

# The Rise of the Well-Informed Candidate



ManpowerGroup<sup>®</sup>  
Solutions

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# Introduction

## GLOBAL CANDIDATE PREFERENCES SURVEY

We asked  
**14,000**  
currently in  
the workforce

ages **18-65**

fielded in **19**  
influential employment markets across the globe

*Candidates shared what matters most to them in the job search process*



Information is power. Historically, the balance of power between employers and candidates has favored employers. Candidates had few sources of information about open positions, corporate culture or company vision, let alone compensation and benefits.

Globally, the talent market is constantly changing. Candidates today report a dramatic increase in the amount of information they have about a company and a position at early stages of the job search process. In the last year alone, candidates report significant increases in the amount and types of information they have prior to beginning the application process.

To better understand how employers can leverage global candidate preferences and perceptions, ManpowerGroup Solutions, the world's largest Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) provider, went directly to the source — candidates. In the Global Candidate Preferences Survey, nearly

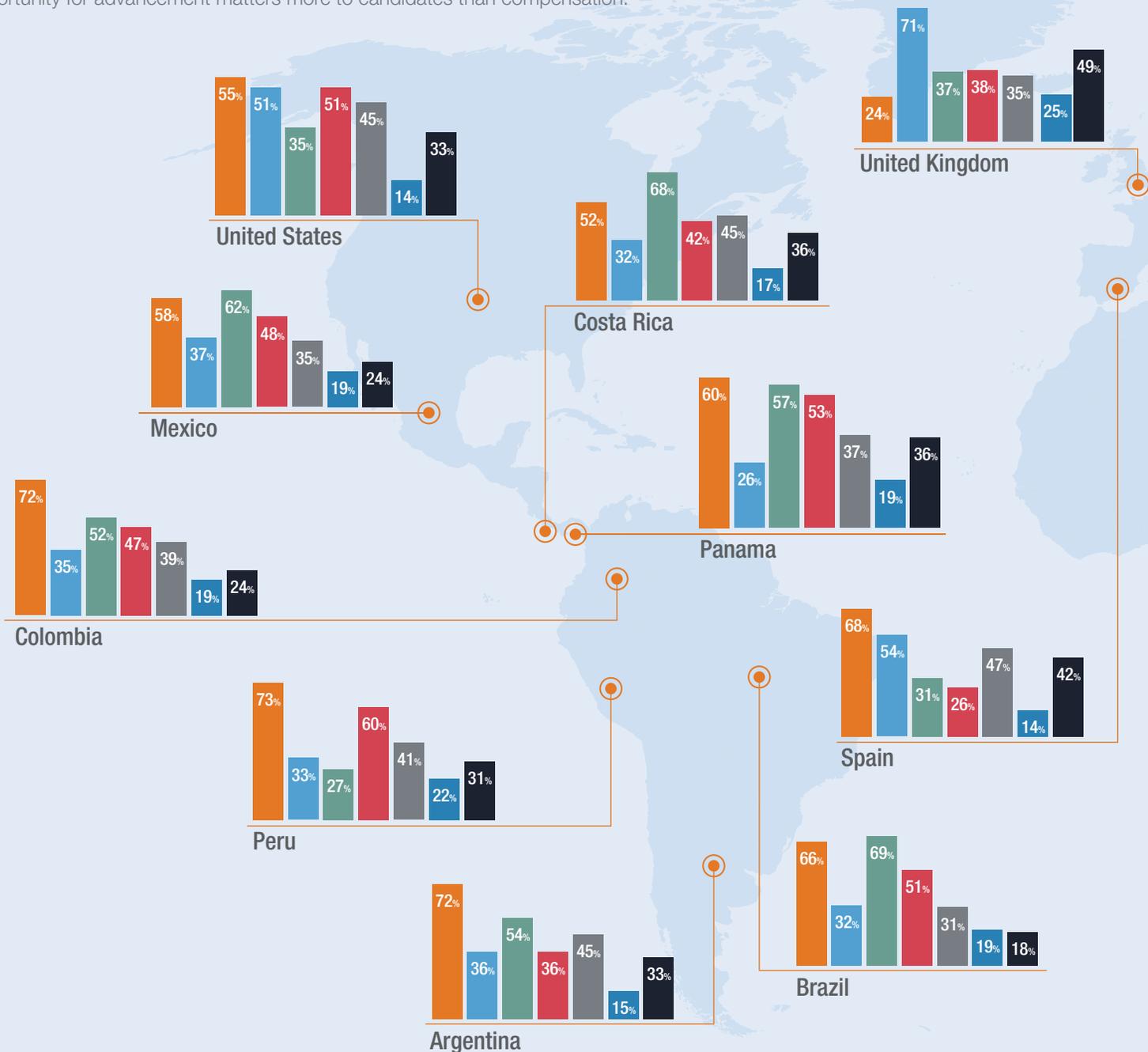
14,000 individuals currently in the workforce between the ages of 18 and 65 shared what matters to them in the job search process. The survey was fielded in 19 influential employment markets across the globe.

