HR.com's State of High-volume and Hourly Hiring 2024

Strengthen your high-volume recruitment with best practices and technologies

JUNE 2024

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Executive Summary

High-volume recruitment may sound like a numbers game, but it's as much art as science. In fact, our latest research shows that, although most recruiters say recruitment metrics are useful for making decisions, few believe those metrics to be "correct" and "complete."

Therefore, even in our data-rich age, talent acquisition (TA) experts must rely on a combination of experience, intuition, and insights along with technologies, expert services and metrics.

This is an important lesson in an age when three-fourths of responding organizations either have employed or plan to employ high-volume hiring. Recent labor shortages, among other issues, make high-volume hiring difficult. This difficulty is further underscored by the fact that 60% of our respondents say their organizations struggle with a scarcity of quality candidates for these positions.

This report takes a deep dive into the topic of high-volume and hourly hiring so that recruiters and HR professionals can learn more about the approaches most closely associated with success and stay abreast of the fast-moving topics of outsourcing services, emerging trends, key metrics and the use of recruitment technologies, including artificial intelligence.

Before getting into the details of the report, however, we begin with a quick summary of some of the key findings.

About the Survey

HR.com's "The State of High-volume and Hourly Hiring 2024" survey ran from March to May 2024. We gathered responses from 188 HR professionals in virtually every industry vertical. Respondents are located all over the world, but most of them reside in North America, especially the United States.

The participants represent a broad cross-section of employers by number of employees, ranging from small businesses with fewer than 100 employees to enterprises with 20,000+ employees. Two-thirds of the respondents represent midsize and large organizations.

Defining high-volume hiring

High-volume recruiting generally refers to filling a larger-than-average number of positions in a relatively short time-frame. In some cases, however, these are roles for which employers are continuously and consistently recruiting. High-volume recruitment can be achieved via in-house recruitment or with the help of external providers and partners.

Our Major Research Findings

Major Finding **1**

High-volume recruitment is going strong.

- Fully 77% of respondents say their organizations are currently engaged (40%) in high-volume recruitment, have engaged in it in the past (26%), or plan to do so in the future (11%).

- Of those respondents, three-quarters plan to engage in high-volume recruiting over the next six months to one year.

- Over half (55%) of employers that are engaged in high-volume recruiting plan on increasing their budget to support their hiring plans and strategies over the next two years; in contrast, only 9% anticipate decreasing their budgets over that same time period.

Major Finding **2**

Many organizations partner with outsourcing agencies for high-volume recruitment.

- Over half (52%) of responding organizations outsource at least a part of their high-volume recruiting process to third-party providers and partners.

- Organizations that outsource high-volume recruiting primarily rely on:
  - staffing agencies (62%)
  - job boards and aggregators (57%)
  - temporary employment services (45%)
  - recruitment process outsourcing providers (42%)

Major Finding **3**

A well-defined strategy improves the effectiveness of high-volume recruitment.

- Reflecting on the effectiveness of their high-volume recruitment in successfully sourcing and onboarding candidates:
  - a majority of organizations strongly agree (27%) or agree (51%) that they are effective at high-volume hiring and hourly recruiting
  - 13% neither agree nor disagree, and 8% actively disagree

- Reflecting on whether they have a defined strategy for high-volume recruitment or hourly hiring:
  - 22% strongly agree and 40% agree that they do
  - 16% actively disagree with the statement

Major Finding 4

Organizations attract candidates through a variety of practices and channels.

- Practices most commonly considered effective for high-volume recruiting are:
  - ▸ automating as much of the process as possible (65%)
  - ▸ removing barriers to applying (65%)
  - ▸ developing a compelling employer brand and value proposition (64%)
- Channels considered to be most effective for high-volume recruiting are:
  - ▸ advertising on job boards (83%)
  - ▸ actively soliciting referrals from employees (64%)
  - ▸ advertising jobs on paid social media (57%)

Major Finding 5

Leveraging technology and AI can boost the effectiveness of high-volume recruiting.

- Tools and technologies considered to be most effective for high-volume recruiting are:
  - ▸ full capabilities available on mobile devices (44%)
  - ▸ automated means of gathering candidate feedback (35%)
  - ▸ SMS or automated chat client (31%)
- Although two-fifths are not planning to use AI for high-volume recruiting, other organizations aim to use AI for :
  - ▸ creating job descriptions (40%)
  - ▸ scheduling interviews (36%)
  - ▸ sourcing diverse candidates (36%)

Major Finding 6

High-volume recruitment metrics are useful and important but not necessarily complete or accurate.

- High-volume recruiting metrics that matter the most are:
  - ▸ time to hire and/or time to fill (63%)
  - ▸ retention rates (59%)
  - ▸ quality of hire (57%)
- Respondents in organizations that use high-volume recruiting metrics say the data is:
  - ▸ useful in making decisions (67%)
  - ▸ aligned with post-hire performance data (30%)
  - ▸ complete (30%)
  - ▸ correct (26%)

Major Finding **7**

Organizations are doing their best to tackle high-volume recruitment challenges with better offerings.

- Over the past year, the top challenges have been:
  - ▸ too many low-quality candidates (60%)
  - ▸ not enough candidates (53%)
  - ▸ high employee turnover/churn (46%)

- In response to talent shortages, organizations have increased:
  - ▸ wages (72%)
  - ▸ benefits and perks (52%)
  - ▸ flexibility (47%)

Major Finding **8**

Organizations face diverse recruitment challenges, from optimizing pre-hire assessments to navigating hiring felons and ensuring candidate reliability.

- Only about half of organizations use pre-hire assessments for high-volume recruitment purposes either internally (47%) or through their outsourcing partner (6%).

- Although three-fifths of organizations will sometimes consider hiring convicted felons, this is contingent on issues such as job roles, nature of conviction, hiring managers, etc.

- Over a third (36%) say that new hires not showing up after accepting a job offer is a major or considerable problem.

- Over a fifth of organizations have seen increases in attempts to organize labor among their hourly workers.

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Major Finding 9

Compared to organizations with ineffective high-volume hiring capabilities (laggards), those with effective capabilities (leaders) are:

- almost 8x more likely to have a defined, dedicated strategy for high-volume recruitment
- 1.5X more likely to have metrics that are useful in making hiring decisions
- 1.5X more likely to advertise jobs on paid and organic/free social media
- over 4X more likely to utilize full capabilities available on mobile devices
- over 2X more likely to utilize automated means of gathering candidate feedback
- significantly more likely to use AI for high-volume recruiting

Please note that the findings and recommendations contained in this report are informational only. Nothing in this report should be construed as constituting legal opinions or advice. Please consult an attorney if you have questions about the legal requirements, rules or regulations associated with any content discussed in this report.

The Persistent Vitality of High-volume Hiring

Finding: High-volume recruitment is prevalent in a majority of organizations

We asked respondents if their organization engages in high-volume recruitment (either internally, with a third-party supplier, or some combination). Two-fifths say their organization is currently engaged in such recruiting, a quarter has done so in the past and one-tenth have plans to do so in the future.
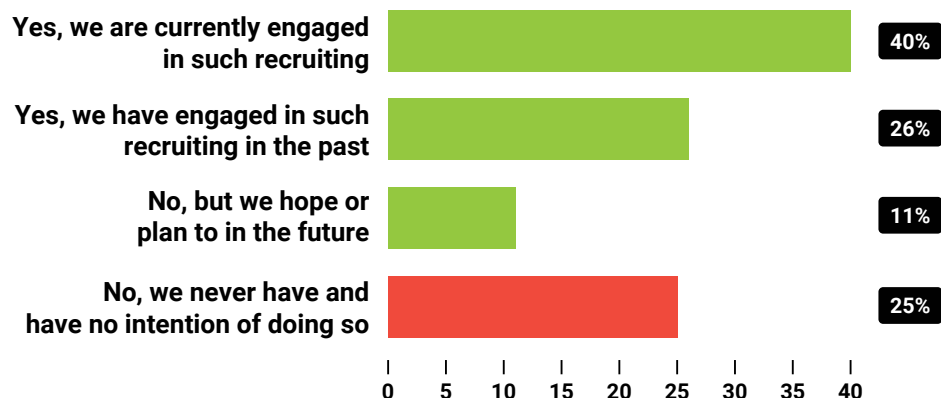
Just a quarter say they have never engaged in high-volume recruitment and have no intention of doing so. In our 2023 study, about the same proportion (72%) of respondents said their organizations have had experience with high-volume recruiting either at present or in the past or expect to do so sometime in the future. It seems that high-volume recruiting continues to go strong.

For the purpose of this report, large organizations have 1,000 or more employees, mid-size organizations have 100 to 999 employees, and small organizations have 99 or fewer employees.

Differences based on organization size

Our research suggests that large organizations are much more likely to currently engage in some form of high-volume hiring activity (48%) compared to their midsize (40%) or small business (19%) counterparts.

Does your organization engage in high-volume recruitment (either internally, with a third party supplier, or some combination)? (select all that apply)

Response	Percentage
Yes, we are currently engaged in such recruiting	40%
Yes, we have engaged in such recruiting in the past	26%
No, but we hope or plan to in the future	11%
No, we never have and have no intention of doing so	25%

Editor's note: Although respondents could choose both "Yes" responses (which is why the percentages add up to more than 100%), the "No" responses were exclusive. This means that if respondents chose one of those "No" responses, they cannot choose other options. Therefore, we know that 75% of respondents have used and/or are currently using high-volume recruitment.

Finding: There will be a pressing need for high-volume recruiting over the next year

Of the organizations that are engaged in high-volume recruitment at present, in the past, or are planning to do so in the future, about three-fourths plan to engage in high-volume recruitment over the next 6 months to one year. Of these, about six in 10 plan to rely on in-house resources, while 16% plan to outsource at least part of the task.

Do you think your organization will engage in high-volume recruiting over the next 6 months to 1 year? (select the one that best applies)

Yes, and we will rely on our in-house resources	**59%**
Yes, but we will outsource at least part of the task	**16%**
No	**25%**

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

Editor's Note: In the original data, 13% of respondents stated they "Don't know." For this chart, we removed those responses and recalculated, so this chart only shows percentages for those that indicated that they know what the future is likely to bring.

A quarter of responding organizations do not plan to engage in high-volume recruiting over the next 6 months to one year
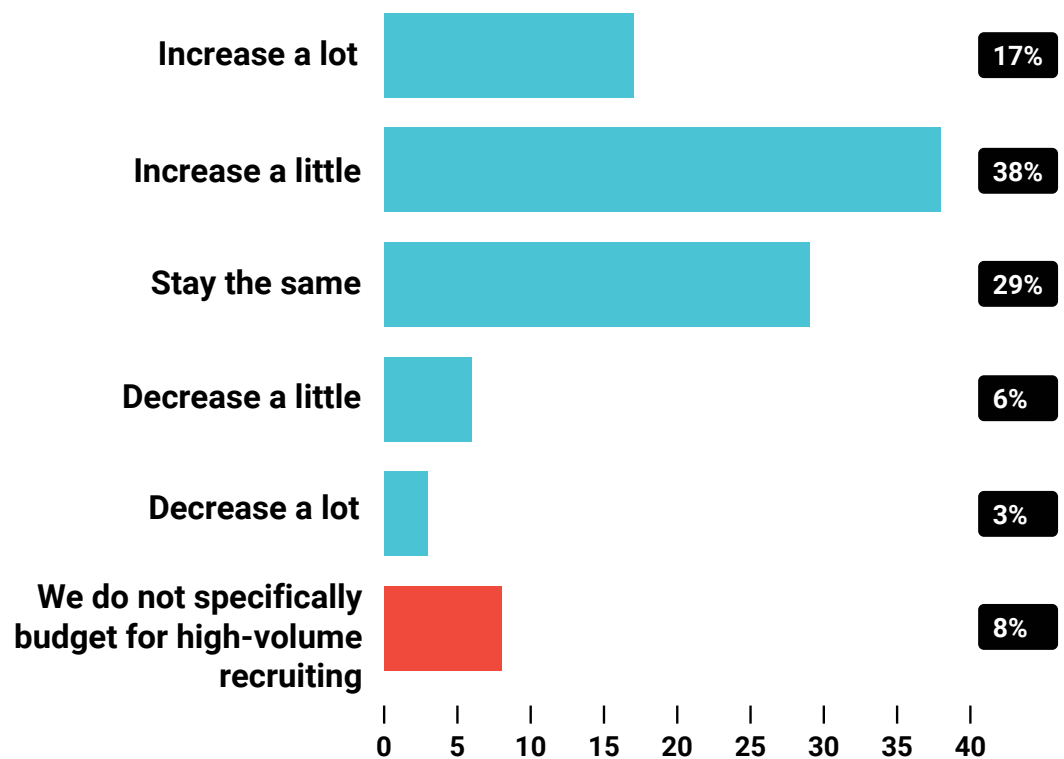
HRRI Strategic Insight: Organizations looking to manage high-volume recruitment in-house must have efficient and scalable processes to handle the large volume of applicants, CVs, and interview schedules. This requires the right tools and strategies to be in place, backed by careful planning to make sure the right candidates are selected and hired efficiently.

