CareerPlug

2020 RECRUITING METRICS

Benchmark Data by Industry

INTRODUCTION

Hiring metrics are often still a black box, particularly for smaller companies with limited access to custom, enterprise reporting on the metrics that matter in hiring. Our team at CareerPlug analyzed hiring activity in 2019 from **more than 10,000 companies** — covering more than **10 million applications** — to shed light on the most important metrics that determine hiring success for small businesses.

In this report, you will find analysis of data covering the **hiring funnel** from initial visit through hire, organized by industry.

This report will establish industry-level benchmarks for key hiring metrics, including:

- Average job view and application rates
- Conversion rates from job view to application, from application to interview, and from interview to hire
- The number of applicants typically needed to make one hire
- The average time it takes to contact applicants — and how long it typically takes to contact a hire
- The top sources for applicants and hires
- The times of the year that are most likely to produce the highest application rates

CONTENTS

2020

Hiring Benchmark Metrics Defined

Views Per Job
How many views a job posting gets

Applicants Per Job
The number of applicants received divided by the number of jobs posted

Applicants Per Hire
How many applicants were received to make one hire

Average Days to Contact
The number of days it took to contact an applicant, starting from the minute the applicant applied

Average Days to Contact Hire
The number of days it took to contact an applicant who became a hire

Average Days to Hire
The number of days it took to hire an applicant, starting from the minute the applicant applied

Conversion Rate Metrics Defined

View-to-Applicant Conversion Rate

How many views of a job posting turn into applications

Applicant-to-Interview Conversion Rate

How many applications turn into interview invitations

Interview-to-Hire Conversion Rate

How many interview invitations turn into hires

What We Learned About Hiring in 2019

In analyzing the data, we found the most significant takeaways to be the answers to the following questions.

1. How many job views convert to applicants?

Rates of job view-to-applicant conversion rates vary widely between top performing industries and those that lag behind. Performing well on this metric indicates a use of compelling job descriptions, clear job titles, and simple initial application forms. **Industries that perform well on this metric can see view-to-applicant rates of 15 to 20%,** and all companies should be targeting at least a 10% conversion rate from job views to clicks.

INDUSTRY	VIEWS-TO-APPLICANT RATE
Automotive	18%
Cleaning Services	20%
Education & Child Care	6%
Fitness	9%
Healthcare	11%
Home & Commercial Services	10%
Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation	14%
Personal Care	7%
Restaurant & Food Service	16%
Retail	9%

2. How many applicants convert to hires?

Converting interview invitations to hires drives down applicant-to-hire ratios, as expected. While there is variance across industries in the rate of applications that are invited to an interview, the better predictor for a better applicant-to-hire ratio is the rate at which those interview invitations are turned into hires. **The top performing industries in our benchmarks need 64% fewer applicants to make a hire than the worst performing industries in our benchmarks** — despite converting their applicants to interviews at similar rates.

Applicant-to-interview conversion

INDUSTRY	APPLICANT-TO-INTERVIEW CONVERSION RATE
Automotive	17%
Cleaning Services	23%
Education & Child Care	27%
Fitness	11%
Healthcare	13%
Home & Commercial Services	20%
Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation	18%
Personal Care	14%
Restaurant & Food Service	11%
Retail	12%

Interview-to-hire conversion

INDUSTRY	INTERVIEW-TO-HIRE CONVERSION RATE
Automotive	7%
Cleaning Services	2%
Education & Child Care	8%
Fitness	6%
Healthcare	8%
Home & Commercial Services	3%
Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation	9%
Personal Care	6%
Restaurant & Food Service	14%
Retail	12%

Applicant-to-hire conversion

INDUSTRY	APPLICANTS PER HIRE
Automotive	84
Cleaning Services	185
Education & Child Care	46
Fitness	148
Healthcare	106
Home & Commercial Services	141
Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation	59
Personal Care	115
Restaurant & Food Service	64
Retail	72

3. What are the best times of year to post jobs?

Across all industries in our analysis, the time of the year that a job is posted is a major predictor of the number of applicants the job will receive. For nearly all industries in our analysis, **the best months of the year to post a job are January, June, and July** while **November and September are the worst months of the year** to post. A typical job posted in January, the top performing month for most industries in our analysis, will receive 35% more applications than the same job posted in November, the worst performing month for most industries.