This report provides new insights into the type of information candidates look for and are armed with before they hit the “submit” button on their application. Never before have candidates been so well-informed so early on in the process. And it is not just about having a more detailed job description – **candidates worldwide report a significant increase in the amount of information they have about compensation, benefits, company mission/vision and culture, corporate brand and corporate social responsibility.** This report highlights what matters most to today's candidates and suggests new strategies and tactics to effectively compete for in-demand talent in this new global marketplace.

# What Information is Most Important to Candidates?

Generally, **compensation** and **type of work** are the most important factors in making career decisions. The Global Candidate Preferences Survey results also reveal that the importance of **schedule flexibility** is rising, pulling even with **benefits** as the third most important factor.

There are significant differences by market. For example, candidates in Norway and the United Kingdom rank type of work as most important. However, in Australia, compensation falls almost to the bottom of the list of motivators with factors like schedule flexibility and geographic location ranking much higher. And in Brazil, Costa Rica and India, opportunity for advancement matters more to candidates than compensation.



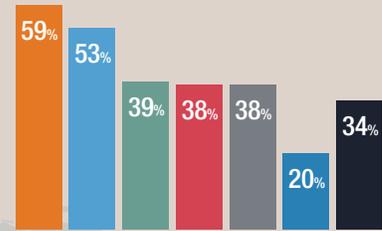
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Candidates have more power than ever before because they have more information, thus they make more informed decisions. Companies have to be smarter in where they look for candidates. This is contributing to the rise in referrals as a major source of candidates.

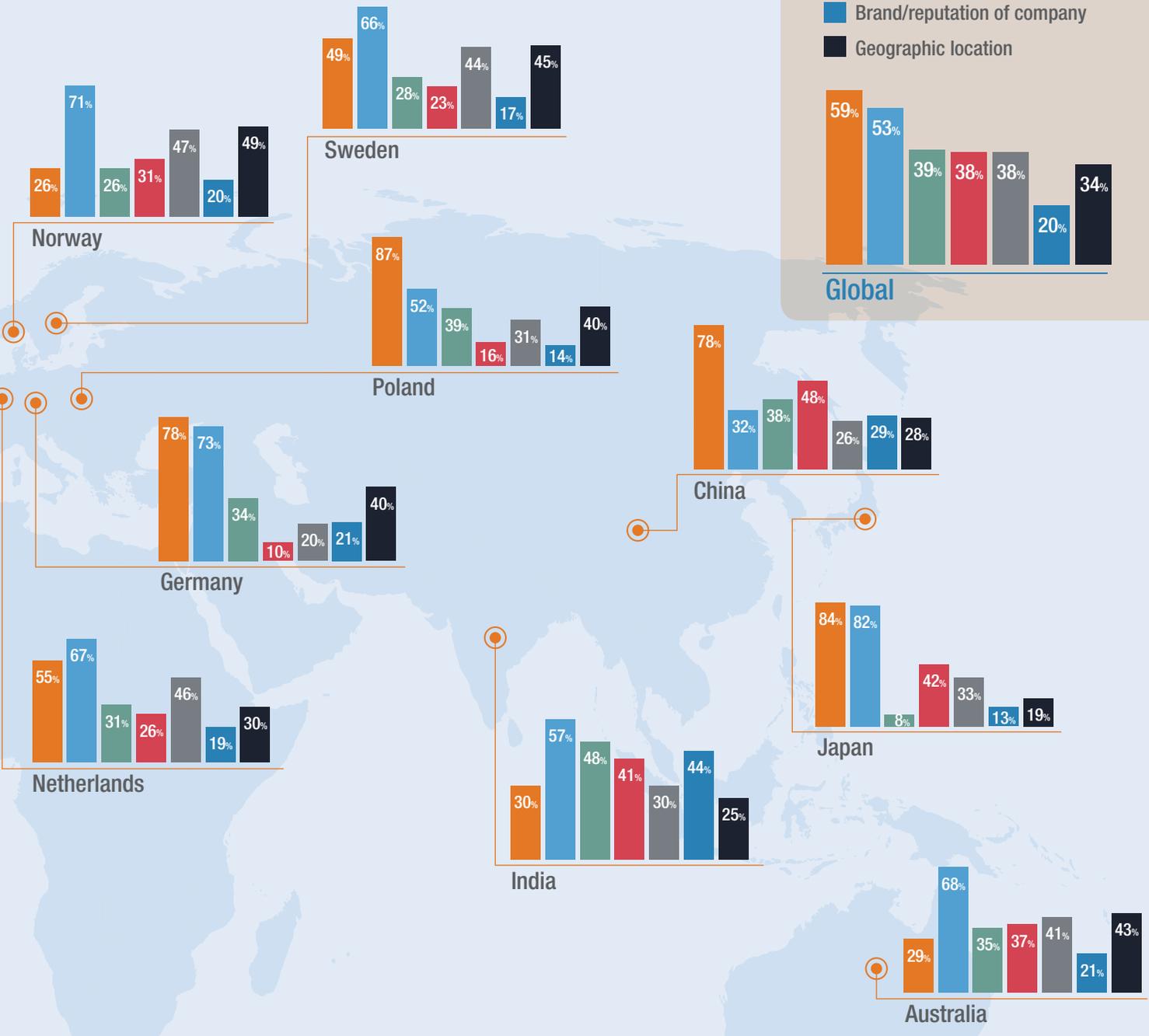
Nikki Grech, Executive Director, ManpowerGroup Solutions, Australia

