

The Candidate Perspective: What Hiring Looks Like Today

SUMMARY

In many respects, it's an employer's market today. Some employers will discount or deprioritize candidate experience, but it's important to remember that hiring is a two-way decision, and attracting and hiring the best talent requires a strategic, supportive approach.

Candidate Realities



CANDIDATES DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AS **STRESSFUL, SLOW, UNCLEAR**, AND EVEN **SCAMMY**



43% FREQUENTLY FEEL FRUSTRATION WITH JOB SEARCHES



REMOTE-SEEKING CANDIDATES ARE **20% MORE LIKELY** TO REPORT FREQUENT FRUSTRATION

Top frustrations come down to speed:



Ghosting/no updates
(64%)



Long, drawn-out process
(58%)

What Candidates Want

#1 PRIORITY TODAY:

a smooth, easy application that respects their time (61%)
— now edging out knowing starting salary (60%)



75% WANT GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES HIGHLIGHTED DURING HIRING



64% SAY TIMELY RESPONSES LEAVE THE STRONGEST POSITIVE IMPRESSION

CANDIDATES TRUST REFERRALS:
2/3 ARE VERY LIKELY TO APPLY IF A TRUSTED CONTACT REFERS THEM

CONCLUSION

Candidates have never been clearer about what they want: speed, respect, and authenticity. A smooth application that values their time now outranks even salary transparency as the top priority. At the same time, frustrations with ghosting, unclear communication, and long processes are eroding trust and pushing candidates to disengage. In today's market, those small signals of respect are what make the biggest difference in winning — and keeping — talent.

SOURCE

2025 Lighthouse Research & Advisory Talent Acquisition Trends Study (n=1,000 candidates)