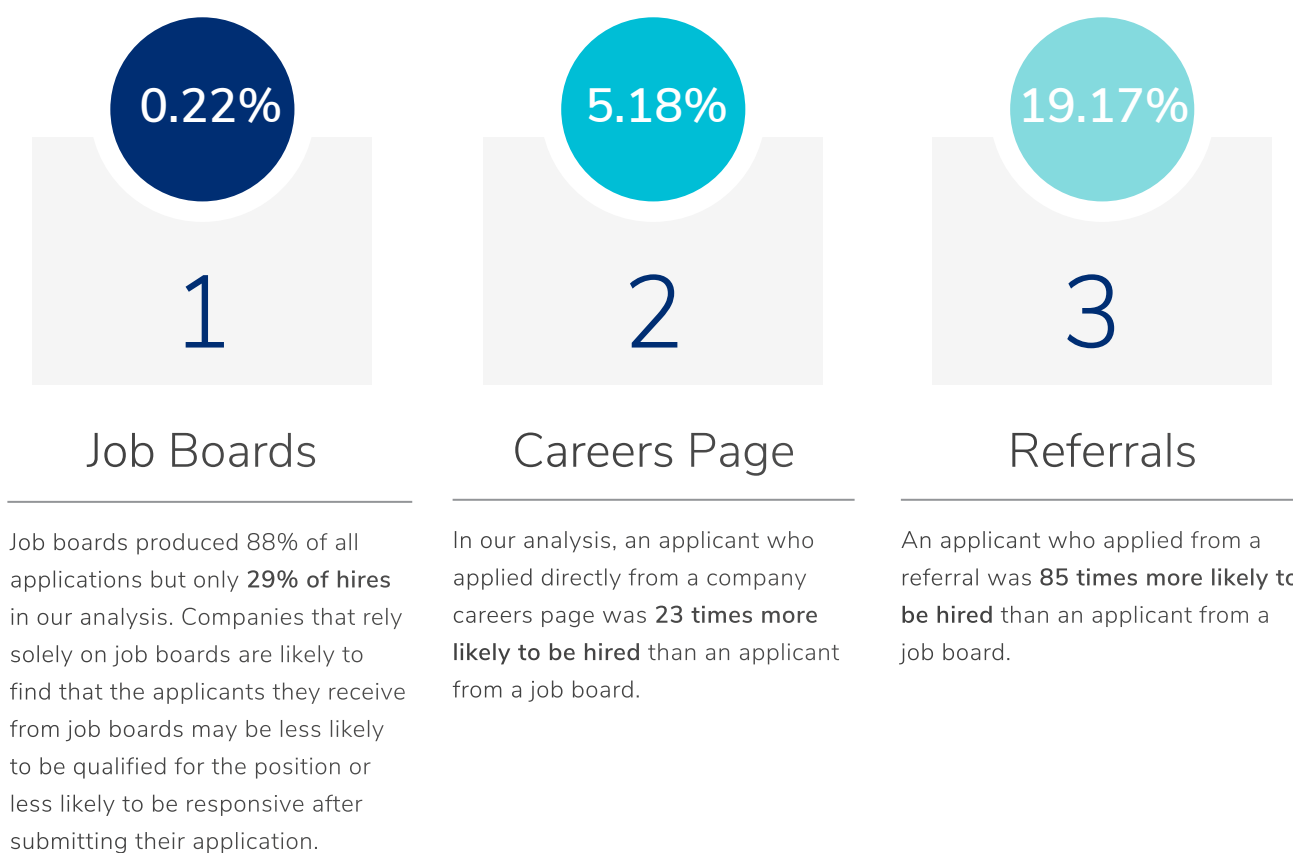**Best Months to Post Jobs**

January, June, and July

Worst Months to Post Jobs

November and September

4. Where are the best places to post jobs?

Job boards are the most common source for applicants across all industries, producing upwards of **80% of applications** in every industry in our analysis and **more than 90% of applications in some industries**. If absolute volume is your goal, posting your job to job boards is your best bet. Despite being the source of most applicants, **job boards do not produce hires at nearly the same rate as other sources.**

Applicant Hire Rates

0.22%	5.18%	19.17%
1	2	3
Job Boards	**Careers Page**	**Referrals**

Job boards produced 88% of all applications but only **29% of hires** in our analysis. Companies that rely solely on job boards are likely to find that the applicants they receive from job boards may be less likely to be qualified for the position or less likely to be responsive after submitting their application.

In our analysis, an applicant who applied directly from a company careers page was **23 times more likely to be hired** than an applicant from a job board.

An applicant who applied from a referral was **85 times more likely to be hired** than an applicant from a job board.

Job Boards Produce Quantity, But Not Always Quality

The reasons for these stark differences in applicant-to-hire rates based on source may vary, but our experience shows us that applicants who apply from job boards are more likely to be sending out dozens of applications in short order, with less consideration for their qualifications for the role or less interest in the specific job. An applicant who takes the time to research a role and apply directly through a company careers page is more likely to have spent time considering their own fit for the role and the company, and an applicant who is referred to a job is much more likely to be excited about the position and to be a good match.

What This Means For Hiring in 2020

This report is being published in the second quarter of 2020. A lot has changed between the end of 2019 and the time of this writing as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis. 2019 ended with an exceptionally low 3.5% unemployment rate, making the beginning of 2020 a candidate's job market. However, as of April 2020, the unemployment rate is now approaching 18%, with 22 million unemployment claims being filed in a four-week span.

These ongoing seismic shifts in the job market are not represented in our 2019 data. Still, there are some findings gleaned from our analysis that remain true and will continue to be relevant as businesses begin to hire again.

As the economy recovers, employers will be met with an applicant pool far larger than any in recent memory. An unprecedented number of talented job seekers are suddenly available and eager to rejoin the workforce. Our hope is that our hiring benchmark data will help employers plan to make the right hires at the right time and, in doing so, help millions of displaced job seekers take the next step in their career paths.

Hiring Data by Industry

The following sections of this report are analyses containing comprehensive hiring data for the following industries:

01 Automotive

02 Cleaning Services

03 Education & Child Care

04 Fitness

05 Healthcare

06 Home & Commercial Services

07 Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation

08 Personal Care

09 Restaurant & Food Service
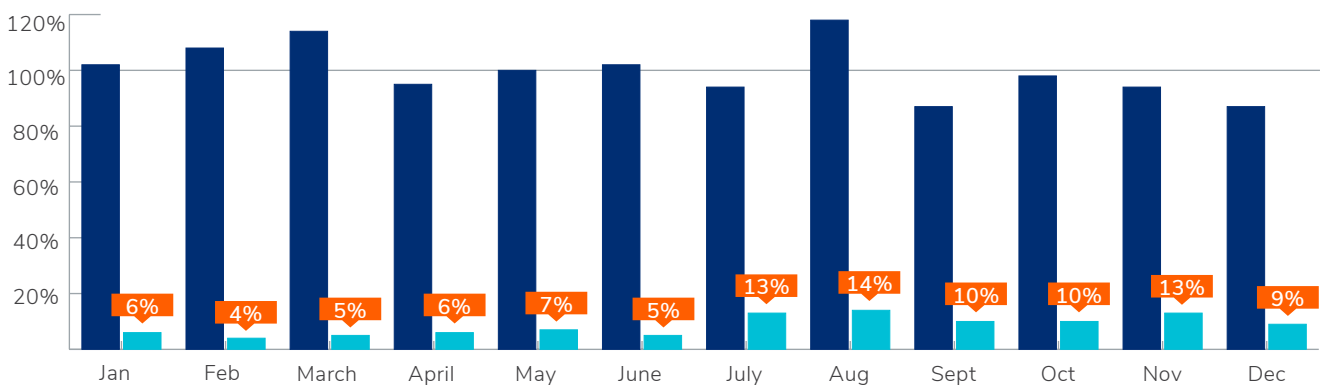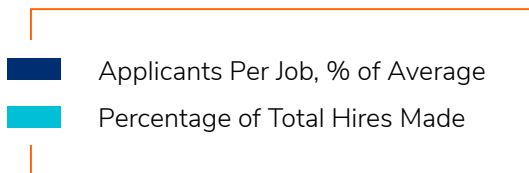
10 Retail

Automotive Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 377
- **Applicants Per Job**: 68
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 84
- **Average Days to Contact**: 4.09
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 8.28
- **Average Days to Hire**: 24