Finding: Over half of organizations planning to engage in high-volume recruitment expect an increase in the talent acquisition (TA) budget

In over half of organizations planning to engage in high-volume hiring in the next year, there is an expected increase in the TA budget, with about a fifth (17%) expecting a high increase and two-fifths (38%) expecting a small increase. Over a quarter (29%) expect the budget to remain the same.

Nearly one in ten organizations do not budget specifically for high-volume recruitment

How do you expect your talent acquisition (TA) team's high-volume recruiting budget to change in the next two years compared to the current budget? (select the one that best applies)

Category	Percentage
Increase a lot	17%
Increase a little	38%
Stay the same	29%
Decrease a little	6%
Decrease a lot	3%
We do not specifically budget for high-volume recruiting	8%

Editor's Note: In the original data, 8% of respondents stated they "Don't know." We removed those responses and recalculated, so this chart only shows percentages for those who indicated that they know how the budget is likely to change over the next two years.

HRRI Strategic Insight: HR professionals striving to win top leadership buy-in to increase the TA budget can consider making a business case on:

- how successful the recruitment strategy has been in the past few years

- the volume of applicants needed

- the associated costs of leaving positions unfilled

This requires a comprehensive understanding of recruitment metrics and analytics to back the claims with numbers.

Practices and Trends in High-volume Recruitment

Practices

Finding: Almost half of organizations have outsourced some part of their high-volume recruitment to one or more other entities

Among organizations that are currently engaged in high-volume recruiting or have done so in the past, just over half (52%) say they outsource the recruitment sometimes (45%) or always (7%). This is an increase in the proportion of respondents who said the same (46%) in last year's research on the same topic. However, as we saw in the results above, most (59%) organizations looking to engage in high-volume hiring recruitment over the next 6 months to 1 year plan to rely on their in-house resources. Perhaps these organizations have built better internal capacity to engage in high-volume recruitment internally.

Differences based on organization size

Large organizations are more likely to handle high-volume recruitment in-house, with 55% saying they never outsource any part of high-volume recruitment. Midsize organizations are more likely to outsource the activity, with just a fifth saying they never outsource any part of high-volume recruitment. Two-fifths of respondents from small organizations say the same. We assume large organizations are more likely to have the in-house capabilities and technology to undertake high-volume recruitment while smaller organizations may be hiring fewer overall employees, so this may not necessitate outsourcing. However, as we see in the report, a majority of organizations have outsourced at least part of their high-volume recruitment in the past or are doing so currently.

Does your organization outsource any part of high-volume recruitment to some other entity (e.g., staffing or recruitment process outsourcing firm)?

Yes, always	**7%**
Yes, sometimes	**45%**
No, never	**45%**

Scale: 0 10 20 30 40 50

Less than a tenth (7%) of organizations always outsource their high-volume recruitment

HRRI Strategic Insight: Choosing to handle high-volume recruitment internally or using outsourcing agencies depends on factors like role complexity, involvement preference, budget, partner reputation, scalability, cultural fit, technology, and compliance. Organizations must assess these first and then decide the best approach.

Finding: Staffing agencies and job boards are popular choices for organizations that outsource high-volume recruitment

More than six in 10 organizations use staffing agencies for high-volume recruitment. About three-fifths (57%) use job boards (e.g., Indeed), and two-fifths rely on temp agencies and recruitment process outsourcing organizations. These were the top choices in our 2023 research study as well.

There are some key differences between these agencies and services. Staffing agencies often act as a finders – they source, pre-screen and introduce the candidate to the hiring managers. A recruitment process outsourcing organization (RPO), on the other hand, acts as a recruitment expert to handle the complete or specific part of recruitment based on the company's requirements. RPOs generally handle identifying, sourcing, screening, shortlisting, interviewing, and onboarding candidates for jobs. Job boards offer organizations the ability to advertise jobs, but the hiring process is often handled by the organization.

What external agencies, services or partners do you use for high-volume recruiting? (select all that apply)

Category	Percentage
Staffing agency	62%
Job boards (e.g., Indeed)	57%
Temp agency	45%
Recruitment process outsourcing organization	42%
Contractors (1099) versus W-2	25%
Business process outsourcer/partner	11%
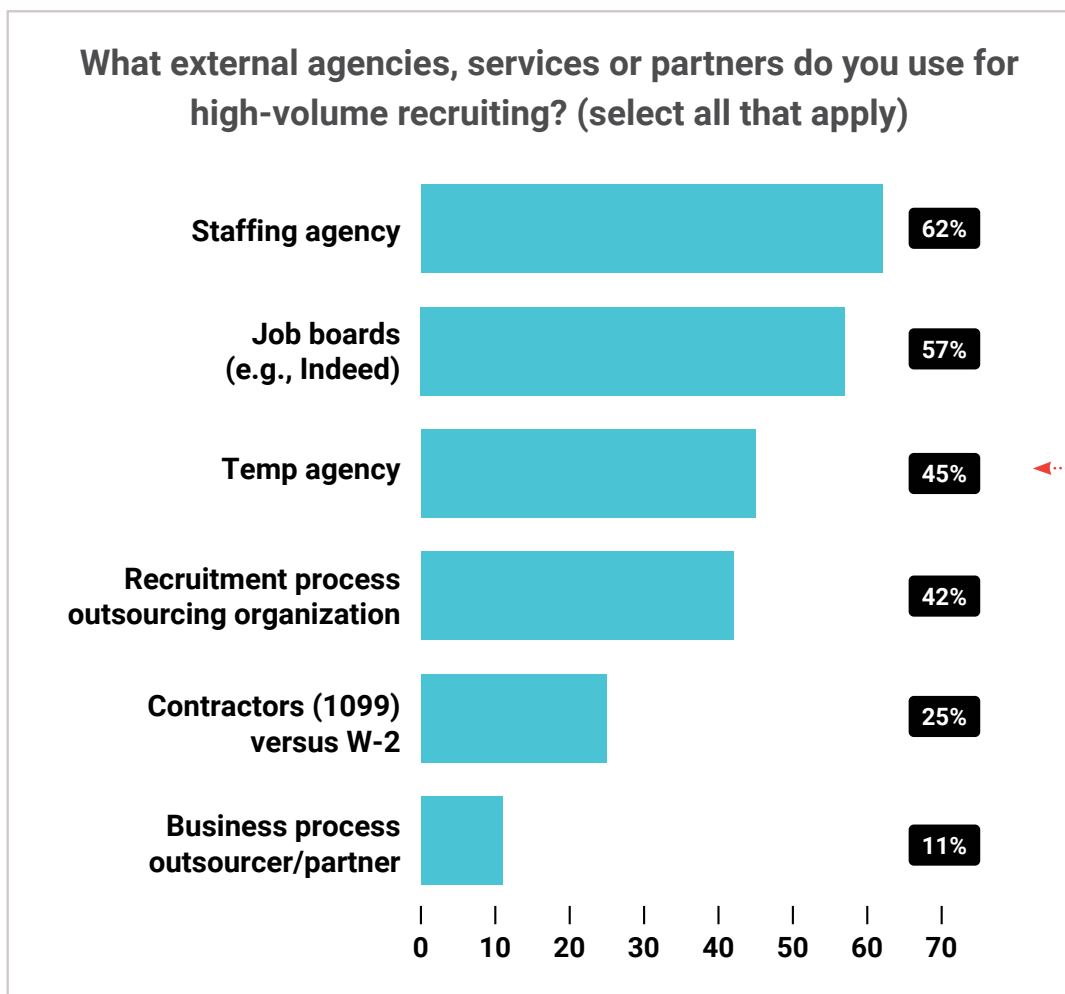
Editor's Note: In the original data, 4% of respondents stated they "don't know." We removed those responses and recalculated, so this chart only shows percentages for those who answered the question

Over two-fifths of organizations use temp agencies for high-volume recruiting

Trends

Finding: One-fifth of organizations say attempts to organize labor among hourly workers have increased over the last year

Differences based on organization size

Small organizations have seen more attempts to organize labor among hourly workers over the past year (38%) compared to midsize (18%) and large (17%) organizations. However, a greater proportion of large organizations say their workforce is already unionized (14%) compared to 9% in mid-size and 6% of responding small organizations.

Close to two-thirds (65%) of respondents believe there has not been an increase in such attempts. Over one-fifth (22%) say there has been an increase in such activity, while another 13% say their workforce is already unionized.

Last year, just 12% said that there had been an increase in unionization among hourly workers. This is a trend that needs watching. The Economic Policy Institute reports that in 2023, 16.2 million workers were represented by a union—an increase of 191,000. At the same time, the percentage of workers represented by a union decreased from 11.3% to 11.2%, as unionization efforts were unable to keep pace with 2023's strong job growth.

Have you seen increases in attempts to organize labor among the hourly workers in your organization over the past year? (e.g., form a union, collective bargaining)
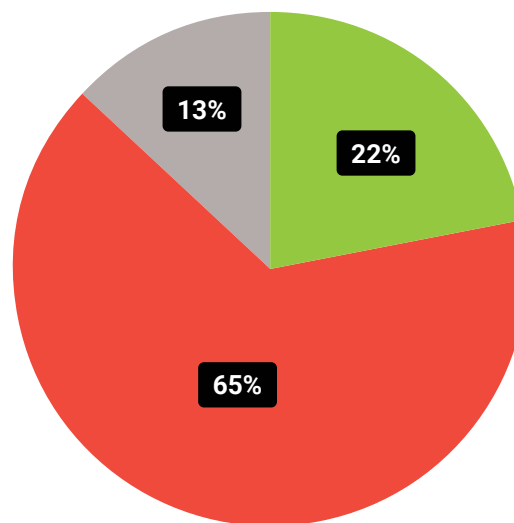
- Yes
- No
- Our workforce is already unionized

Editor's note: In the original data, 6% of respondents stated they "Don't know." We removed those responses and recalculated, so this only shows percentages for those who answered the question.

Finding: Most organizations will hire candidates with prior felony convictions, but few make a special effort to tap into this labor pool

Differences based on organization size

Small organizations are more likely to disqualify applicants with criminal records (25%) compared to midsize (6%) and large organizations (14%).

Three-fifths of organizations (61%) say they will "sometimes" hire candidates with criminal records depending on issues such as job roles, nature of conviction, hiring manager, etc. Another one-fifth (16%) report they would hire such candidates but only rarely. Very few (4%) organizations have a hiring initiative specifically in place targeting those who have been previously incarcerated.

