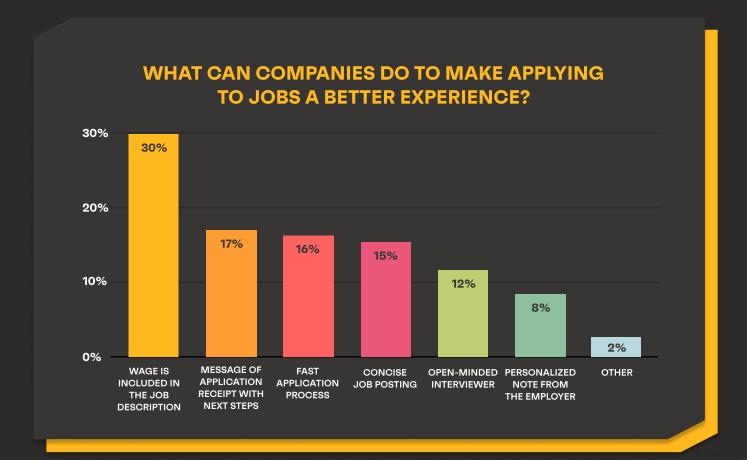
#### Those That Do Apply Are Frustrated

Lack of communication and a slow application process are the two biggest pain points for applicants. No surprise that these were also directly cited as reasons why applicants ghost employers.



## Necruiting Process

Clarity and transparency are the areas where recruiters can improve their application process. Including wage in the job description directly addresses one of the primary reasons candidates ghost - and it's a simple change. After that, find areas to improve communication and streamline the process.





## Takeaways

Systems and tools have made the job search a long, impersonal, and demoralizing process. Make improvements to your process and you will end up with a better flow of candidates and less ghosting.



- 1. Most candidates look for a job when they need one, not when they have one. Move quickly because they generally take the first offer they receive.
- 2. Improve your job description include wages and make it as concise as possible.
- 3. Once someone applies, be as transparent as possible and keep the process moving.



#### **Let's Revisit Our Candidates**



**Steve** 

Steve stays in his role because of the money. He is the main provider. But over the years, as the grind has gotten to him, he can't help but take an interest in good management. Compensation is most important to Steve, but it's the search process that has been most disappointing; things have changed over the years. When Steve was connected by another guy on the job, he always had a sense of the going wage. His biggest complaint about the job platforms (other than how tedious they are!) is the lack of transparency about wages.

Rahul is looking to stay in the same industry but he needs to make a better wage to afford rent in a new place when his wife comes. The thing he needs most is Canadian work experience. He searches on job platforms and puts in 25 applications over one month. He targets his searches based on companies that value wage, convenient location, and career growth. Rahul estimates that it takes him 2+ minutes to review each job posting, he trusts in an employer if they give the wage up front and he thinks a job posting should consist of the nuts and bolts, not the nice-to-haves. Rahul got the job with a marginal wage increase.



Rahul



Lexa was tired of her new boss, and so she searched up the leading trends for her role on TikTok and put in 126 applications on job platforms off of her iPhone. If the review of management, compensation, or career growth opportunities was poor, she moved on. If an application took too long, or the process was unclear, she ghosted. Lexa spent under 30 seconds reviewing applications, and if she couldn't see them easily on the screen of her phone, she moved on. Lexa took one interview and even though it wasn't her first pick, she took the job.



#### Key Learnings from CEO, Mike Wallace

Hello all,

Thank you for your interest in FindWRK and in better understanding Canada's hourly workforce.

Our team spends their time working closely with talent acquisition leaders to enable them to better do their job. We regularly hear the same challenges you read about in the press: *I can't find staff. No one wants to work. I get ghosted by candidates all the time.* At the same time, we engage with the candidates on the FindWRK platform every day, hearing about their stories, their objectives, and their challenges. It's clear to us that there is a **disconnect** here. **Ultimately that's why we built FindWRK.** 

And it's why we put this document together. We know that a stronger understanding of today's workforce will go a long way to helping those that use our platform to hire.

There are more than 10,000,000 hourly paid workers in Canada. There are nuances within this group based on age, life stage, immigration status, and motivation. Knowing what type of person you're looking to hire and what motivates them will help you structure a compelling opportunity for them.

44% of hourly workers hold more than one job. 48% of workers under 35 stay in a role for less than 6 months. 41% of workers don't expect to be in the same industry in five years, let alone the same role. **Retaining and attracting great talent is more important than ever.** Retain your staff with **great management** and **competitive compensation. Highlight growth opportunities and flexibility** to draw candidates in.

That **ability to draw candidates in is fundamental** to running your business. It's clear from this work that the current way of doing this is broken. And that's one of the fundamental issues we're looking to solve with FindWRK.

For a long time, the answer to hiring in the hourly space has been **volume.** How many resumes can we get for what price per resume? **That way of thinking created efficiency problems for recruiters,** which were then addressed by software programs. But this efficiency comes at the expense of the candidate. **It's now a volume game for them too.** They spend a lot of time dealing with computers before they interact with a human. In that time and with that lack of human interaction, **you end up losing great candidates.** 

FindWRK was designed to provide the same efficiency without sacrificing the human connection. In minutes you can build a shortlist of select candidates that meet your needs and canvas them for interest. Then connect directly with those that fit and have intent. The first connection made with the candidate is a human one. And you start your relationship off on the right foot.

Hopefully, you've found this to be useful. I'm always available to chat about recruiting and talent acquisition or anything else that might be helpful. You can reach me at **mike@findwrk.com.** Don't be a stranger.

Mike

## FINDWRK will ensure that you connect with the right workers, fast.

Align with quality candidates in an hour or less. You can save time and find the right candidates fast with several features:

- 1. **Search**—Find qualified local candidates within seconds by using our search features to shortlist candidate profiles.
- 2. **Campaign**—Catch their attention by sending the first message. Share details about your role to see if they're interested.
- 3. **Connect**—Spend less time reviewing resumes and more time speaking to skilled, interested candidates. Create a human connection that lasts.

Thousands of workers across industries are ready to work! Spend money and time where it matters for that qualified candidate.



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matt@findwrk.com mike@findwrk.com



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