■ Applicants Per Job, % of Average
■ Percentage of Total Hires Made

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

In 2019, **August** saw a significant uptick in applications received at **118%** — which is interesting, since August sits between two underperforming months, July (94%) and September (87%). November and December see a dip in applicant volume, as is typical of most industries, but applicants pick up again in the next two best performing months: **February (108%)** and **March (114%)**.

Month	%
Jan	6%
Feb	4%
March	5%
April	6%
May	7%
June	5%
July	13%
Aug	14%
Sept	10%
Oct	10%
Nov	13%
Dec	9%

APPLICANT SOURCES

While job boards produce 90% of applicants, they only produce 38% of hires. Compare that to custom links as a job source, which accounts for an equal 38% of hires, but only 2% of applicants. Similarly, the company careers page for an automotive company produces only 2% of applicants, but 22% of hires.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	90%	2%	6%	2%	<1%
% of Hires	38%	22%	1%	38%	1%
% of Applicants Hired	1%	11%	<1%	23%	22%

Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Automotive Industry	18%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Automotive Industry	17%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Automotive Industry	7%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

4.09 days

Automotive Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

➔ The automotive industry boasts one of the highest view-to-applicant rates at 18%. This means that job postings in the automotive industry are compelling enough to entice job seekers to fill out an application.

➔ **Focus your recruitment marketing efforts on sources other than job boards**, as the data shows higher quality applicants come from custom links – think industry-specific job boards, local university job boards, or community message boards. You'll also find your company careers page is a source of high quality applicants, so making sure you have an attractive careers page will be key to your success.

➔ High view-to-applicant conversion rates mean that **your competition is writing compelling job postings** that persuade people to apply. Take the time to make sure your job postings are equally as enticing, giving applicants a sense of what they can expect from the job, your company culture, and the benefits offered.

➔ Knowing that employers in the automotive industry are quick to contact (at 4.09 days from the time of application), **make sure you're contacting your applicants quickly**. A great candidate won't be on the market for long in this industry.
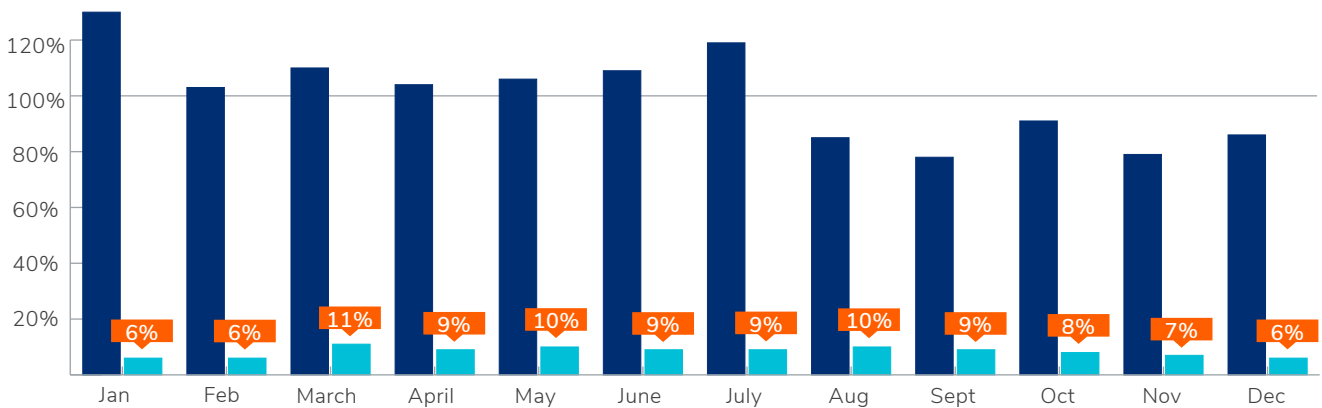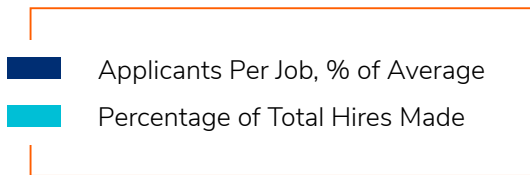
Cleaning Services Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 643
- **Applicants Per Job**: 129
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 185
- **Average Days to Contact**: 5.44
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 2.64
- **Average Days to Hire**: 22

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Applicants for the cleaning industry start out strong at the beginning of the year, peaking at **130% of applicants in January**. The number of applicants drops a bit in February (103%), but still steadily brings in over 100% compared to the average, hitting another high of **119% in July**. After July, however, things start to slow down significantly, with a **low of 78% in September** and similarly lower applicant volume through the remainder of the year.