One-fifth of organizations (16%) do not hire applicants with criminal records and immediately disqualify them. We need to consider that while organizations strive to improve DEIB, black men are five times more likely to be incarcerated than white men. Strict policies like these further reduce their chances of employment. Hiring such individuals also improves the talent pool available to organizations. Several U.S. states have adopted the "ban the box" laws to increase job opportunities for ex-offenders by restricting criminal conviction disclosure questions.
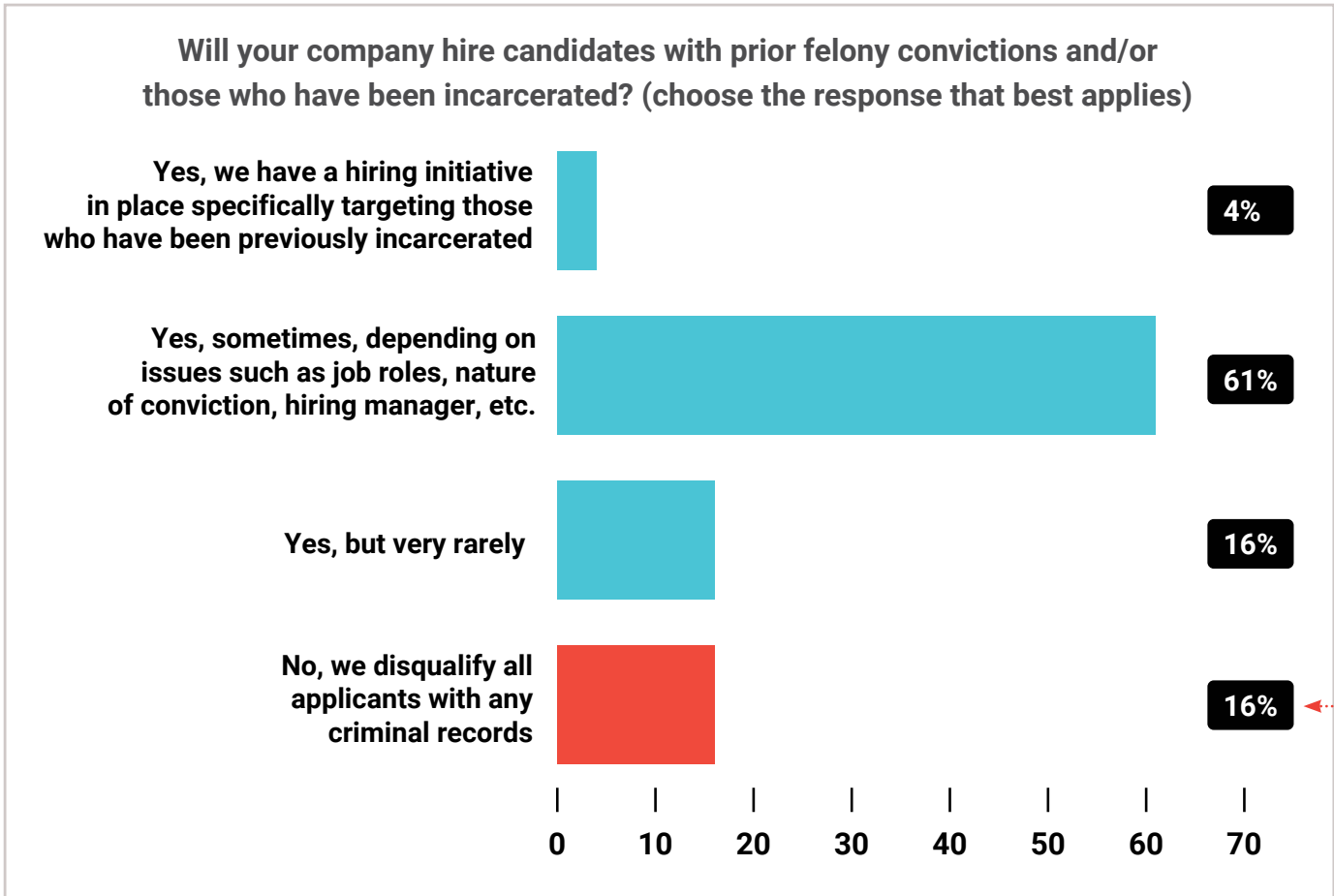
Will your company hire candidates with prior felony convictions and/or those who have been incarcerated? (choose the response that best applies)

Yes, we have a hiring initiative in place specifically targeting those who have been previously incarcerated — **4%**

Yes, sometimes, depending on issues such as job roles, nature of conviction, hiring manager, etc. — **61%**

Yes, but very rarely — **16%**

No, we disqualify all applicants with any criminal records — **16%**

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

Editor's note: In the original data, 6% of respondents stated that they "Don't know." We removed those responses and recalculated, so this only shows percentages for those that answered the question. The numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

16% of organizations disqualify all applicants with criminal records

HRRI Strategic Insight: Implementing hiring practices for some individuals with criminal records and offering second-chance initiatives might help build an employer brand by portraying a commitment toward community development. However, such policies need to be crafted carefully and with the involvement of legal experts.

Improving High-volume Recruitment Effectiveness

Finding: More than a quarter strongly agree their organization is effective at high-volume recruitment

Over three-fourths of organizations are confident in their capabilities, citing they agree (51%) or strongly agree (27%) that their organization is effective at high-volume recruitment. This is an improvement from two-thirds of respondents who said the same in 2023. Under one-tenth disagree that their high-volume recruitment processes are effective.

Throughout the rest of this report, we will discuss findings that differentiate organizations that are highly effective at high-volume recruitment from those that are not, based on the data below.

Your organization is effective at high-volume recruitment.

7%

1%

13%   51%   27%

0   20   40   60   80   100

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Agree ■ Strongly agree
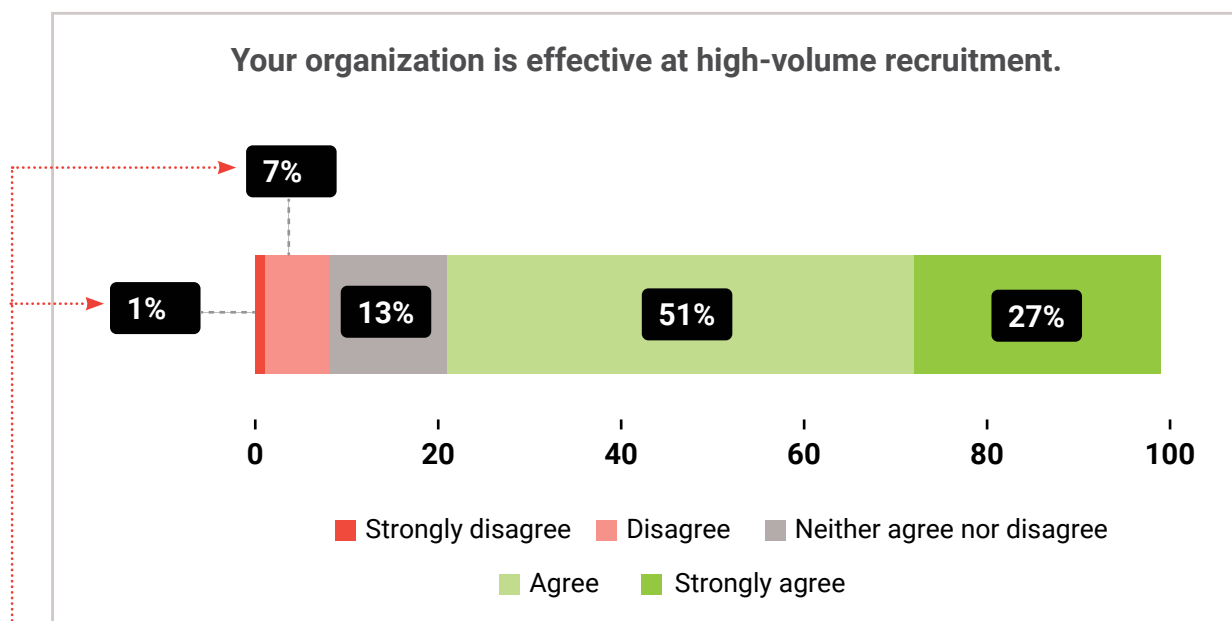
Editor's note: Within the survey, we noted that "effective" refers to success in sourcing and onboarding candidates.

About one in ten actively disagree that their organization is effective at high-volume recruitment

High-volume recruitment cohort classification

What differentiates organizations with highly effective high-volume recruitment practices from others? To examine this question, we divided our sample into two cohorts:

- **High-volume recruitment leaders (or, recruitment leaders):** those answering "strongly agree" or "agree" to the statement, "Your organization is effective at high-volume recruitment."

- **High-volume recruitment laggards (or, recruitment laggards):** those answering "neither agree nor disagree," "disagree," or "strongly disagree" to the same statement.

  Effectiveness in this context is defined as success in sourcing and onboarding candidates. Of course, correlation is not the same as causation. While we cannot state that any particular practice will lead to highly effective high-volume recruitment functions, we do see intriguing relationships that may, if used judiciously, result in greater success.

Finding: Three-fifths of organizations have a defined strategy for high-volume recruitment

Do organizations engaging in high-volume recruiting have a defined strategy? About seven in 10 respondents agree (40%) or strongly agree (28%) that their organization has a defined strategy for high-volume recruitment. Under one-fifth (16%) actively disagree.

An organization without a well-defined strategy can face tedious, misdirected outreach activities, disorganized data, and overall ineffective recruitment processes. A well-defined high-volume recruitment strategy, on the other hand, can help identify required resources, prioritize tasks, and effectively leverage the tools and knowledge available.

Your organization has a defined strategy for high-volume recruitment.

| 1% | 15% | 15% | 40% | 28% |

0   20   40   60   80   100

- 🟥 Strongly disagree
- 🟧 Disagree
- ⬜ Neither agree nor disagree
- 🟩 Agree
- 🟩 Strongly agree
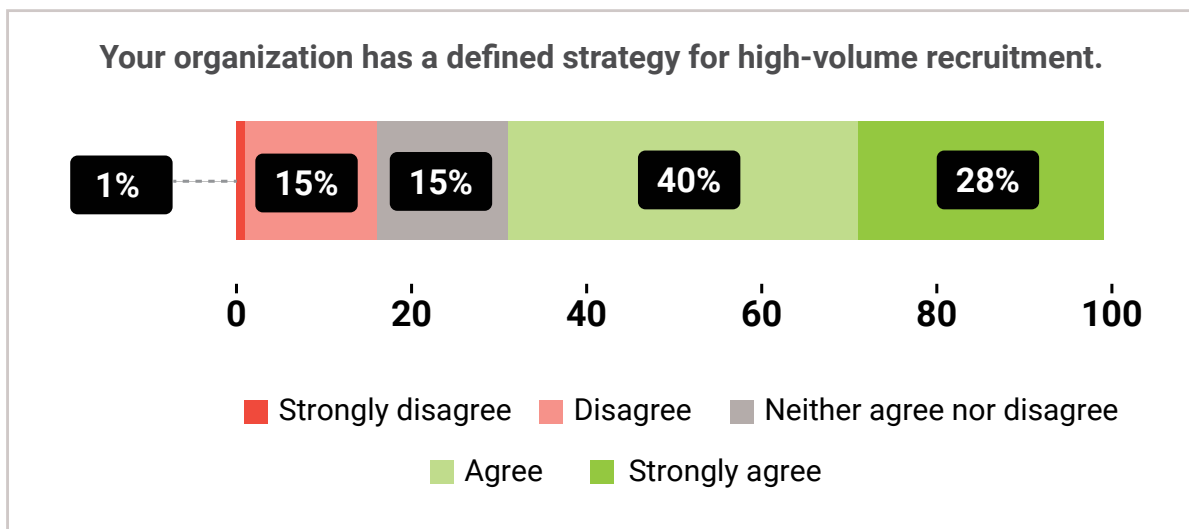
Editor's note: The numbers don't add up to 100% due to rounding off.

Finding: Recruitment leaders are more likely than laggards to have a well-defined strategy in place for high-volume recruitment for a longer time

Results of Chi-square Test

A chi-square test of independence shows that high-volume recruitment leaders are significantly more likely than laggards to have a well-defined recruitment strategy. They are significantly more likely than laggards to have a well-defined recruitment strategy in place for over five years.

At least part of the success of high-volume recruitment leaders can be attributed to their likelihood of having a well-defined strategy in place for high-volume recruitment. This allows them to set targets, allocate resources, and measure performance leading to better chances of success.

Over eight in 10 (84%) high-volume recruitment leader organizations agree/ strongly agree that they have a well-defined strategy in place compared to just one-tenth of laggards who say the same.

Of those that do have a well-defined strategy in place, high-volume recruitment leaders are more likely to have a strategy in place for longer than have laggards. A quarter (24%) of leaders have had the strategy in place for over five years, while none of the laggards have. But, we must consider the possibility that some of these laggard organizations may have been in business only for a couple of years.

In contrast, half of the laggards seem to have a defined strategy for less than a year while only 13% of the leaders say the same.