## Most Important Factors When Making Career Decisions

- Compensation
- Type of work
- Opportunity for advancement
- Benefits offered
- Schedule flexibility
- Brand/reputation of company
- Geographic location



Global



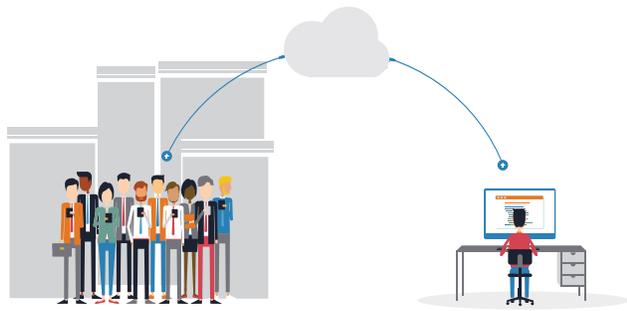
When it comes to attracting and retaining Millennials specifically, companies need to demonstrate that staying with their organization can lead to increased pay, new skills and career progression, all of which is valued highly by Millennials across the globe.

**Regardless of what motivates candidates in a given market, candidates around the world are seeking and finding more information than ever before.** It is important for employers to be aware of what motivates candidates when making career decisions.

# Information Early On

**Candidates report having more information about a company and the opportunity early on in the job search process**

- Double the Information on Company Brand
- Compensation Transparency
- The Perks of Known Benefits
- Seeing the Value in the Vision



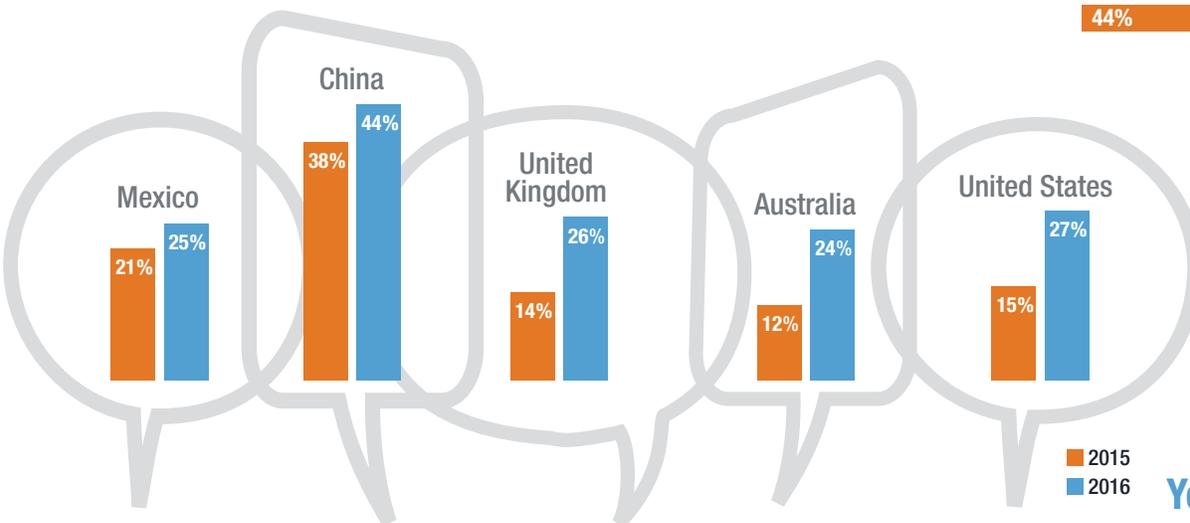
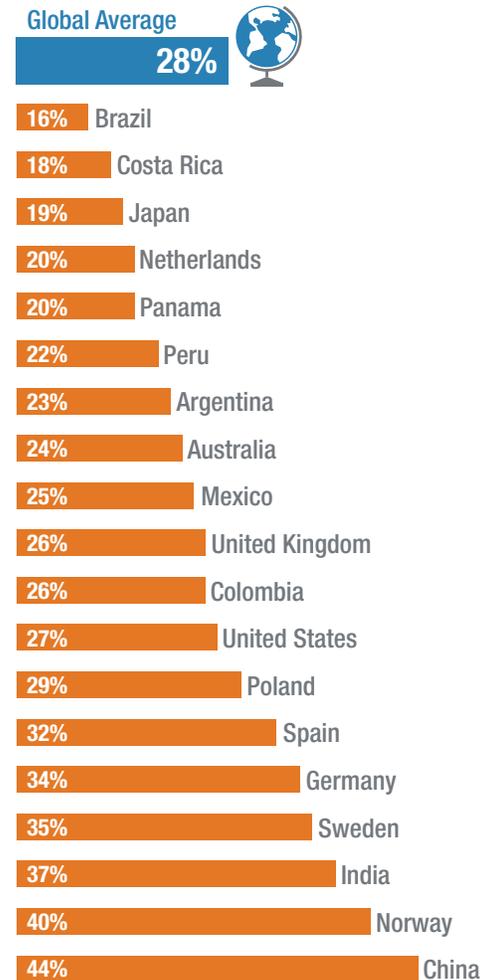
# Double the Information on Company Brand

