

VISI^{ER} SURVEY REPORT

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GHOSTING BY EMPLOYEES (AND EMPLOYERS)

on the rise amidst a tight labor market





Ghosting is a practice that was already being lamented prior to the pandemic, but since the pandemic and its massive impact on employee satisfaction and the emergence of the “great resignation,” Visier expected that the practice might be on the rise, discovering that indeed both job candidates and potential employers are both guilty of ghosting.

Visier explored the issue recently with a survey of 1,000 U.K. and 1,000 U.S. employees who had been job hunting during the previous 18 months, to measure both the prevalence of ghosting and the reasons behind it. This report looks at the results of the U.S. survey.

As we expected, ghosting is on the rise. This is true not just among job applicants, but employers as well—with 62% of respondents saying they have been ghosted by an employer or potential employer.

Ghosting common among U.S. job seekers

An overwhelming majority of workers actively looking for a job have ghosted an employer or potential employer over the past 18 months, suggesting that ghosting has become more common in the job market and an accepted reality in the hiring process.

A startling 84% of respondents indicated that they had ghosted an employer or potential employer at least once during this timeframe. Of these:

- **37%** indicated they had ghosted an employer
- **25%** had ghosted a potential employer
- **21%** had ghosted both an employer and a potential employer

You read those numbers correctly. It’s not just during the talent acquisition process that candidates may ghost a potential employer—even after receiving an offer, and even once actually on the job, employees may still suddenly disappear. Interestingly, even though such a majority of job seekers indicate that they had or would ghost a potential or current employer, they also recognize that there may be potential negative impacts of them doing this—67% said they had concerns about these negative impacts (70% of male and 59% of female respondents).

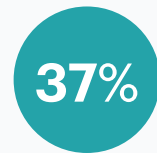
ghost·ing

[goh-sting]
noun

Abruptly ending communication with someone without explanation. The concept most often refers to romantic relationships but can also describe disappearances from friendships and the workplace.

Psychology Today

Who’s ghosting who?



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Job seekers also reported that they are just as willing to ghost an employer during the late stages of the hiring funnel than the early stages. Although a third of employees said they would ghost after their first interview, and 30% would ghost at the very beginning, after being approached about a potential new role, a staggering percentage said they would ghost in the later stages of the process:

- **31%** would ghost an employer after their first day on the job
- **31%** would ghost at the point of the job offer
- **30%** would ghost after accepting a job offer, but before starting the job
- **29%** would ghost after two or more interviews
- **27%** would ghost during the reference check period

So, who are these employees who drop out of the interview process? Their demographics vary in some interesting ways.

The demographics of ghosting job candidates

It may come as a surprise that job candidates' willingness to ghost increases steadily with job level seniority. The more senior the worker, the more comfortable they are with ghosting their current or prospective employer. In fact, respondents in the highest levels of management reported that they had ghosted a current or prospective employer within the past 18 months.

- Directors (91%)
- SVPs (99%)
- VPs (93%)
- C-suite (96%)

This was, perhaps, the most startling data revealed through this research.

We also found that the type of role and size of company also factor into decisions to ghost. Desk workers (89%) were more likely to ghost than those in frontline positions (79%). Large-scale enterprises are more likely to be ghosted than smaller businesses—95% of candidates interviewing at organizations with more than 5000 employees had ghosted one of those organizations; 76% had ghosted an organization with 1000-4999 employees; 81% had ghosted an organization with 500-900 employees.

Men are more likely (90%) to ghost than women (68%) with both current and prospective employers at each stage of the hiring process—from first interview through the first day on the job. This was true even pre-pandemic with 71% of male respondents reporting that they were likely to ghost an employer compared to 50% of female respondents. During the hiring process, men are still more likely (64%) to ghost than women (41%)—68% of these men say this is related to the COVID-19 pandemic and hybrid working models compared to 48% of women.

At what point in the hiring process do job seekers ghost?

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What's driving the ghosting trend?

One of the major drivers of ghosting today is a US job market that has become increasingly competitive. In this market, potential employees have higher expectations for employers especially related to pay, company culture and even the interview process itself.

More than half (55%) of respondents said that other available job opportunities was the top reason they were more likely to ghost either a prospective or current employer. Other drivers included an interview process that was impersonal (46%) and an awareness of the overall rise in ghosting (44%)—"if everybody else is doing it..."

Because of the leverage they have in this job market, prospective employees have higher expectations and demands than ever before—another driver of the increase in ghosting.

The top reasons for ghosting related to these expectations included:

- Salary levels below expectations (29%)
- Other, more attractive job offers (28%)
- Inaccurate descriptions of job roles (27%)
- Companies with bad reputations and online reviews (26%)
- Dislike of perceived workplace culture (22%)

However, companies offering the right positions, with competitive salaries and offering a strong corporate culture are still subject to ghosting. The interview process itself also often leads to ghosting if the experience is not optimum.

Candidates pointed to a negative first impression of the company (28%) and an interview process that was too slow, too long, and too complex (26%) as two key reasons for ghosting.

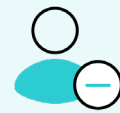
Top reasons for ghosting



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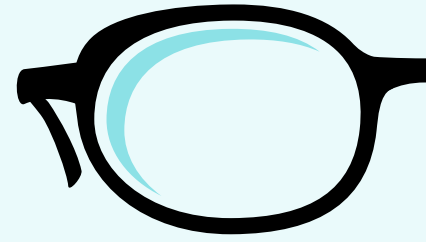
How employers can address this trend

Based on these results, what are some steps that employers can take to minimize the odds that they'll be ghosted?

First, review your own hiring process and talent acquisition pipeline to determine whether improvements need to be made in the communication process with candidates to avoid them feeling that they have been ghosted. These perceptions can have major negative impacts on employer brand or reputation which we've already seen is important for job candidates considering companies as a potential place to work. In fact, 37% of respondents said that they would be angrier about being ghosted by a prospective employer than a date—nearly half of women respondents (47%) and about one third of male respondents (33%) said that this was the case.

Consider how candidates may be falling through the cracks at various stages in the process, especially when multiple people are involved. Automating the process can help to close some of these gaps by minimizing the potential for missed handoffs and miscommunication.

Even as the volume of job requisitions increases, companies need to put their best foot forward during every aspect of the hiring process to stand out in an increasingly competitive US labor market.



About Visier

Visier's purpose is to reveal the human truth about your workforce and contribute to a better future.

Visier was founded to focus on what matters to business people: answering the right questions, even the ones a person might not know to ask. Questions that shape business strategy, provide the impetus for taking action, and drive better business results.

Visier delivers fast, clear people insight by using all the available people data—regardless of source. With best-practice expertise built-in, decisionmakers can confidently take action. Thanks to our amazing customers, Visier is the market leader in Workforce Analytics with more than 15,000 customers in 75 countries around the world.

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