Your organization:

Has a defined strategy for
high-volume recruitment
(% responding
"agree" or "strongly agree")
84%
11%

Has had this strategy in
place for over 5 years
24%
0%

Has had this strategy in
place for a year or less
13%
50%

0 20 40 60 80 100

■ High-volume recruitment leaders   ■ High-volume recruitment laggards
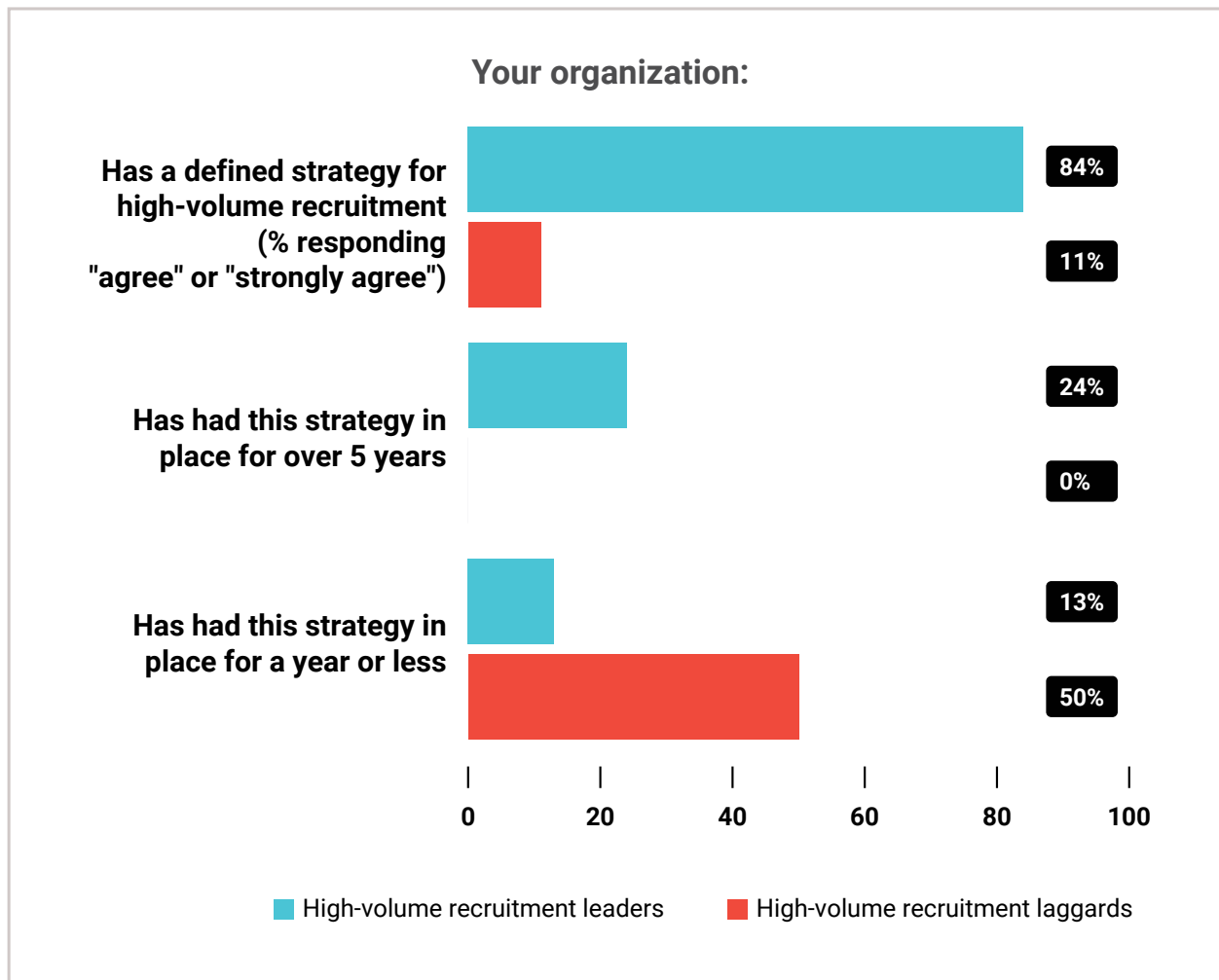
HRRI Strategic Insight: A well-defined strategy is key for effective high-volume recruitment. Aligning high-volume recruiting with broader business objectives can be achieved by engaging key stakeholders and aligning their goals with growth targets and operational efficiency. Reviewing and updating this recruitment strategy is crucial to adapting to the changing external environment and constantly evolving business needs.

Effective Practices and Channels for High-volume Hiring

Finding: The most effective high-volume practices are aimed at improving the ease of high-volume hiring processes

About two-thirds of respondents believe that automating the process as much as possible and removing barriers to applying are key practices for high-volume recruitment success.

It is interesting to note that four out of five practices cited by over half of the respondents are related to process improvement and just one is technology-related. We believe it underscores the fact that having solid processes in place and good technological tools to aid those processes can elevate a function as a whole.

In your organization, what practices do you consider to be the most effective for high-volume recruiting? (select all that apply)

Practice	%
Automate as much of the process as possible	65%
Remove barriers to applying	65%
Develop a compelling employer brand and value proposition	64%
Distill screening questions to the most essential	57%
Define ideal candidate profiles for each high-volume role	53%

Editor's Note: Within the question, we noted that "effectiveness" refers to practices that result in the most outflow of candidates.

Finding: High-volume recruitment leaders are more likely to distill screening questions

Two of the differentiators between high-volume recruitment leaders and laggards are the willingness and ability to distill screening questions (63% vs. 35%) and the automation of processes (68% vs. 53%).

In your organization, what practices do you consider to be the most effective for high-volume recruiting?

Practice	Leaders	Laggards
Automate as much of the process as possible	68%	53%
Distill screening questions to the most essential	63%	35%

■ High-volume recruitment leaders   ■ High-volume recruitment laggards

Editor's note: Effective refers to practices that result in the most outflow of candidates

HRRI Strategic Recommendations

Following are some suggestions to maximize the effectiveness of practices and channels for high-volume recruitment:

- Streamline application processes, simplify forms, and optimize for mobile devices to improve candidate experience.

- Use automation tools to handle administrative tasks and provide prompt responses. They can also lower fatigue levels of recruiters. But be careful not to "over-automate" to the degree that human judgment and attention never come into play.

Finding: Over eight in 10 respondents believe advertising on job boards is the most effective channel for high-volume recruitment

What channels do organizations that engage in high-volume recruitment find to be effective? Over eight in 10 say advertising on job boards is most effective followed by actively soliciting referrals from employees (64%) and advertising jobs on paid social media (57%) and advertising jobs on organic/free social media (52%). These have remained the top choices from last year's research on the same topic.

In your organization, what channels do you consider to be the most effective for high-volume recruiting? (select all that apply)

Channel	Percentage
Advertise on job boards	83%
Actively solicit referrals from employees	64%
Advertise jobs on paid social media	57%
Advertise jobs on organic /free social media	52%
Expand candidate pools by providing experiential training	27%
Continuously engage alumni employees	21%
Convert existing customers and clients	17%

Finding: Recruitment leaders are more likely than laggards to use a variety of channels for high-volume recruitment

High-volume leaders are more likely to employ a variety of channels for high-volume recruiting. Leaders are 1.5 times more likely to advertise jobs on paid social media and free/organic social media. Leaders are also four times more likely to use lesser-used channels such as continuously engaging alumni employees (25% vs. 6%).

In your organization, what channels do you consider to be the most effective for high-volume recruiting?

Channel	Leaders	Laggards
Advertise jobs on paid social media	62%	41%
Advertise jobs on organic/free social media	55%	35%
Continuously engage alumni employees	25%	6%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

■ High-volume recruitment leaders   ■ High-volume recruitment laggards
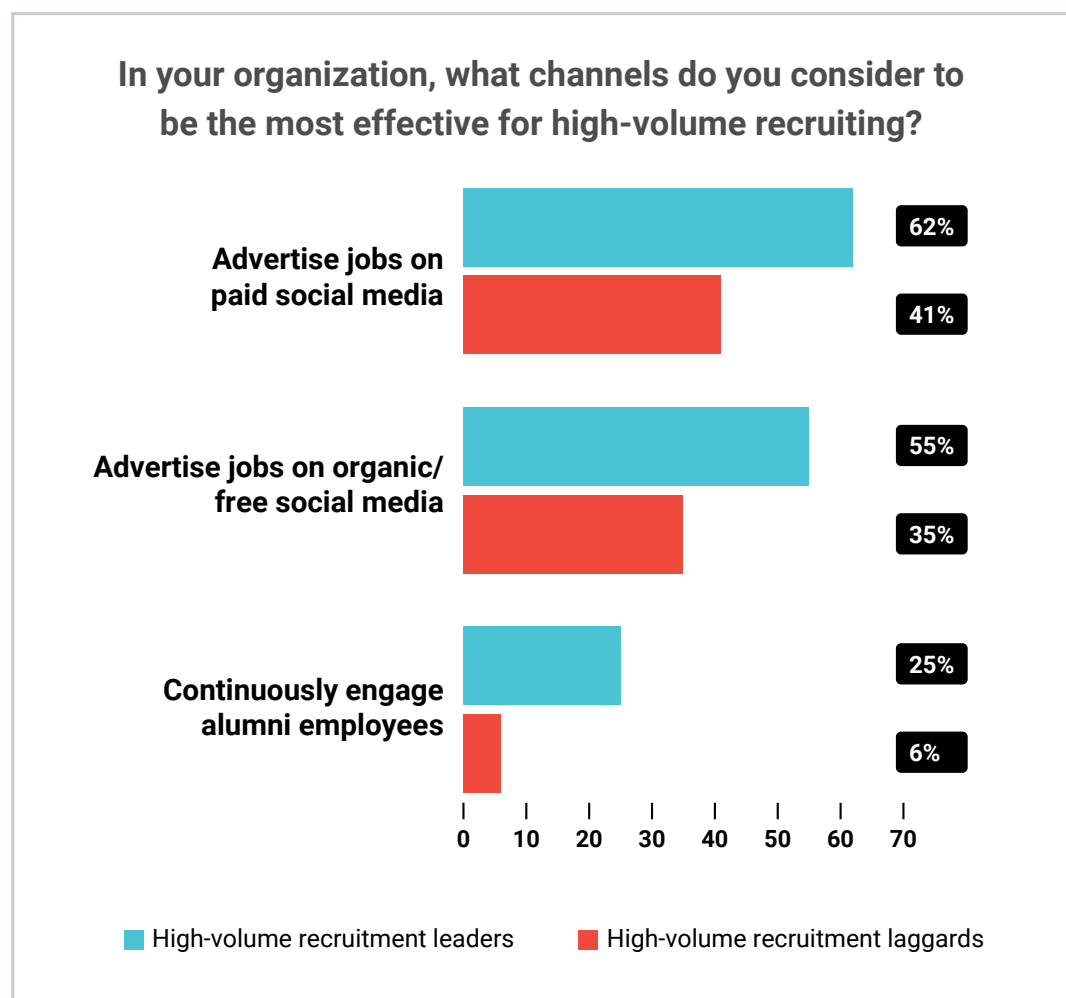
HRRI Strategic Insight: Utilizing targeted job boards and social media advertising to reach relevant candidates can improve hiring metrics. Try engaging with followers and showcasing your employer brand through organic content.

Technologies and AI in the High-volume Hiring Landscape

Finding: Over two-fifths of respondents believe mobile devices equipped with full capabilities are the most effective tools/technologies for high-volume recruiting

Tools and technologies can be invaluable in high-volume recruitment. Over two-fifths believe full capabilities available on mobile devices are most effective for high-volume recruitment. Candidates expect the hiring experience to be personal, quick, and convenient. With a majority of candidates applying for jobs on their mobile devices, a consumer-like experience can reduce barriers to completing the application process.

The second most widely cited tool/technology is the automated means of gathering candidate feedback (35%). Third on the list is SMS or automated chat client, cited by 31%.

Over a quarter do not use any tools/technologies for high-volume recruitment. This strikes us as concerning, given the challenges of high-volume recruitment. Indeed, as we will see in the next finding, there is a strong positive correlation between tool/technology usage and the effectiveness of high-volume hiring.

In your organization, what channels do you consider to be the most effective for high-volume recruiting?

Channel	Percentage
Full capabilities available on mobile devices	44%
Automated means of gathering candidate feedback	35%
SMS or automated chat client (or "chatbot")	31%
Succinct, user-friendly assessments	29%
Artificial intelligence (e.g., chatbots)	23%
Automated ranking of candidates	23%
Automated generation of interview questions	22%
Programmatic advertising	21%
Virtual tryouts; job previews (e.g., via video content)	18%
Asynchronous video interviewing	17%
Geolocation capabilities	17%
We do not use any tools /technologies for this	26%

Over a quarter (29%) of respondents believe succinct, user-friendly assessments are an effective technology/tool for high-volume recruitment

Finding: High-volume recruitment leaders are more likely than laggards to utilize a variety of tools and technologies to maximize recruitment effectiveness

Leaders are considerably more likely than laggards to leverage full capabilities available on mobile devices for high-volume recruitment, use automated means of gathering candidate feedback, and use SMS or automated chat.

Two intriguing findings are that laggards do not use AI at all, while 30% of leaders do. Also, they are over twice as likely as leaders to not use any tools/technologies for high-volume recruitment. Both these findings indicate that a proper use of technology can make a difference in high-volume hiring.

Results of Chi-square Test

A chi-square test of independence shows that high-volume recruitment laggards are significantly more likely than leaders to say they do not use any tools/technologies for high-volume recruitment, while leaders are significantly more likely than laggards to use AI and full capabilities available on mobile devices.

In your organization, what tools and technologies do you consider to be most effective for high-volume recruiting?