In previous candidate preferences research, 58 percent of global candidates stated that company brand is more important to them than it was five years ago. This is especially true when it comes to younger Millennials/Gen Y candidates (18-35 years old). Companies can benefit from embracing this trend and building a stronger Employer Value Proposition (EVP), or a unique set of offerings, associations and values that positively influence target candidates and employees.

In the five major talent markets tracked over the past two years (China, the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and Mexico), candidates report having more information about employer brand prior to the application process. Candidates in the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom report having access to almost double the amount of information about brand than the year prior.

The trend also holds true for other markets surveyed in 2016. Globally, 28 percent of candidates surveyed reported having information about an employer's brand pre-application. Norway, India, Sweden, Germany, Spain and Poland exceeded the global average – though candidates in Japan, Costa Rica and Brazil report having significantly less information.

## Global Comparison: Candidates with Information About Company Brand Pre-Application



2015  
2016

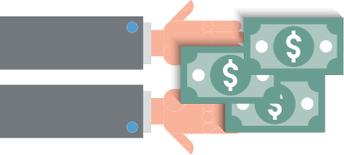
## Year-Over-Year: Candidates with Information About Company Brand Pre-Application





Traditionally, Japanese workers do not speak out about the workplace. Historically, it is commonplace for Japanese workers to spend their whole careers at one employer. Candidates do have more information than ever before about companies, but it is changing more slowly than in other markets.

Ayano Kiryu, Assistant Manager, ManpowerGroup, Japan

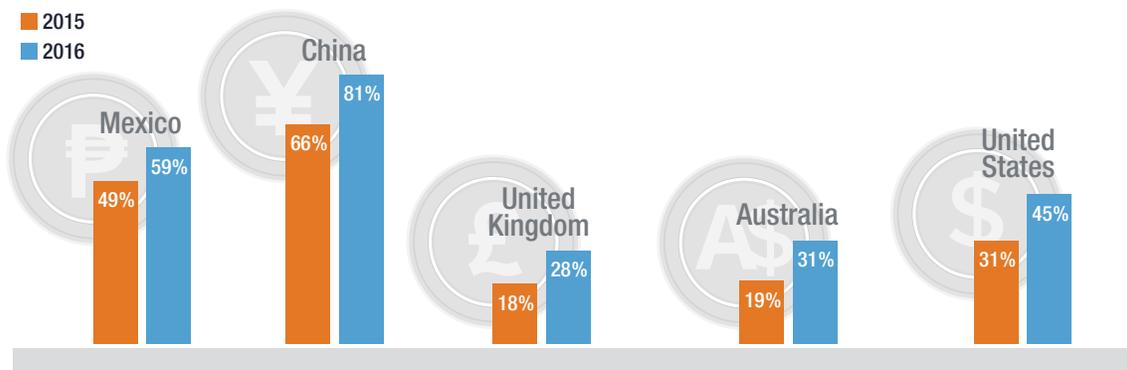


# Compensation Transparency

As noted earlier, compensation is an important motivator for career decisions among candidates globally. In fact, when it comes to switching jobs, an increase in pay is twice as powerful as the type of work according to the 2015 Global Candidate Preferences Survey. Earlier and more complete disclosure of compensation information may also increase recruiting efficiency as candidates can remove themselves from consideration when one of their primary motivators for career decisions and job switching does not meet their expectations.

In the five major markets for which year-over-year comparison data is currently available, the number of global candidates with compensation information has increased more than 10 percent in all markets.

## Year-Over-Year: Candidates with Information About Compensation Range Pre-Application



On average, **44 percent of candidates globally have information about compensation prior to completing the application process.** However, information levels fluctuate by market. More than half of candidates reported having compensation range information in China, Japan, Mexico, Brazil and Panama. Sweden and Norway lie at the other end of the spectrum with fewer than 20 percent having access to similar information.