Legend:
- Applicants Per Job, % of Average
- Percentage of Total Hires Made

Chart data labels: Jan 6%, Feb 6%, March 11%, April 9%, May 10%, June 9%, July 9%, Aug 10%, Sept 9%, Oct 8%, Nov 7%, Dec 6%

APPLICANT SOURCES

While the majority of applicants (92%) come from job boards, these applicants only make up 37% of hires. On the other hand, custom links generate only 1% of applicants, while resulting in a whopping 31% of hires. Company careers pages see the next highest hiring success rate, with 23% of hires made from only 3% of applicants.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	92%	3%	4%	1%	<1%
% of Hires	37%	23%	6%	31%	4%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	1%	<1%	4%	18%

*Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion		**Time to Contact**
Cleaning Services Industry	20%	
Average Across All Industries	12%	
		5.44 days
Applicant-to-interview conversion		Cleaning Services Industry
Cleaning Services Industry	23%	
Average Across All Industries	17%	
		7.52 days
Interview-to-hire conversion		Average Across All Industries
Cleaning Services Industry	2%	
Average Across All Industries	8%	

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The average job posting in this industry receives a high number of applicants, and hiring managers invite a high percentage of them to interview. However, very few of these interviews result in hires – at only 2%, this is the lowest interview-to-hire rate of all industries in our study. If you're looking to improve your results, you'll want to **be more selective with the candidates you invite to interview**. One way you can do this is by including pre-screen questions and assessments to qualify candidates earlier in the process. You may also improve conversion rate success by investing in tools to remind candidates of upcoming interviews or sending clear follow-up communication after an applicant applies and interviews.

Cleaning services companies also generate more applicants from job boards than average, but just over a third of hires made come from job boards. They hire a far greater proportion of applicants from company careers pages and custom links, meaning that they're finding higher quality applicants outside the job boards. They're also underutilizing an untapped source of high quality applicants – referrals. You can **increase the quality of your applicant pool by improving your online presence and asking existing employees for referrals.**
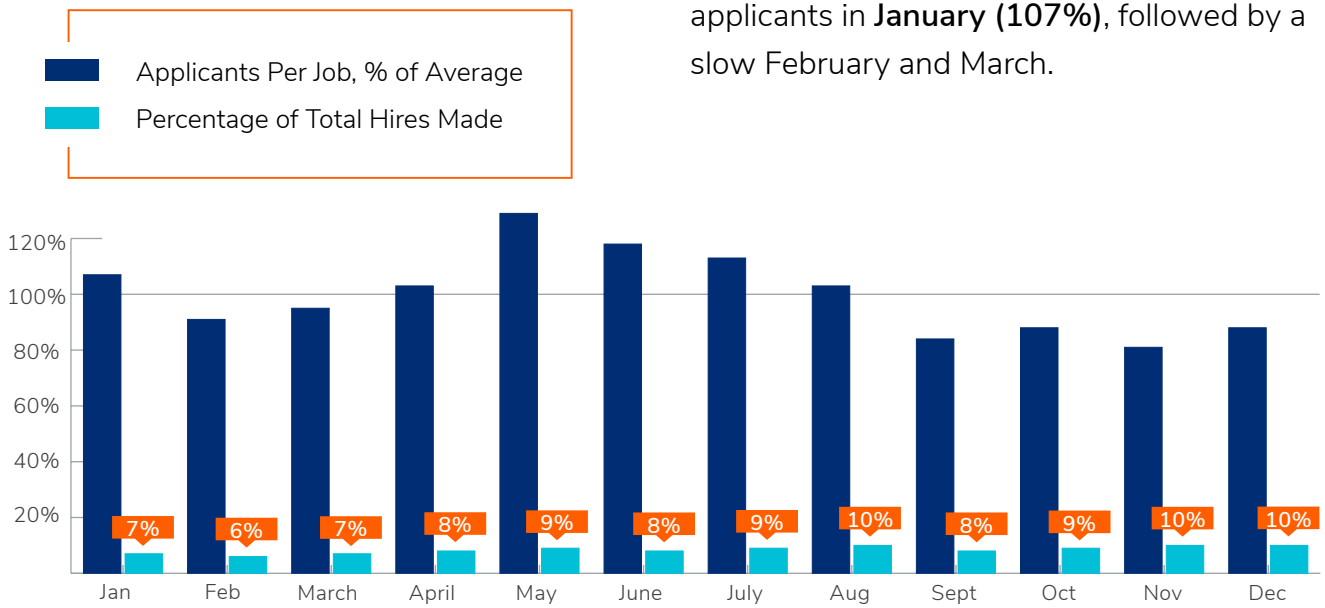
Education & Childcare Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 687
- **Applicants Per Job**: 38
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 46
- **Average Days to Contact**: 6.12
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 3.44
- **Average Days to Hire**: 33

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Unsurprisingly, this is one of the industries most affected by seasonality. The summer months bring the highest volume of applicants, peaking in **May (129%)**, and staying well above 100% of the average until a drop off to a yearly low in **September (84%)**. There's another slight uptick in applicants in **January (107%)**, followed by a slow February and March.

Legend:
- ■ Applicants Per Job, % of Average
- ■ Percentage of Total Hires Made

Month	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
% of Total Hires	7%	6%	7%	8%	9%	8%	9%	10%	8%	9%	10%	10%

APPLICANT SOURCES

This industry finds job boards producing 86% of applicants, but only 18% of hires – one of the lowest applicant-to-hire conversion rates for this source in our study. Company careers pages account for 61% of hires, one of the highest in our study. This means that while job boards will bring you a huge quantity of applicants, these applicants aren't likely to be high quality. Other sources like company careers pages and custom links result in higher quality candidates.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	86%	9%	4%	2%	<1%
% of Hires	18%	61%	1%	17%	2%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	7%	<1%	11%	12%

Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Education & Childcare Industry	6%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Education & Childcare Industry	27%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Education & Childcare Industry	8%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

6.12 days

Education & Childcare Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

➔ Because this industry has the lowest view-to-applicant conversion rate, we know that the candidate pool starts out very small. From this small group, applicants convert to interviews at the highest rate in our study. This means that companies in this industry are less selective about candidates they invite to interview, as the high applicant-to-interview rate does not carry over into a high interview-to-hire rate. You'll want to **broaden your applicant pool to ensure you're not picking from a limited selection of talent**. Our data finds that one consistent source of high quality applicants across all industries is referrals – a source being woefully underutilized in the education and child care industry. Ask your employees for referrals to get better results out of your next round of hiring.