Full capabilities available on mobile devices — 53% / 12%

Automated means of gathering candidate feedback — 39% / 18%

SMS or automated chat client (or "chatbot") — 36% / 12%

Artificial intelligence (e.g., chatbots) — 30% / 0%

Automated ranking of candidates — 27% / 6%

Programmatic advertising — 25% / 6%

Automated generation of interview questions — 25% / 6%

Virtual tryouts; job previews (e.g., via video content) — 22% / 6%

We do not use any tools/technologies for this — 20% / 47%

Axis: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60

■ High-volume recruitment leaders   ■ High-volume recruitment laggards

Almost half of laggards do not use any tools/technologies for high-volume recruitment

HRRI Strategic Recommendations

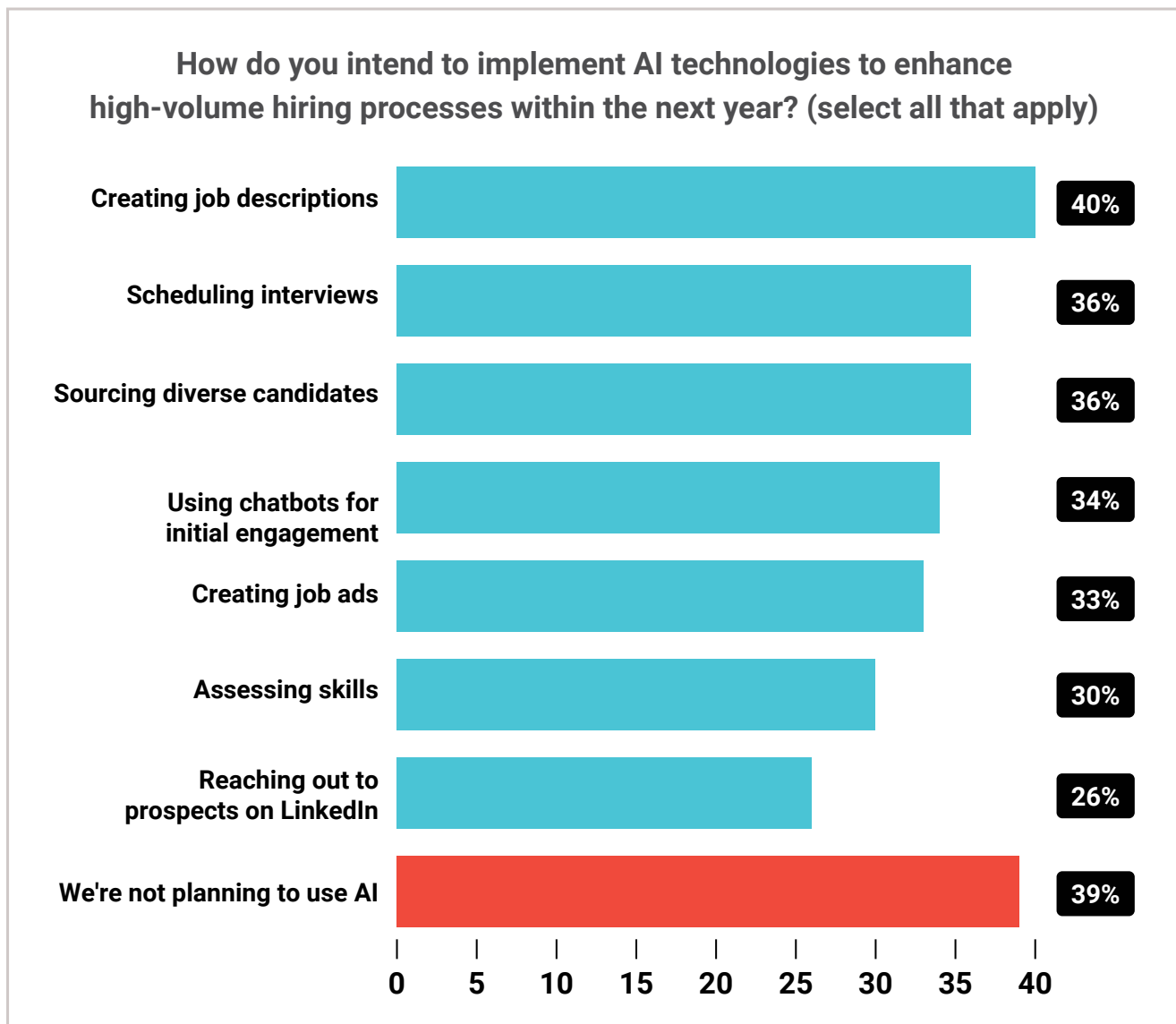Following are some suggestions to effectively leverage technology for high-volume recruitment:

- Optimize recruitment processes for mobile devices with mobile-friendly platforms and communication channels. More candidates applying for jobs on their phones is only set to increase in the future.

- Consider asynchronous video interviewing platforms for streamlined screening.

Finding: About three-fifths of respondents plan to use AI in high-volume recruiting for a variety of purposes

Over the next year, about three-fifths of respondents believe their organizations will utilize AI in high-volume hiring. The primary usage include creating job descriptions (40%), scheduling interviews (36%), and sourcing diverse candidates (36%), among others.

How do you intend to implement AI technologies to enhance high-volume hiring processes within the next year? (select all that apply)

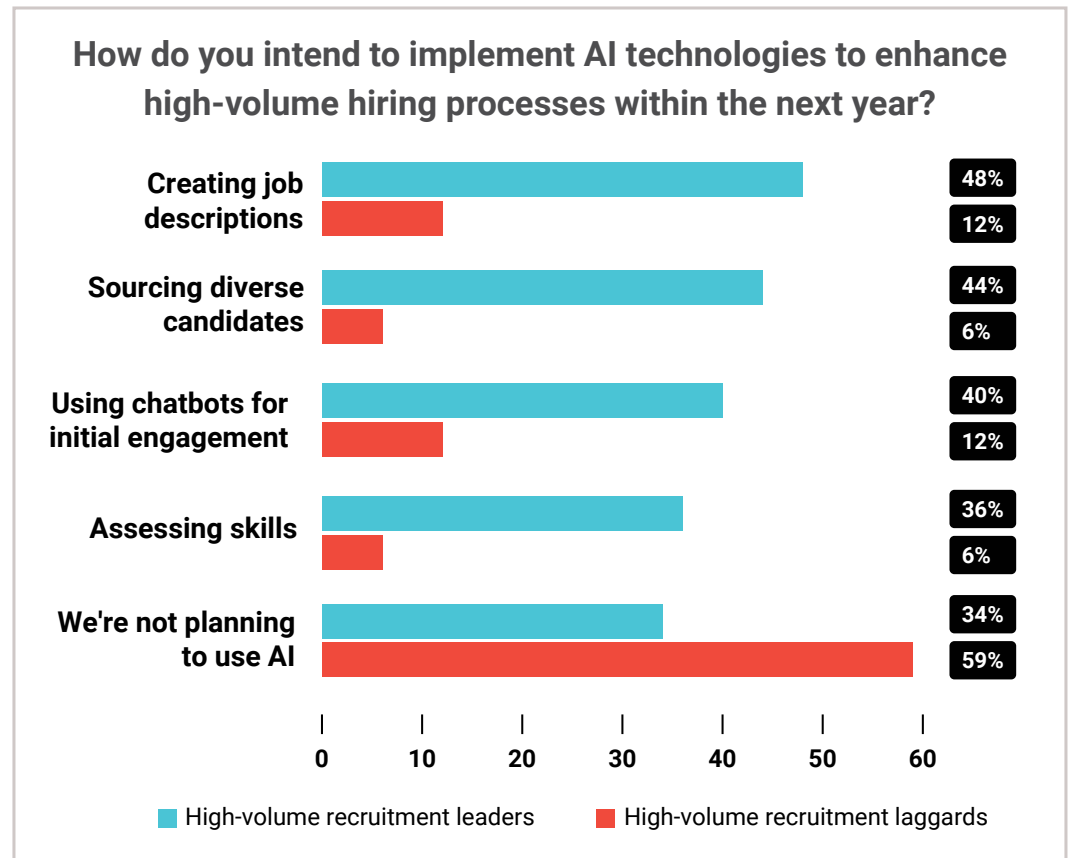| Category	Percentage
Creating job descriptions	40%
Scheduling interviews	36%
Sourcing diverse candidates	36%
Using chatbots for initial engagement	34%
Creating job ads	33%
Assessing skills	30%
Reaching out to prospects on LinkedIn	26%
We're not planning to use AI	39%

Finding: High-volume recruitment leaders are more likely than laggards to leverage AI for high-volume recruitment

Results of Chi-square Test

A chi-square test of independence shows that high-volume recruitment leaders are significantly more likely than laggards to use AI for creating job descriptions, sourcing diverse candidates, using chatbots for initial engagements and assessing skills.

Leaders seem to be significantly more likely than laggards to use AI in a variety of tasks related to high-volume hiring over the next year.

How do you intend to implement AI technologies to enhance high-volume hiring processes within the next year?

Task	High-volume recruitment leaders	High-volume recruitment laggards
Creating job descriptions	48%	12%
Sourcing diverse candidates	44%	6%
Using chatbots for initial engagement	40%	12%
Assessing skills	36%	6%
We're not planning to use AI	34%	59%

■ High-volume recruitment leaders   ■ High-volume recruitment laggards

HRRI Strategic Insight: AI can become a good tool for automation. Using it to complete routine tasks like analyzing job descriptions and sourcing diverse candidates can come in handy. Chatbots can be used to engage and assist candidates, thereby improving the candidate experience.

Quantifying Success in High-volume Hiring

Finding: Time to hire and/or time to fill is the most popular high-volume recruitment metric
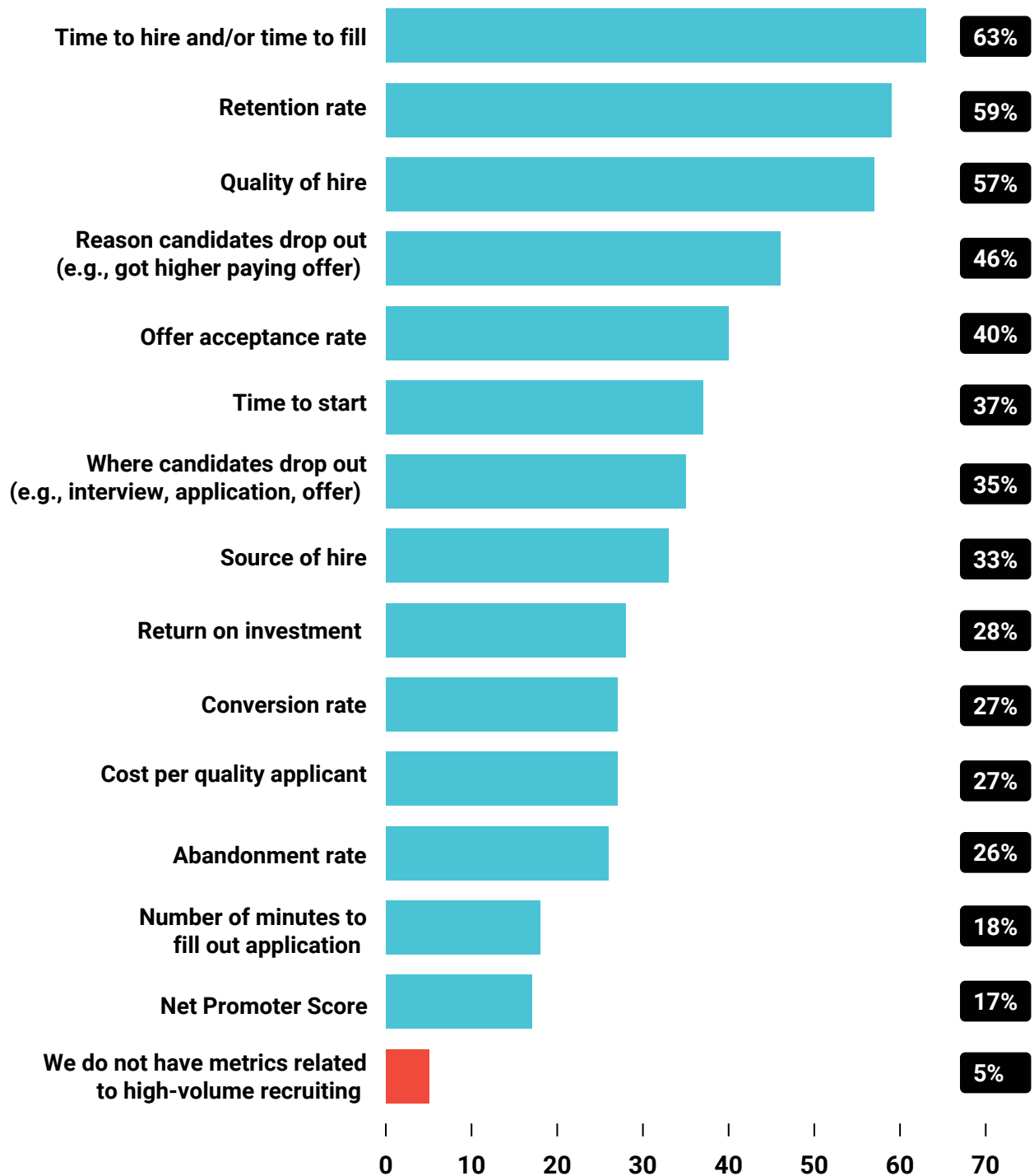
Metrics allow recruiters to understand how quickly they can get candidates for a position, how much they're spending per qualified applicant, and where their candidates are coming from, to name a few key issues. Solid metrics help them to benchmark their efforts and make tangible improvements in terms of time and money.