## Global Comparison: Candidates with Information About Compensation Range Pre-Application



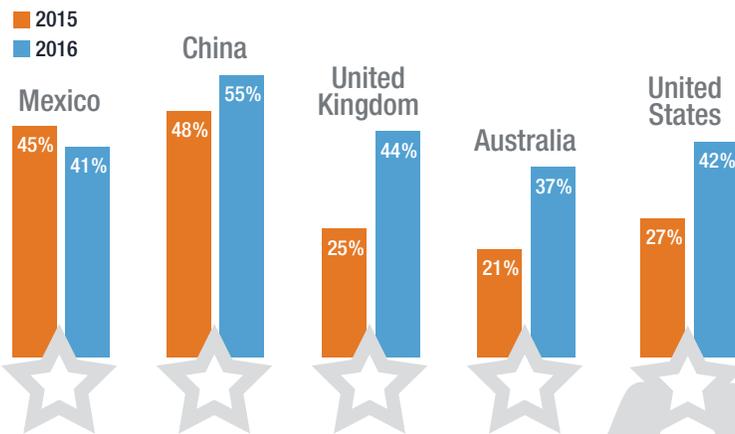


# The Perks of Known Benefits

Candidates across the globe expressed a desire to understand the benefits information offered by prospective employers. **38 percent of candidates said that the benefits offered with a role or company was one of their top three factors in making a career decision.**

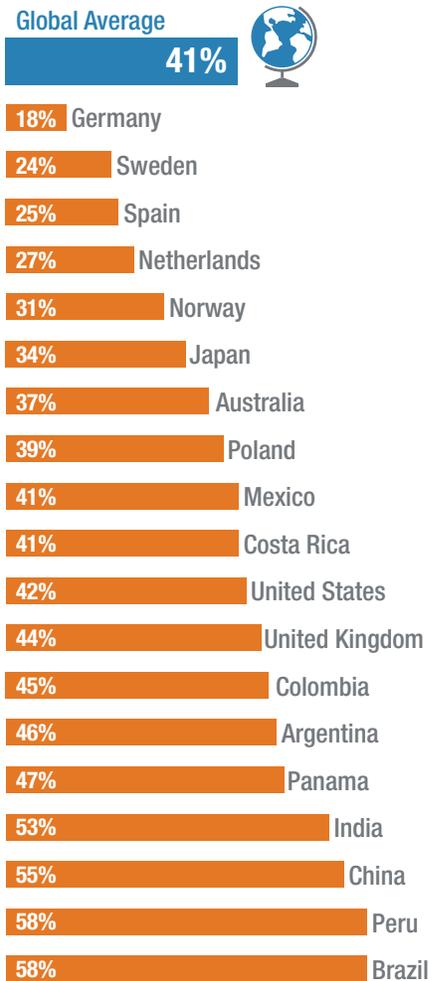
Knowing benefits information prior to application submission increased more in the United Kingdom and Australia more than in the United States, Mexico or China. This may be the result of the continued provision of strong benefits packages by employers in the United Kingdom and Australia versus the other countries.

## Year-Over-Year: Candidates with Information About Benefits Offered Pre-Application



Candidates in Latin American countries reported having more information about benefits than other global regions. And over half of all Chinese and Indian candidates also reported having information about benefits offered at the very earliest stages of the job search process.

## Global Comparison: Candidates with Information About Benefits Offered Pre-Application

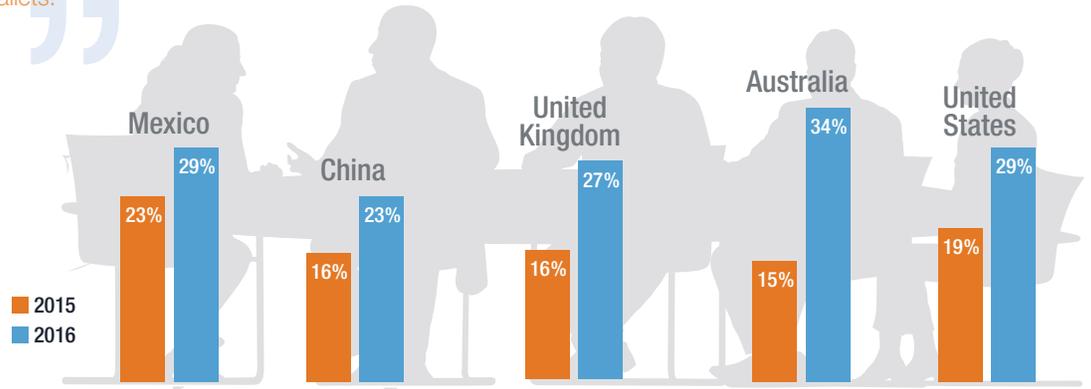




Candidates want to be aligned with organizations they feel good about. Their personal brand is tied to the employer they work for. Candidates, like consumers, are now voting with their talents, as well as their wallets.