➔ Because job boards result in so few hires, hiring managers in education and child care should **focus your efforts on improving your online presence in places other than job boards**. Since company career pages yield 61% of hires, it's important to ensure that you have an attractive careers page that results in more applications from high quality talent. Similarly, custom links provide an effective source of hires, so make sure your jobs are posted in places like industry-specific job boards or local university job boards.

Fitness Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 1171
- **Applicants Per Job**: 98
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 148
- **Average Days to Contact**: 13.5
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 9.3
- **Average Days to Hire**: 38

- ■ Applicants Per Job, % of Average
- ■ Percentage of Total Hires Made

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

The fitness industry is affected by seasonality, with applications slowing way down during the fall and winter holiday season, but spiking to a high of **124% during January**. This is likely to meet increased demand brought on by increased membership thanks to New Year's resolutions. Another increase occurs during beach season: **May (112%), June (111%),** and **July (114%)** all see increased applicant volume.
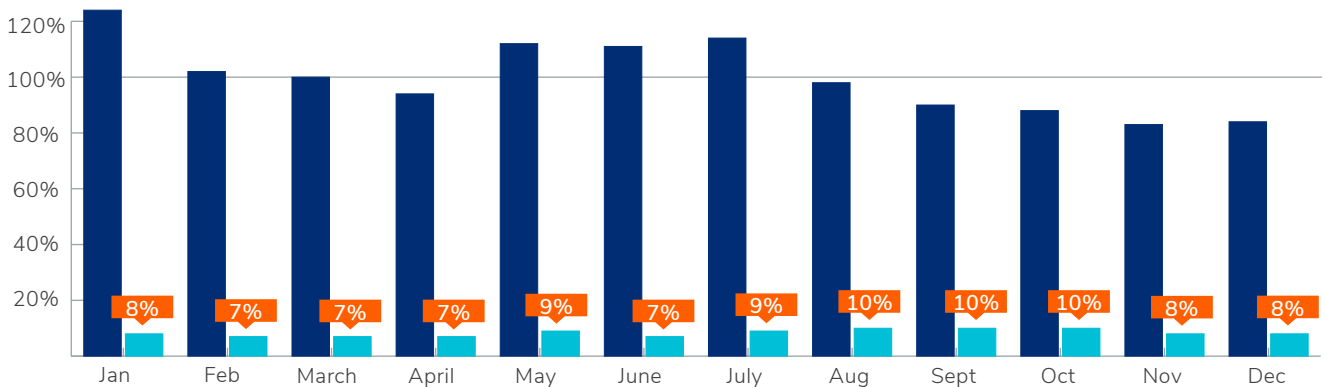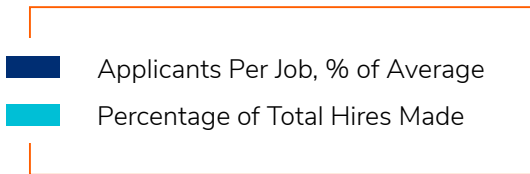
APPLICANT SOURCES

Company careers pages account for the overwhelming majority of hires at 74%, despite only bringing in 11% of applicants. Job boards bring in an abysmally low 12% of hires compared with the 86% of applicants they generate. Custom links have a near equal amount of hiring success to job boards at 11% of hires, while bringing in less than 1% of applicants total.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	86%	11%	3%	<1%	<1%
% of Hires	12%	74%	1%	11%	3%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	2%	<1%	12%	18%

Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Fitness Industry	8%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Fitness Industry	11%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Fitness Industry	6%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

13.5 days

Fitness Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

→ With an industry trending below average in all key metrics, it will become important for fitness companies to invest time into improving their hiring processes. With only 7% of job views resulting in applicants, it may be a good idea to start by **ensuring that job postings are high quality.** Optimize postings with accurate job titles and keywords that resonate with job seekers in this industry.

→ Just 11% of applicants come from company careers pages, but those convert to 74% of hires. One explanation for this extraordinary careers page hire rate is that fitness is an industry with a huge overlap between their customers and their potential employees – people who love coming to your gym are often the people that are best qualified and most interested in joining your team. **Focus your efforts on marketing your employment opportunities to your customers.** Investing in a strong careers page and making it visible and accessible to your customers is a great way to maximize this source. If it's hard for them to find your open positions, you might lose great potential candidates to a competitor.

→ The fitness industry has the greatest time-to-contact figure in our study. **Contact applicants sooner** so that you can convert more of them into interviews and have a larger talent pool to choose from the further you get down the hiring funnel.

Healthcare Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 319
- **Applicants Per Job**: 35
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 106
- **Average Days to Contact**: 8.67
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 5.95
- **Average Days to Hire**: 34

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

The healthcare industry sees a steady stream of higher than average applicant numbers in spring and summer, peaking in **July (113%)**. Like many industries, **September (86%)** kicks off a downward trend.

Legend:
- Applicants Per Job, % of Average
- Percentage of Total Hires Made

Month	Applicants Per Job % of Average	% of Total Hires
Jan	106%	6%
Feb	97%	6%
March	109%	9%
April	112%	8%
May	107%	8%
June	112%	8%
July	113%	10%
Aug	97%	10%
Sept	86%	9%
Oct	93%	10%
Nov	81%	9%
Dec	87%	8%

APPLICANT SOURCES

Job boards dominate this industry as a source of applicant volume (93%), but fall short when it comes to hires (37%). Compare that with links from custom sources, which account for only 2% of applicants, but a near equal 36% of hires. You'll also find high quality applicants coming from company careers pages, resulting in 23% of hires from only 3% of applicants.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	93%	3%	3%	2%	<1%
% of Hires	37%	23%	1%	36%	3%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	6%	<1%	15%	18%

Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Healthcare Industry	11%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Healthcare Industry	13%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Healthcare Industry	8%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

8.67 days

Healthcare Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

➔ A lower than average applicant-to-interview conversion rate suggests that companies in this industry are receiving an influx of unqualified applicants (most likely from major job board postings). **Focus your efforts on pre-screening candidates through questions and assessments** early in the application process.