The top three metrics for high-volume recruitment are time to hire and/or time to fill (63%), retention rate (59%), and quality of hire (57%). These have remained in the top 3 positions since 2023.

This prioritization of speed is understandable since high-volume recruitment is often about how fast positions are filled. However, compromising too much on quality of hire could have a negative impact on other areas, from retention rates to employee productivity.

In your organization, which high-volume recruiting metrics matter most?
(select all that apply)

Metric	Percentage
Time to hire and/or time to fill	63%
Retention rate	59%
Quality of hire	57%
Reason candidates drop out (e.g., got higher paying offer)	46%
Offer acceptance rate	40%
Time to start	37%
Where candidates drop out (e.g., interview, application, offer)	35%
Source of hire	33%
Return on investment	28%
Conversion rate	27%
Cost per quality applicant	27%
Abandonment rate	26%
Number of minutes to fill out application	18%
Net Promoter Score	17%
We do not have metrics related to high-volume recruiting	5%

About half (46%) of organizations believe that the reason candidates drop out is an important metric

Finding: About seven in 10 high-volume recruitment leaders measure time to hire and/or time to fill

Leaders use a variety of metrics to a much higher extent than laggards. Although leaders are more likely than laggards to use all these metrics, the following are the areas where there are significant statistical differences.

- Time to hire and/or time to fill – 1.5 times (69% vs. 41%)

- Net promoter score - 22% vs. 0%

- Conversion rate – over 5 times more likely (33% vs. 5%)

Results of Chi-square Test

A chi-square test of independence shows that high-volume recruitment leaders are significantly more likely than laggards to say time to hire and/or fill, net promoter score and conversion rate are metrics that matter the most.

One-tenth of laggards do not have metrics related to high-volume recruitment

In your organization, which high-volume recruiting metrics matter most?

Metric	Leaders	Laggards
Time to hire and/or time to fill	69%	41%
Quality of hire	61%	41%
Conversion rate	33%	6%
Abandonment rate	30%	12%
Net promoter score	22%	0%
We do not have metrics related to high-volume recruiting	3%	12%

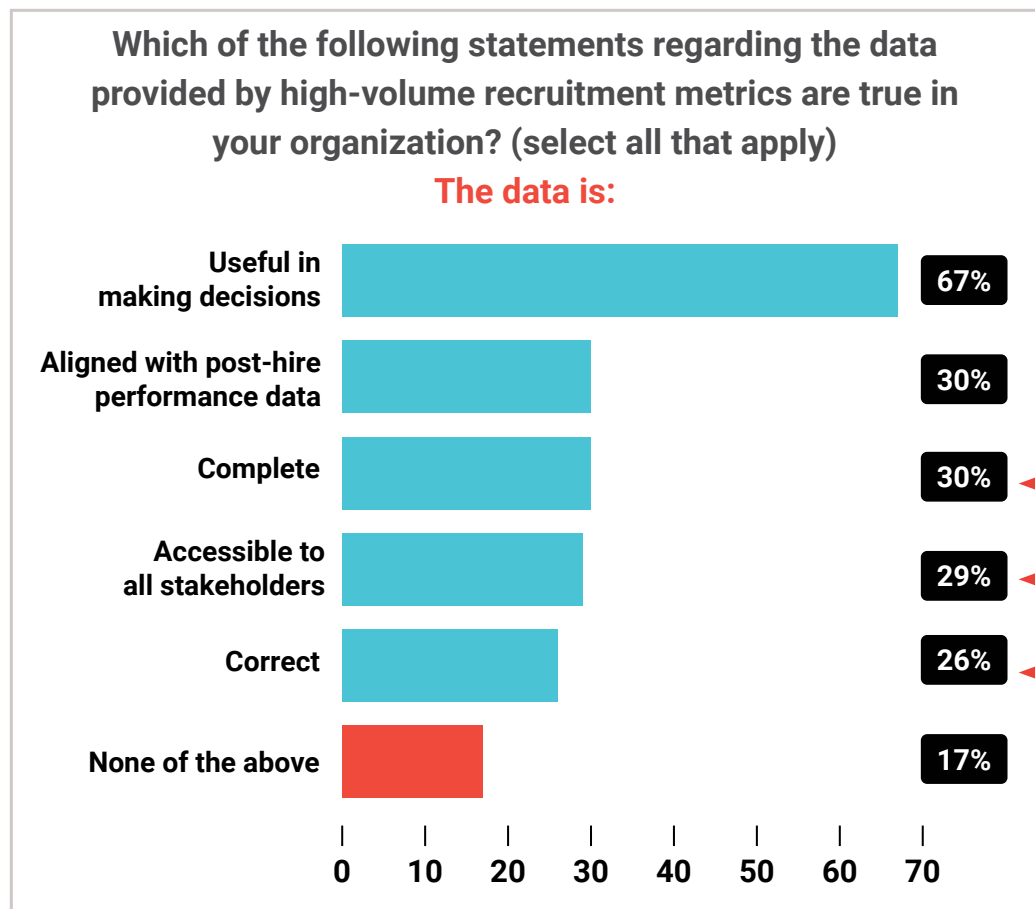■ High-volume recruitment leaders   ■ High-volume recruitment laggards

Finding: About seven in 10 of organizations believe the data provided by high-volume recruitment metrics is useful in making decisions

We see a conundrum when it comes to high-volume recruitment metrics. On one hand, a majority (67%) believe these metrics are useful in helping make decisions. On the other, only a quarter (26%) believe these metrics are "correct" and only under a third (30%) say they are "complete."

Why do we see this apparent paradox? Perhaps the idea is that organizations want directionally sound data even if it's not as precise as it could be. This suggests that despite the role of metrics and technologies, there is an art to high-volume recruitment. Experienced high-volume recruiters likely know how to make the most out of the imprecise data they have to make sound hiring decisions. The numbers are important but so is human judgment.

Only a minority of respondents believe their high-volume recruitment metrics are correct, complete, and accessible to all stakeholders

Which of the following statements regarding the data provided by high-volume recruitment metrics are true in your organization? (select all that apply)

The data is:

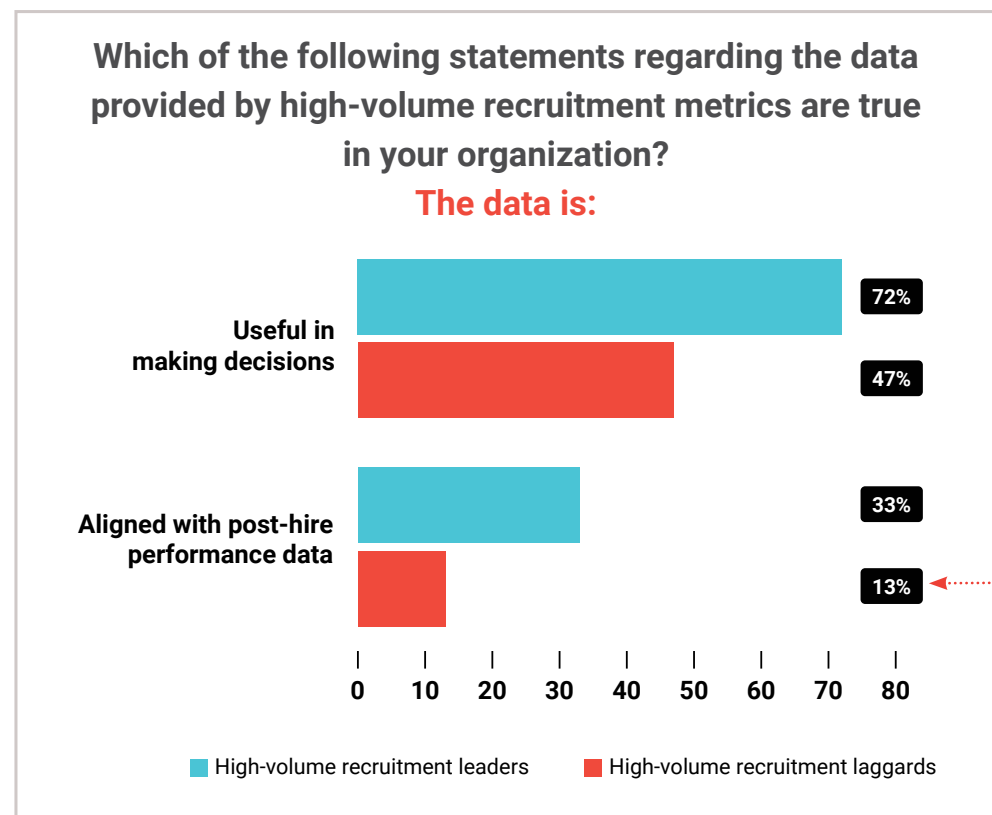|	
Useful in making decisions	67%
Aligned with post-hire performance data	30%
Complete	30%
Accessible to all stakeholders	29%
Correct	26%
None of the above	17%

Finding: Over seven in 10 of leaders believe their metrics are useful in making decisions

High-volume recruitment leaders outperform their laggard counterparts in the quality of metrics they collect and utilize. They are over 1.5 times more likely than laggards to believe their high-volume recruitment metrics are useful in making decisions, and almost 3 times more likely to say those metrics align with post-hire performance data. While there is room for improvement for leaders in the quality of metrics they use, they are certainly faring better than laggards, perhaps because they know how to make the best of the metrics they have.

Results of Chi-square Test

A chi-square test of independence shows that high-volume recruitment leaders are significantly more likely than laggards to say metrics are useful in making decisions.

Which of the following statements regarding the data provided by high-volume recruitment metrics are true in your organization?

The data is:

Useful in making decisions
- High-volume recruitment leaders: 72%
- High-volume recruitment laggards: 47%

Aligned with post-hire performance data
- High-volume recruitment leaders: 33%
- High-volume recruitment laggards: 13%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

■ High-volume recruitment leaders   ■ High-volume recruitment laggards

Only 13% of laggards believe their high-volume metrics align with post-hire performance data

HRRI Strategic Recommendations

Following are some suggestions to maximize the use of metrics in improving the efficacy of high-volume recruiting:

- Don't assume that the technologies will handle everything well based on existing metrics. The metrics are widely seen as flawed, so human judgement and experience are still important for high-volume hiring. Find recruiters with excellent track records and reputations.

- Work to ensure comprehensive tracking and reporting throughout the recruitment lifecycle. Improving data quality over time is important. But don't let the "perfect be the enemy of the good." In the short term, gather the data that is "good enough" for making relatively sound decisions.

- Post-hire performance is a metric worth tracking and is one way to gauge quality of hire. Consider creating linkages between recruitment metrics and post-hire performance data for deeper insights into redesigning your processes.