Jim McCoy, Vice President and Global Practice Leader, ManpowerGroup Solutions

## Year-Over-Year: Candidates with Information About Company Mission and Vision Pre-Application



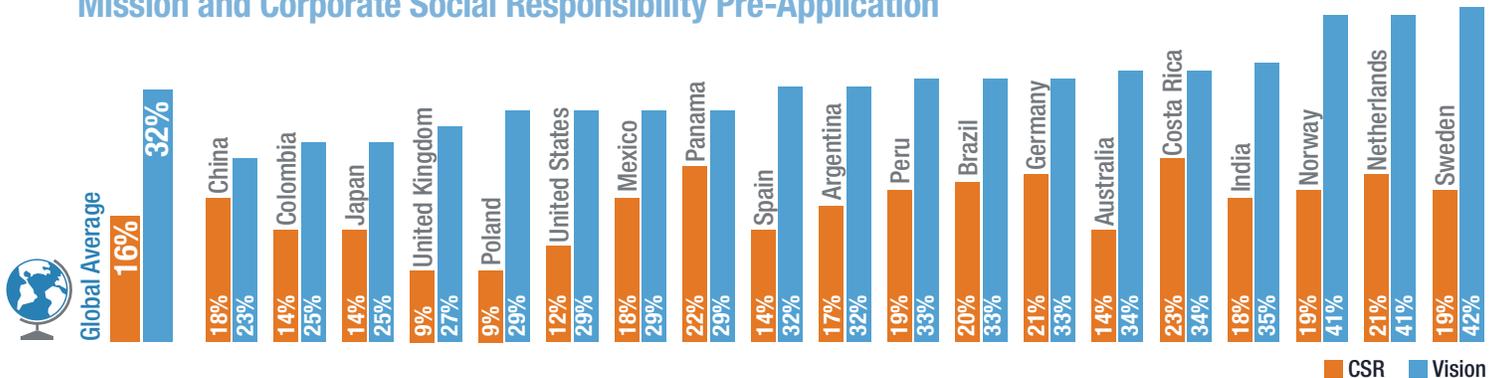
## Seeing the Value in the Vision

Companies have become increasingly active in sharing information about their mission, vision and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies. This comes at a time when more businesses and candidates seek to align themselves with organizations that share a common point-of-view and commitment to these important areas. According to ManpowerGroup's global [Millennials](#) study, a majority said purpose is a priority. Eight in 10 Millennials in Mexico, India and Brazil say working for employers who are socially responsible and aligned to their values is important.

More candidates than ever are accessing this type of information prior to submitting an application. In particular, job seekers in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States have made great strides in obtaining information about the vision and mission of potential employers.

**Globally, 32 percent of candidates report having information about their potential employer's corporate mission/vision at the earliest stages of the job search process.** Candidates in eleven of the surveyed countries either met or exceeded this global average. And while fewer candidates (16 percent) report having CSR information prior to applying for a position, less than any other aspect of job search information, that number continues to rise.

## Global Comparison: Candidates with Information about Corporate Vision/ Mission and Corporate Social Responsibility Pre-Application





For years, the information about companies and positions was very controlled and purposefully hidden. We now encourage our clients to share more information about company vision and what it is like to work there...it creates a powerful and meaningful dialogue with candidates that can yield better quality hires.

Ximena Cardenas, Program Delivery Manager, ManpowerGroup Solutions, Latin America



# Key Considerations

## Key Considerations for Employers in a World of More Informed Candidates

The Global Candidate Preferences research highlights a shift in the balance of power from employer to candidate. Regardless of whether this is fed by employers increasing access to information in an effort to be more transparent and build stronger brands or candidates being increasingly vigilant in seeking what they want to understand, leveraging the myriad of sources available on the Internet, this shift has significant implications for organizations.

## EMPLOYERS SHOULD CONSIDER:

# Reaching the Right Talent Where They Are



- ✓ Engaging with the Right Groups Often
- ✓ Messaging by Occupation Type
- ✓ Company Websites are Still Number One
- ✓ Employer Review Websites are Gaining Attention

Today's candidates are looking for information that resonates with them and with their situation. They want to have career conversations where and when they want. Throughout the job search process, they seek information in a variety of areas, which is good news in some cases. They are also finding information in places that are tough for employers to control.

The rise of the well-informed candidate suggests organizations should think about the way they spend marketing dollars in a holistic manner. By targeting candidate messaging, you are reinforcing your consumer brand simultaneously.

Jim McCoy, Vice President and Global Practice Leader, ManpowerGroup Solutions

**Engaging with the Right Groups Often** As competition for candidates intensifies, employers are attempting to build talent communities and increase the frequency of communications with their talent pools. To capture the attention of candidates, companies are pushing more information to candidates than ever before. Communications that showcase company culture, values and other aspects of employer brand are increasing in volume.

**Messaging by Occupation Type** Fortune 500 companies are increasingly devoting portions of their career pages to messaging about specific job categories (e.g., engineers, sales professionals).<sup>1</sup> This personalized content is intended to build stronger relationships with hard-to-find talent by demonstrating an understanding of their unique interests and needs.