➔ Because we know that the highest quality candidates come from company careers pages and custom sources, it's important to **invest the time in establishing your hiring brand online**. Ensure that you have an attractive careers page that entices quality candidates to apply. Give them a sense of what it's like to work for your company. Expand your reach into more industry specific job boards and local university job boards, as custom sources prove to be very effective at producing high quality candidates in this industry.
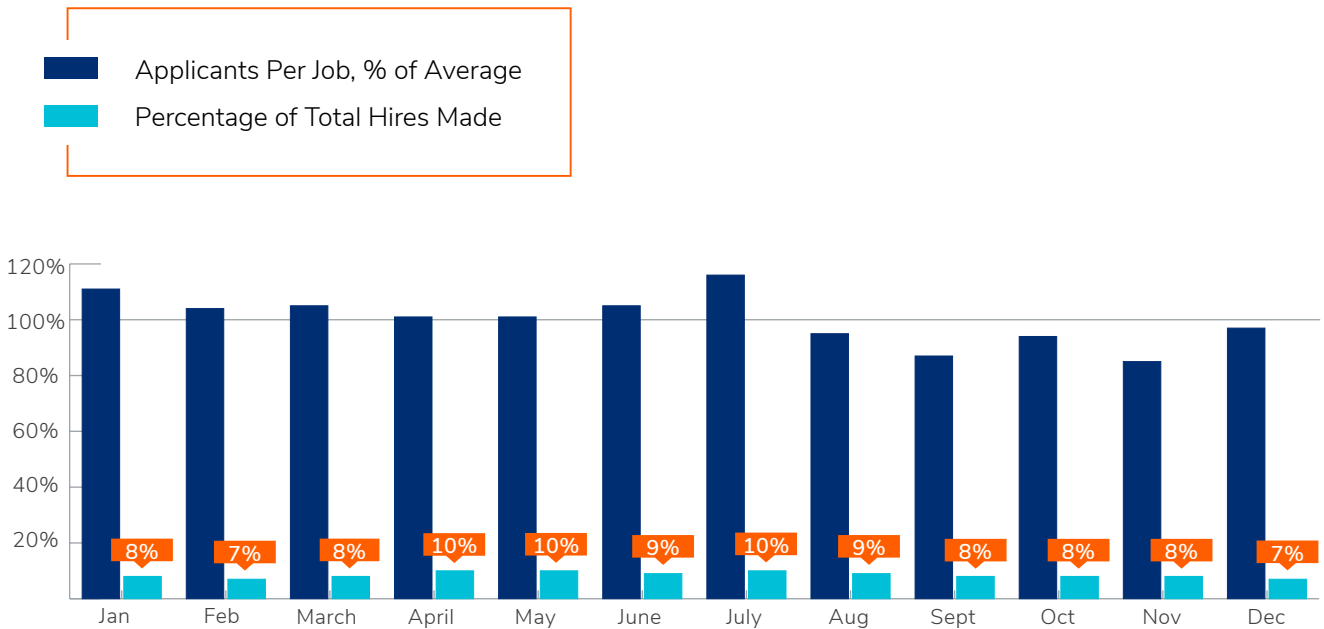
Home & Commercial Services Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 739
- **Applicants Per Job**: 74
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 141
- **Average Days to Contact**: 4.31
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 2.94
- **Average Days to Hire**: 27

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

While the first half of the year is strong overall, applicant volume peaks in **July (116%)** and drops off by over 20% the following month, maintaining below average volume for the rest of the year.

■ Applicants Per Job, % of Average
■ Percentage of Total Hires Made

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	8%	7%	8%	10%	10%	9%	10%	9%	8%	8%	8%	7%

APPLICANT SOURCES

Job boards may bring the largest share of applicants at 93%, but they only result in 36% of hires. For comparison, custom links bring in only 1% of applicants, but produce an astounding 34% of hires. This means low quality applicants are coming from job boards and high quality applicants are coming from custom sources.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	93%	3%	4%	1%	<1%
% of Hires	36%	25%	2%	34%	3%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	3%	<1%	12%	17%

*Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Home & Commercial Services Industry	10%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Home & Commercial Services Industry	20%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Home & Commercial Services Industry	3%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

4.31 days

Home & Commercial Services Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

→ One troubling trend in this industry is a high applicant-to-interview conversion rate (20%) that doesn't actually result in more hires. To the contrary, in fact: **at 3%, this is one of the lowest interview-to-hire conversion rates in our study.**

→ **Be more selective about applicants you invite to interview**. Interviewing 1 in every 5 applicants you receive is not advisable, especially when so few of those interviews result in hires. Add pre-screen questions and assessments earlier in your application process to better qualify candidates before you invite them to interview.

→ This is an industry that suffers from a high rate of no-show interviews as candidates drop out of the process after applying or interviewing. You can help increase conversions by **reaching out to high quality applicants quickly** and **communicating why you are the best option for them**, since high competition for skilled labor and a poor interview experience can drive a low interview-to-hire rate.

→ A high number of applicants come from job boards, but not a high number of hires. **Focus on marketing your jobs in places other than job boards**, such as careers pages, custom sources, and referrals — all sources that produce hires with more success than job boards.

Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 641
- **Applicants Per Job**: 91
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 59
- **Average Days to Contact**: 5.68
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 5.08
- **Average Days to Hire**: 27

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

It seems the timing for employers and applicants is a little mismatched in this industry. The highest influx of applicants is in **January (128%)**, but in that same month, employers only make 7% of their hires. Conversely, employers reach their hiring peak in September and October, right as applicant volume begins to decline.