High-volume Hiring Challenges

Finding: Low quality of candidates is the top challenge with high-volume recruitment over the past year
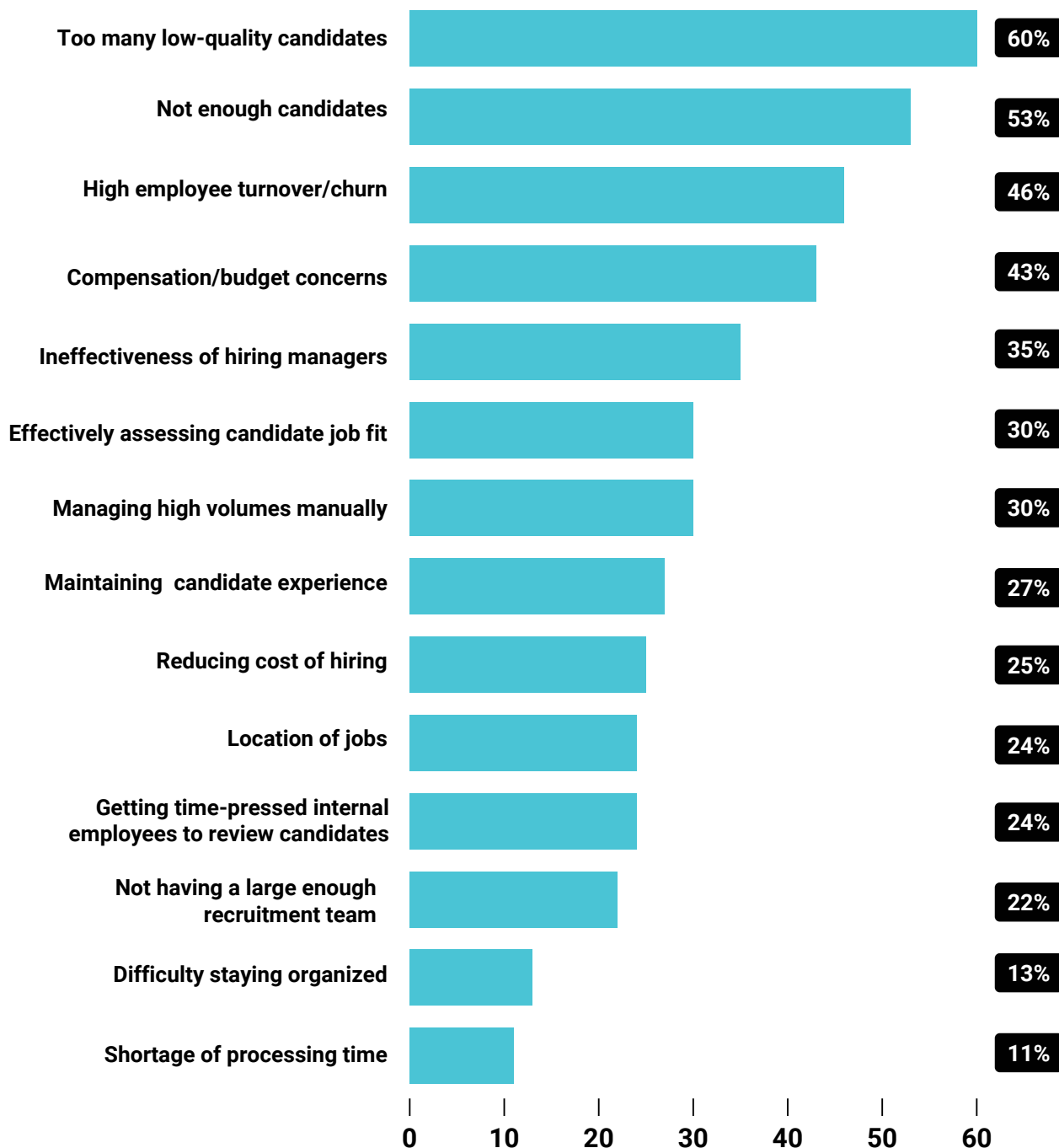
Essentially, organizations have had a hard time finding good-quality candidates. More than half cite too many poor-quality candidates (60%) and not enough candidates (53%) as the top challenges of high-volume recruitment over the last year. These were the top three challenges cited in our 2023 study as well, indicating that they are enduring and hard-to-solve problems.

Although a lack of candidates may be related to external factors such as demographics and unemployment rates, it could also point to internal factors such as problems with advertising, sourcing, assessing, and more.

Employee turnover may largely depend on the quality of the hiring process as well as other organizational factors such as compensation, culture, and the nature of the work.

In your organization, what have been your top high-volume recruitment challenges in the past 12 months? (select all that apply)
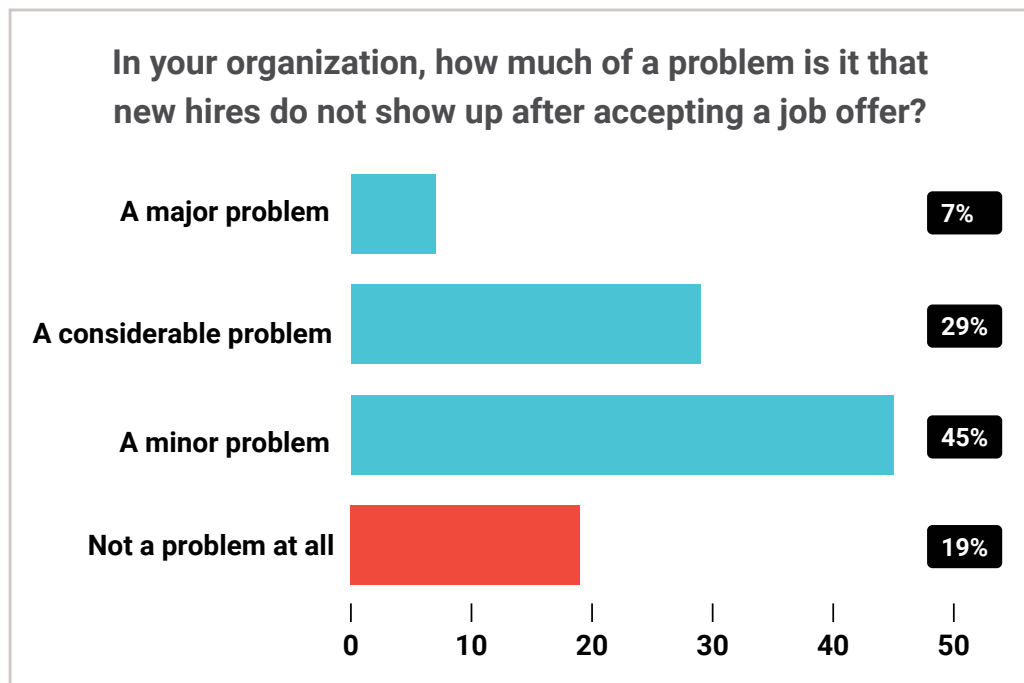
Challenge	%
Too many low-quality candidates	60%
Not enough candidates	53%
High employee turnover/churn	46%
Compensation/budget concerns	43%
Ineffectiveness of hiring managers	35%
Effectively assessing candidate job fit	30%
Managing high volumes manually	30%
Maintaining candidate experience	27%
Reducing cost of hiring	25%
Location of jobs	24%
Getting time-pressed internal employees to review candidates	24%
Not having a large enough recruitment team	22%
Difficulty staying organized	13%
Shortage of processing time	11%

Over a third cite ineffectiveness of hiring managers to be a top challenge

Finding: Over a third of respondents say that "ghosting" is a considerable problem

In more than eight in 10 organizations, "ghosting" (that is, new hires do not show up after accepting a job hire) is a problem of varying magnitudes. While it is a considerable (29%) or major (7%) problem in over a third of organizations, another two-fifths say it is a minor problem (45%). Under one-fifth (19%) of respondents say new hires not showing up is not a problem at all.

There could be a variety of reasons for new hires not showing up. It could be candidates getting better offers, job descriptions being inaccurate, organizations' poor brand image, or finding the company culture and hiring experience unsatisfactory.

In your organization, how much of a problem is it that new hires do not show up after accepting a job offer?

Category	Percentage
A major problem	7%
A considerable problem	29%
A minor problem	45%
Not a problem at all	19%

Finding: Over three-fourths of organizations have increased wages in response to recent employee shortages

Differences based on organization size

Small organizations (75%) are more likely than midsize (68%) and large (66%) organizations to offer higher wages as a response to employee shortages.

Most commonly, organizations tend to increase wages (72%) in response to talent shortages. Over half (52%) increase benefits and perks, and almost half (47%) increase flexibility offered (such as open shift schedule).

However, organizations looking to increase salaries for new hires when the job market is competitive must consider issues related to pay compression. This is when new hires have starting salaries higher than or close to what existing employees are making in similar roles. This means salaries don't necessarily reflect employees' skills, professional experience, or their role's responsibilities. This can negatively impact the workforce by lowering staff morale, decreasing engagement, and driving turnover. With transparency laws expanding and more companies including salary ranges in job postings, there is a greater chance that current employees are aware of what their peers are making.

Has your organization increased wages and/or total rewards as a result of the recent employee shortages? (% responding "yes")

Wages	72%
Benefits and perks	52%
Flexibility (such as open shift scheduling)	47%
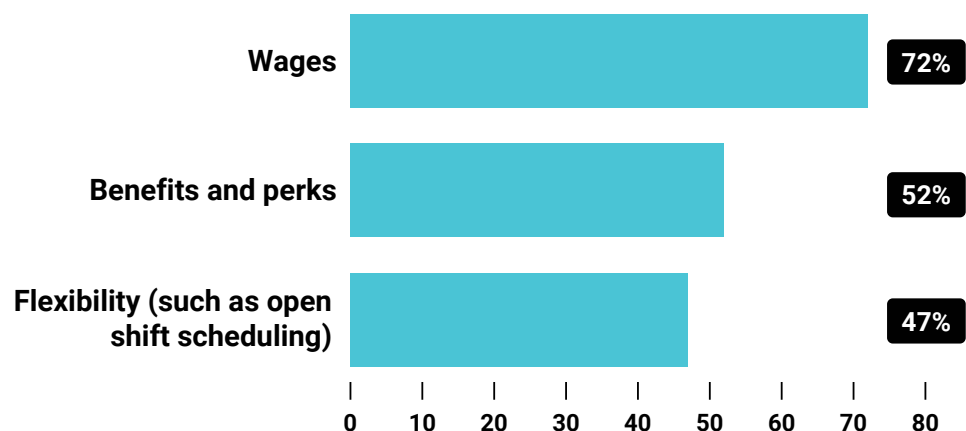
Editor's note: In the original data, 4% to 5% of respondents stated that they "don't know." We removed those responses and recalculated, so this only shows percentages for those who answered the question

HRRI Strategic Recommendations

Following are some suggestions for dealing with the challenges of high-volume recruiting:

- Consider addressing compensation competitiveness through market research and consider enhancing benefits.

- Refine job descriptions, utilize targeted sourcing, and implement rigorous screening for higher-quality candidates.

- Streamline recruitment with ATS and automation tools for a seamless experience.

- Offer training and resources to hiring managers to improve their processes and decision-making.

- Maintain transparent communication and gather candidate feedback to enhance the overall experience.

- Enhance onboarding processes and candidate engagement to address new hire retention challenges and prevent ghosting.

Pre-hire Assessments for High-volume Hiring Success

Finding: Over half of organizations use pre-hire assessments themselves or through their recruitment partner

Pre-hire assessments are tests and tools that can be used to compare the critical competencies of the candidates to find the best match for the job and organization. Although under half (45%) of organizations undertake such assessments for high-volume hiring, another 6% use such assessments through recruitment partners (51% in total).

The key to using pre-hire assessments is determining in advance what the job needs and using appropriate assessments that are compliant with legislation and help maximize candidate experience.
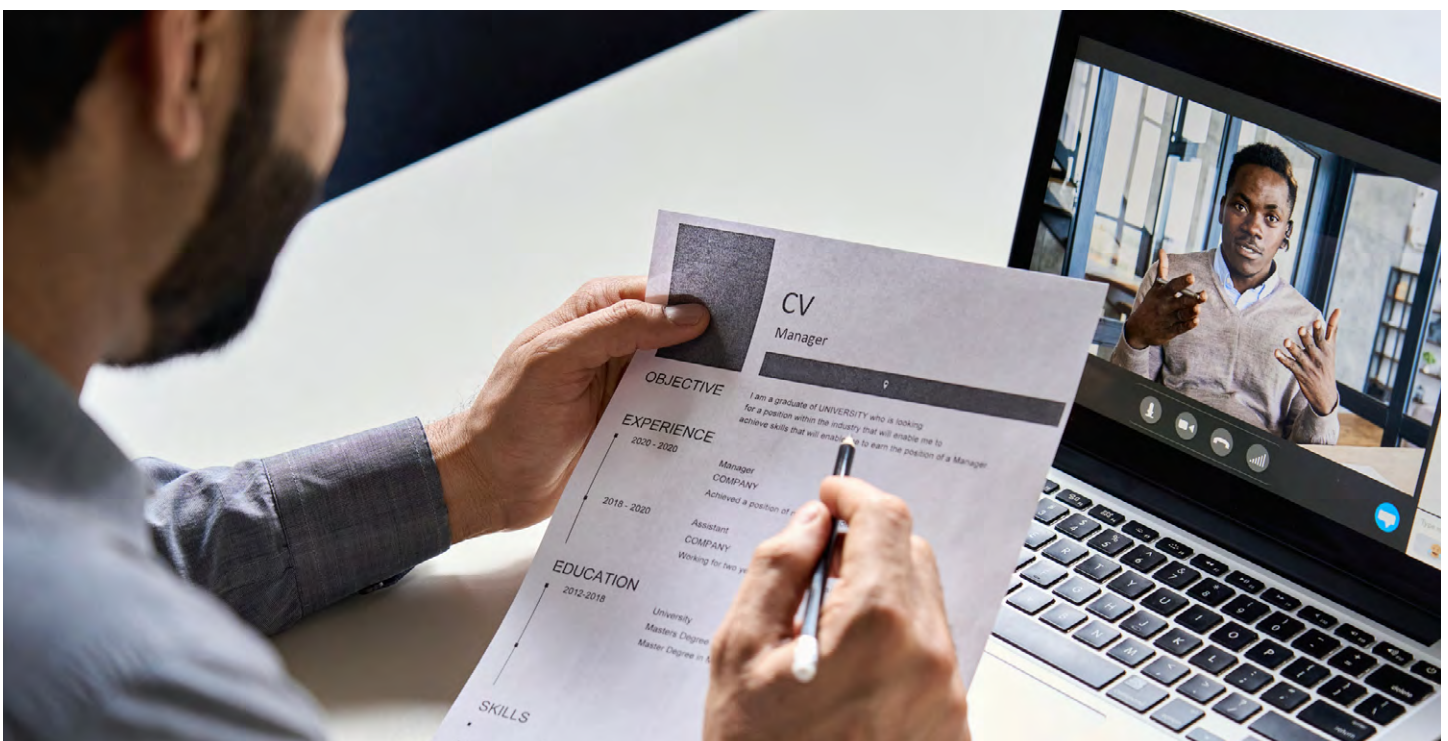
Does your organization use pre-hire assessments for high-volume recruitment purposes?