**Company Websites are Still Number One** For the second year in a row, candidates consider company websites to be the number one source of information and the second most credible source of information about a company's brand (current employees of the company are the most credible source). Employers must recognize the importance of the content on their website and the potential of their HR portals to build employer brand and increase access to the information candidates are seeking.

**Employer Review Websites are Gaining Attention** Global Candidate Preferences Survey data shows that employer review websites (e.g., glassdoor.com, careerbliss.com) are gaining in importance as credible sources of information about an employer's brand. Globally, they are the third most trusted source of information. Thus, given that these websites are here to stay, HR executives need to be aware of what people are saying about their employer brand — both positive and negative. Ideally, engaging with these posts in a positive way will help potential candidates spot posts that are simply false or not reflective of the company's values.

Some companies reject information sharing and transparency based on the fear that they will lose their competitive advantage if other companies copy them. In today's market, that is incredibly short sighted. They are not building employer brand for the long run, nor are they using all the weapons in their arsenal. Dahiana Arias Gutierrez, RPO Manager, ManpowerGroup Solutions, Costa Rica

<sup>1</sup> SmashFly Technologies, Smashfly Recruitment Marketing Report Card for the 2016 Fortune 500, 2017, 8.



EMPLOYERS  
SHOULD CONSIDER:

## Being Open to New Conversations and New Ways of Having Them

To meet the information expectations of candidates, employers should consider being open to sharing more information about their company.

- ✓ More Money Talk
- ✓ Have a Chat
- ✓ More Digital, More Visual
- ✓ Offer a Test Drive

In the U.K., companies are keen for the best talent which often means recruiting passive candidates. Transparency is key to these candidates. Being well-informed reduces their risk and ensures that they are moving from their current job to something better.

Karen De-Merist, Operations Director  
ManpowerGroup Solutions, United Kingdom

Many companies in Germany are starting to experiment with video job descriptions. Employers create a YouTube channel where people talk about the job that is advertised and give applicants the opportunity to see the workplace. It is a great way to subtly communicate corporate culture. People can get a real feel for the company.

Silke Meyer, Director of Operations  
ManpowerGroup Solutions, Germany

**More Money Talk** In some markets, compensation information for particular roles has been publically available for years. In countries without such transparency, the anonymity of the Internet has made it a safe place to share company and salary information in ways never before possible. Millennials are helping to erode pay confidentiality policies. It is becoming harder to keep employees (and potential employees) in the dark regarding average industry compensation levels. Some companies seeking to attract Millennials have developed salary transparency policies as part of their corporate culture.

**Have a Chat** More and more companies are encouraging potential candidates to engage with them prior to the application submission. Specifically, employers are using chat functions to encourage potential applicants to ask questions of employees. And since current employees rank as the number one source of credible information about an employer's brand, the chat function is a simple and relatively low-cost way to increase exposure of employee brand ambassadors. Open forum chats on Facebook can also provide a way to impart information in an authentic way. While training and guidelines should be implemented to guide the employees selected to participate, this can be an excellent way to engage with candidates and provide them with accurate, real-time information about a company or position.

**More Digital, More Visual** The bar has been raised on social media content today. Text only posts and stock photos no longer grab a viewer's attention. The use of dynamic content, such as animation and video is becoming commonplace on all social media channels and is more likely to drive engagement than text-only posts.<sup>2</sup> To gain the attention of in-demand talent, employers must adapt to this landscape. This points to the need to be more creative in expressing your brand online. Content such as video job descriptions, a 3D company tour, employee testimonials or a dedicated careers YouTube channel, can dramatically influence candidates' perception of your company.

**Offer a Test Drive** One of the best ways to ensure that candidates understand the employer's value proposition (and vice versa) is to have them experience it firsthand. In Japan, social recruiting platform Wantedly does just that. Wantedly curates a group of companies that candidates can interact with in office visits, workshops, mentoring groups and even weekend projects to better understand what it is like to work at a company.

Companies in other markets can take a powerful lesson from Wantedly: candidate "test drives" emphasize transparency and build strong talent pools of potential employees — lowering the risk of culture or skills mismatches in the hiring process.

<sup>2</sup> Liraz Margalit, Ph.D., "Video vs. Text: The Brain Perspective, Psychology Today, May 1. 2015.

# EMPLOYERS SHOULD CONSIDER: **Monitoring the Buzz**

Just as it is essential for employers to reach candidates in the right way with the right information, it is equally important for organizations to understand how they are being talked about and perceived on channels they do not own. While control is limited, there is always an ability to respond and often, educate.

- ✓ Information Beyond Employer's Control
- ✓ Recruiting Phishing Scams are Increasing
- ✓ Validate What is Correct



In my experience in Europe, all the major companies are present on Glassdoor, but overall, only about half of the companies proactively manage their profiles. Smaller companies are less invested due to the time and monetary expense required to have a Glassdoor membership. Some employers are also still resistant to making public statements on HR matters in a public format.