Legend:
- Applicants Per Job, % of Average
- Percentage of Total Hires Made

Month	Applicants Per Job, % of Average	Percentage of Total Hires Made
Jan	~128%	7%
Feb	~114%	6%
March	~102%	6%
April	~92%	8%
May	~119%	10%
June	~108%	8%
July	~110%	9%
Aug	~98%	10%
Sept	~83%	11%
Oct	~90%	11%
Nov	~78%	9%
Dec	~81%	7%

APPLICANT SOURCES

Company careers pages win employers the most hires, despite bringing in only 7% of applicants. Custom links also have a high success rate with 25% of hires made from only 1% of applicants. Job boards produce the most applicants, but their quality is low – hiring managers convert only 26% to hires.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	87%	7%	4%	1%	<1%
% of Hires	26%	46%	1%	25%	3%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	7%	<1%	20%	19%

Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation	14%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation	18%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation	9%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

5.68 days

Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

➔ Key metrics look strong in this industry, as businesses convert at above average rates in every stage. Hiring managers are also **quicker to contact applicants** – a practice that may be driving their high conversion rates.

➔ Focus on candidates that come from your biggest drivers of hires – company careers pages and links from custom sources. Don't expect much from the job boards, but do **ask employees for referrals more often**, as referrals are an untapped source of high quality applicants that frequently convert to hires.

➔ While most of the hiring in this industry occurs in September and October, that's not when most people are applying. If possible, you may want to **consider hiring earlier in the year.** For example, hiring just a month earlier in August will produce 15% more applicants than in September. And hiring in July will produce 27% more applicants than in September.
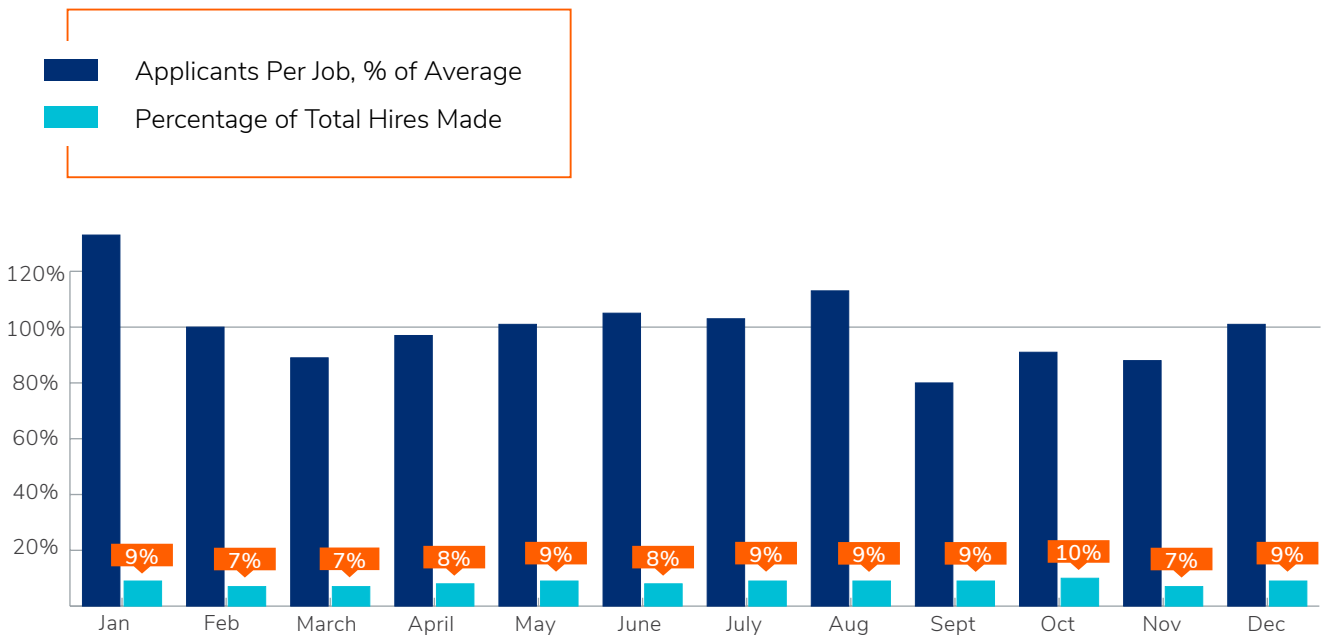
Personal Care Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 985
- **Applicants Per Job**: 71
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 115
- **Average Days to Contact**: 11.55
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 4.14
- **Average Days to Hire**: 31

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Like many industries, personal care sees a huge spike in applicant volume in **January (133%)**. Unlike many industries, however, applicant volume is strong throughout much of the year. However, there is a significant low point in **September (80%)**.

■	Applicants Per Job, % of Average
■	Percentage of Total Hires Made

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	9%	7%	7%	8%	9%	8%	9%	9%	9%	10%	7%	9%

APPLICANT SOURCES

One statistic that will make your head spin: Even though custom links account for only 1% of applicants, they account for 35% of hires made. Compare that to job boards, which bring in a majority of applicants (89%) but convert those to hires with roughly a similar level of success (38%).

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	89%	6%	3%	1%	<1%
% of Hires	38%	22%	2%	35%	3%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	1%	<1%	12%	25%

Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Personal Care Industry	7%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Personal Care Industry	14%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Perosnal Care Industry	6%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

11.55 days

Personal Care Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

➜ There's room for improvement in all key metrics in this industry – particularly in the **low view-to-applicant conversion rates** and the **higher than average time it takes to contact applicants.**

➜ Only 7% of job posting views turn into applications, so it may be time to **optimize your job postings** with accurate job titles, a thorough description of the role, and a sense of what it's like to work for your company. If someone can't envision themselves in the role after reading a job description, they're not going to apply.

➜ One issue that's simple to fix is **decreasing the time it takes to contact an applicant**. The applicant pool in this industry already starts out small, so by waiting a long time to contact those applicants, you run the risk of shrinking your talent pool even further.