Roberta Cucchiaro, Marketing and Sourcing Specialist, RPO, ManpowerGroup Solutions, Europe, Middle East and Africa



## Information Beyond Employer's Control

The rise of social networks, employer review sites and the proliferation of media outlets in today's 24/7 news environment means unfiltered information and opinions has the potential to go viral. In an era of "fake news" in which some websites deliberately publish hoaxes, propaganda and disinformation to increase their traffic and revenues, companies are presented with an unprecedented number of new channels of carrying information that can undermine their brands.

Employer responses send a strong message about a company's culture to all potential viewers: candidates, partners and investors. And candidates want to hear from leadership at the highest possible level. It helps engage them in a more direct dialogue with those steering the business and driving corporate culture. While it is understood that most responses will come from the HR department, it sends a strong message for response posts to come from a company's senior leaders.

## Recruiting Phishing Scams are Increasing

In many markets, online scammers have moved into the recruiting space and are sending fraudulent emails purporting to be from reputable companies about job openings. Often including the official logos and job descriptions from legitimate organizations, these "phishers" seek personal information or payment for services. The practice is especially prevalent in markets with a large migratory labor force who work outside their country of origin. As a result, candidates are becoming smarter about vetting the communications they receive and verifying recruiter credentials.

## Validate What is Correct

Throughout the process, reinforce and validate your corporate messages and understand what candidates have learned about the company through their independent research. Revisiting these messages reinforces the employer value proposition at multiple stages of engagement and assures candidate that they have the information they need to make a decision.

Engaging in meaningful, face-to-face dialog with candidates sets the tone for building employer-employee trust. It also provides HR executives with intelligence about candidate perceptions about the brand.



It was not so long ago that candidates would apply to an ad that was just three or four lines. That was all you had to go on. Now job descriptions are more detailed and candidates have a wide variety of supplemental information sources to explore.

Flor Alvarez, RPO Regional Sales Manager, Manpower Solutions, Latin America



# Conclusion

The rise of the well-informed candidate means that applicants today have more information about companies and open positions than ever before. As the information playing field becomes more level, employers have the opportunity to transform candidate information into knowledge by using the practical, emotional and interactive components that encourage dialogue, engagement and a more positive and engaging experience for candidates. Organizations should seek to harness the power of the well-informed candidate as a competitive advantage in today's global search for the best talent.

## More About the Respondents

Overall, the survey respondents were between **18 and 65 years old** and currently **in the workforce** (not retired or homemakers). In total there were **13,961 global respondents**.

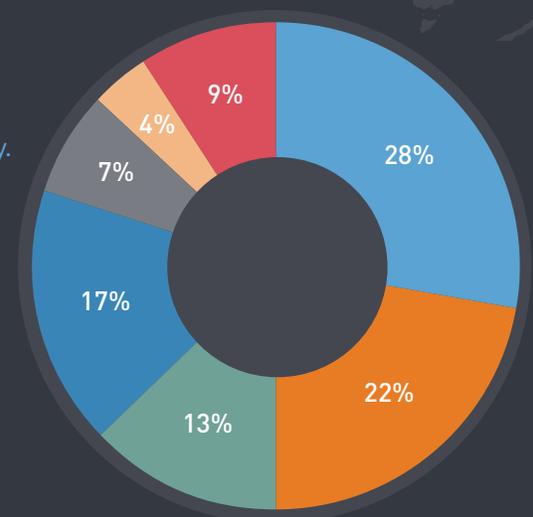
### MARKET BREAKDOWNS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Argentina (n=731), Australia (n=748), Brazil (n=751), China (n=725), Colombia (n=747), Costa Rica (n=248), Germany (n=785), India (n=752), Japan (n=775), Mexico (n=761), Netherlands (n=753), Norway (n=794), Panama (n=248), Peru (n=731), Poland (n=749), Spain (n=750), Sweden (n=763), United Kingdom (n=766) and United States (n=1,384)

They represented a cross-section of age, income, employment status (i.e., full-time, part-time, contract), career level and industry.

### Career Level

■ Non-managers	■ Entry-level	■ Executives
■ Managers	■ Undergraduate/graduate students	■ Senior-level executives
		■ Other



## About ManpowerGroup Solutions

ManpowerGroup Solutions provides clients with outsourcing services related to human resources functions, primarily in the areas of large-scale recruiting and workforce-intensive initiatives that are outcome-based, thereby sharing in the risk and reward with our clients. Our solutions offerings include TAPFIN-Managed Service Provider, Strategic Workforce Consulting, Borderless Talent Solutions, Talent Based Outsourcing and Recruitment Process Outsourcing, where we are one of the largest providers of permanent recruitment and contingent management in the world. ManpowerGroup Solutions is part of the ManpowerGroup family of companies, which also includes Manpower, Experis, and Right Management.



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