Restaurant & Food Service Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 584
- **Applicants Per Job**: 96
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 64
- **Average Days to Contact**: 8.06
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 5.26
- **Average Days to Hire**: 25

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

May kicks off a steady season of high applicant volume, peaking in **July (125%)**. Things start trending downward in **September (88%)**, as is typical of many industries.

Legend:
- ■ Applicants Per Job, % of Average
- ■ Percentage of Total Hires Made

Month	Percentage of Total Hires Made
Jan	7%
Feb	6%
March	7%
April	7%
May	10%
June	8%
July	11%
Aug	11%
Sept	9%
Oct	10%
Nov	8%
Dec	7%

APPLICANT SOURCES

This industry sees one of the highest rates of hiring success from company careers pages. 8% of applicants come from careers pages, but careers pages account for 52% of hires. Custom links also generate high quality applicants that convert to hires. Like all industries in our study, job boards bring quantity, but not quality – just 23% of hires.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	82%	8%	8%	1%	<1%
% of Hires	23%	52%	2%	22%	1%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	7%	<1%	20%	17%

*Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Restaurant & Food Service Industry	16%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Restaurant & Food Service Industry	11%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Restaurant & Food Service Industry	14%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

8.06 days

Restaurant & Food Service Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

➔ There is an opportunity in this industry to improve success in the middle of the hiring funnel. Businesses that struggle to convert applicants into interviews despite having a high volume of applicants are likely receiving unqualified applicants in the first place. The low success rate but high volume of job board applicants may be partially to blame. **Focus your efforts on pre-screening candidates through questions and assessments** early in the application process.

➔ In the restaurant and food service industry, company careers pages are the key drivers of hires. This isn't surprising, as this is an industry where your customers and your potential employees have significant overlap, especially in quick-serve and fast-casual dining. People who know and love your brand will be motivated to apply to your business when they're on the job market. Make sure you're prepared to capture that inbound traffic by **having an accessible and attractive careers page** where your customers can easily find available jobs.

Retail Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job**: 635
- **Applicants Per Job**: 59
- **Applicants Per Hire**: 72
- **Average Days to Contact**: 7.83
- **Average Days to Contact Hire**: 5.59
- **Average Days to Hire**: 22

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

As an industry significantly affected by seasonality, it comes as no surprise that hiring reaches its peak just before the December holiday season. **October** is when you'll find the largest applicant volume at **143%** of the average – the highest of any industry in our study.

Legend:
- Applicants Per Job, % of Average
- Percentage of Total Hires Made

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
% of Total Hires	6%	6%	7%	8%	8%	9%	8%	9%	7%	13%	13%	6%

APPLICANT SOURCES

Company careers pages bring in the majority of hires (44%) despite accounting for only 7% of total applicants. Custom links also drive high quality candidates, yielding 25% of hires from 2% of applicants. Job boards perform poorly in hiring success (26%) despite accounting for the majority of applicants.

SOURCE	JOB BOARDS	CAREERS PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA	CUSTOM LINK*	REFERRAL
% of Applicants	86%	7%	6%	2%	<1%
% of Hires	26%	44%	<1%	25%	4%
% of Applicants Hired	<1%	7%	<1%	16%	28%

Custom link: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

View-to-applicant conversion

Retail Industry	9%
Average Across All Industries	12%

Applicant-to-interview conversion

Retail Industry	12%
Average Across All Industries	17%

Interview-to-hire conversion

Retail Industry	12%
Average Across All Industries	8%

Time to Contact

7.83 days

Retail Industry

7.52 days

Average Across All Industries

KEY TAKEAWAYS

➔ The applicant pool starts out small in this industry and just keeps getting smaller as you move further along the funnel. It's troubling, then, that businesses make hires at an above average rate from this more limited selection of candidates, because you could end up staffing high numbers of employees who aren't the right hires for your business. Take the time to widen your applicant pool by **optimizing your job postings** in a way that entices job seekers to apply, while also accurately describing the role and your company culture.

➔ A low view-to-applicant conversion rate could also be an indication that your jobs are being posted in the wrong places. The data shows that job boards aren't providing this industry with much success, so **focus your efforts on sources other than job boards**. Make sure your careers page is engaging (e.g. showcase employee testimonials or create a brand employment video). Don't forget to explore custom sources like industry specific job boards, community message boards, and local university job boards.

Preparing for the Future

With the current economic climate in a state of uncertainty, there's no way to know when hiring trends will be back to their typical levels. It's possible that all hiring seasonality that occurred in 2019 will be nonexistent in 2020. But one thing is certain – this won't last forever.

There are steps businesses can take now to put themselves in a position to recruit top talent once the job market returns to normal.

1. Build your employment brand.

The data shows that company careers pages are a hugely successful source of hires. But they're an untapped source of applicants overall, with no industry reporting more than 11% and some reporting as low as 2%. Invest in creating an engaging and attractive careers page that showcases employee testimonials, aspects of your company culture, and your core values.

2. Create a job marketing strategy that doesn't rely on job boards.

Compile a list of custom sources like industry-specific job boards, community message boards, local university job boards, etc. Compile another list of friends and colleagues in your personal network to whom you can reach out for referrals. Build a program to generate referrals from your employees – for example, an employee referral program can include an incentive like a cash bonus for every referral that results in a hire. Our data shows that referrals produce the lowest percentages of applicants and yet the highest percentages of hires, so referred applicants are an efficient hiring focus.

3. Optimize your job postings sooner rather than later.

Ask yourself, "Would I want to apply to this job?" Do your research to see which job titles resonate best with job seekers in your industry. Write high quality job descriptions to attract your ideal candidates.

ABOUT CAREERPLUG

CareerPlug is a software company on a mission to solve the #1 challenge of running a business: attracting and hiring the right people. More than 10,000 clients love working with us because we give them a proven playbook to make the right hires. And you don't need to be an HR pro to succeed, since our software is easy enough for anyone to use. We're so committed to Making Hiring Easier that we require every one of our employees to become a certified Hiring Expert so that they can contribute to our mission.

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