Response	Percentage
Yes	37%
No, but the organization to which we outsource or with which we partner does	6%
No, but we use assessments for other purposes	9%
No, we do not use assessments	45%

45% of organizations do not use pre-hire assessments for any purposes
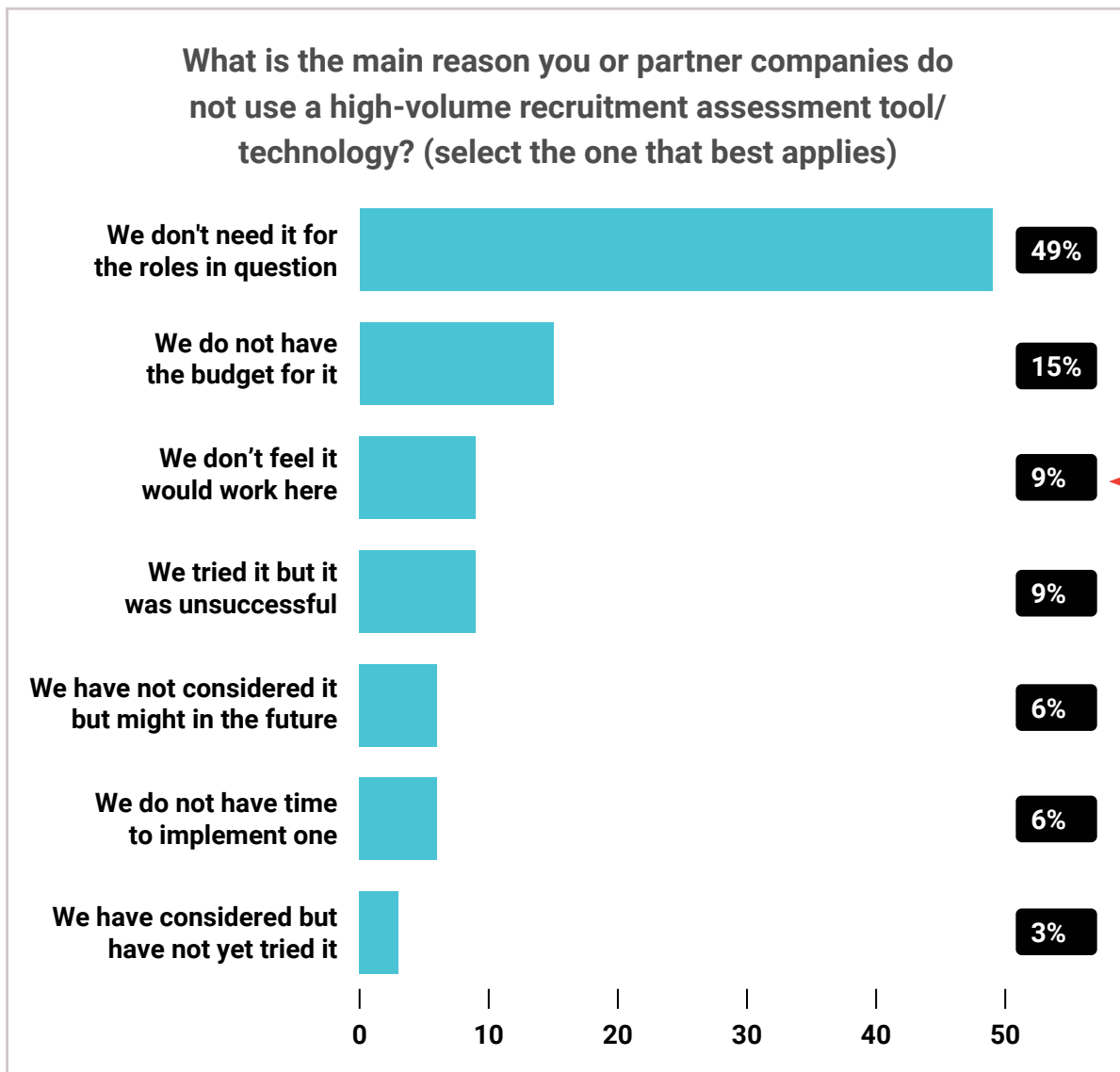
Finding: Almost half of organizations not utilizing pre-hire assessments for high-volume recruitments believe they do not need them for the roles in question

The top reason given by respondents who do not use pre-hire assessments in their organizations for high-volume recruitment is that they do not need them for the roles in question (49%). Other contributing factors may be that they do not have the budget for them (15%), they feel they won't work in their organization (9%), or they have tried and found them unsuccessful (9%).

Of course, using such assessments is a judgment call. Some organizations that are already suffering from a shortage of applicants may worry that assessments will further limit their applicant pool. However, besides being useful for the hiring organization, pre-hire assessments can also improve the candidate experience by allowing a realistic job preview and the opportunity to be more engaged with the hiring process. Candidates who are hired after assessments may have better retention and performance due to a better fit with the job and organization.

What is the main reason you or partner companies do not use a high-volume recruitment assessment tool/ technology? (select the one that best applies)

Reason	Percentage
We don't need it for the roles in question	49%
We do not have the budget for it	15%
We don't feel it would work here	9%
We tried it but it was unsuccessful	9%
We have not considered it but might in the future	6%
We do not have time to implement one	6%
We have considered but have not yet tried it	3%

0   10   20   30   40   50

Editor's Note: In the original data, 8% of respondents stated they "Don't know." We removed those responses and recalculated, so this only shows percentages for those who answered the question.

Almost one-tenth of respondents believe pre-hire assessments would not work in their organizations
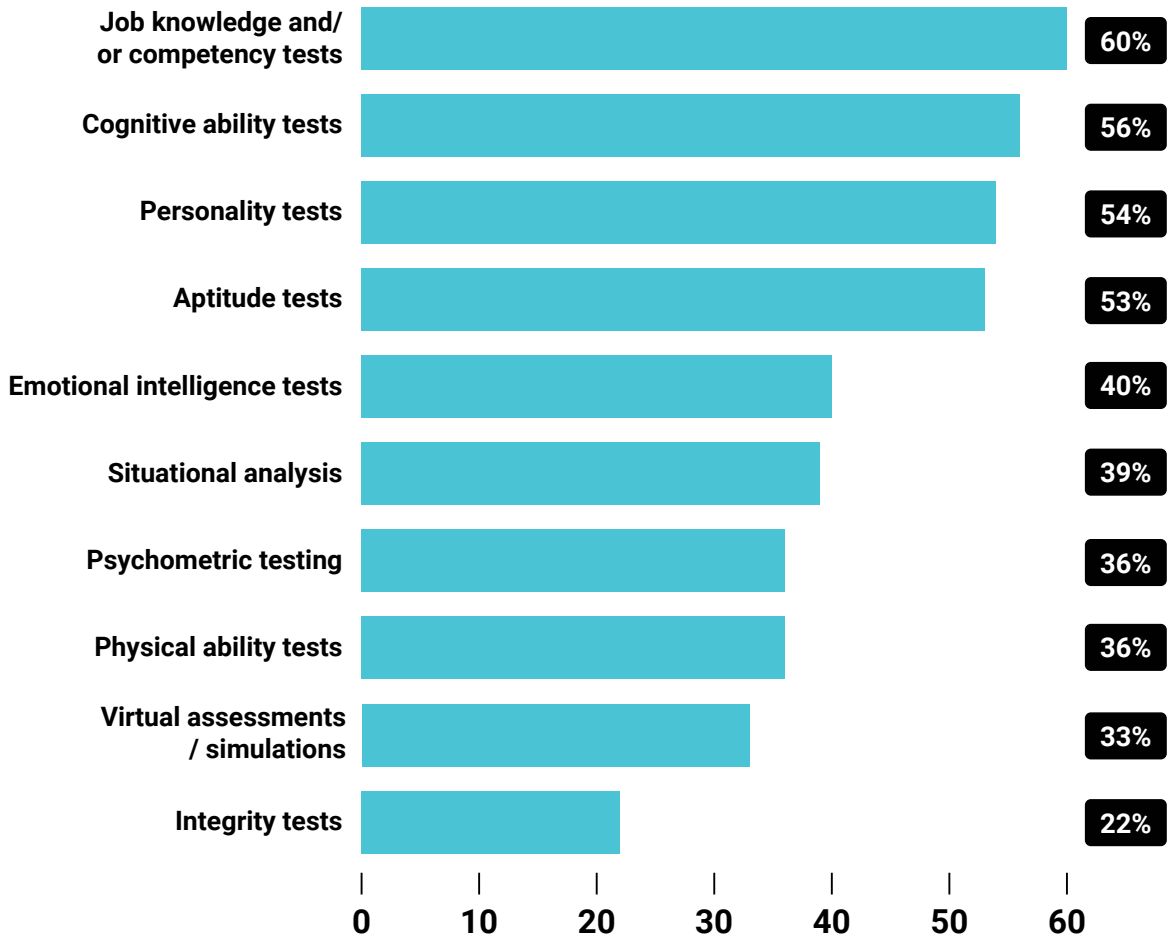
Finding: Three-fourths of organizations that use assessments for high-volume hiring utilize job knowledge and/or competency tests

Most (60%) use job knowledge and/or competency tests. Over half use personality, cognitive, and aptitude tests. Each of the tests has its pros and cons.

While job knowledge tests are a good measure of current knowledge of the subject, they may not provide insight into the learning ability of the candidate. Personality and integrity tests may suffer from the issue of candidates providing responses they believe the potential organization "wants to hear." They may also, however, give a good insight into the cultural fit of the candidate. The choice of test depends on the nature of the job, the authority of the assessment, and the fact that recruiters must be mindful of choosing the optimal mix of tests to assess candidates.

Which of the following assessments does your organization use when high-volume recruiting? (select all that apply)

Assessment	Percentage
Job knowledge and/or competency tests	60%
Cognitive ability tests	56%
Personality tests	54%
Aptitude tests	53%
Emotional intelligence tests	40%
Situational analysis	39%
Psychometric testing	36%
Physical ability tests	36%
Virtual assessments / simulations	33%
Integrity tests	22%

Two-fifths of organizations use emotional intelligence tests for pre-hire assessment during high-volume recruitment

Key Takeaways

The needs of every organization are different, but here are some things we think recruiters should consider to better compete in the proverbial war for talent.

Key Takeaway 1

Focus on candidate experience. Prioritize creating a positive candidate experience throughout the recruitment process. Streamline applications, provide timely feedback, and ensure clear communication to enhance candidate satisfaction and improve employer branding.

Key Takeaway 2

Leverage data analytics. Utilize data analytics to inform recruitment strategies and decision-making. Analyze recruitment metrics to identify bottlenecks, optimize processes, and improve the quality of hires. Predictive analytics can also help forecast future hiring needs and trends.

Key Takeaway 3

Embrace technology. Leveraging automation is associated with higher success, according to our research. But more isn't always better. The trick is to use the right amount of the right technologies. These technologies can range from ATS and recruitment marketing platforms to candidate screening and video interviewing tools. And then, of course, there is the growing number of features associated with artificial intelligence. Think about what your organization needs first, then pick the technologies that enable you to meet those needs.

Key Takeaway 4

Hire and develop excellent recruiters. Technology can't be trusted to make good decisions on its own, and analytics are based on imperfect data. Therefore, it makes sense to hire and develop terrific talent acquisition professionals. In the hiring process, look for those who have had experience and success in high-volume recruitment.

Key Takeaway 5

Build talent pools. Proactively build and maintain talent pools to nurture relationships with potential candidates. Engage with passive candidates through networking events, social media, and targeted outreach to create a pipeline of qualified talent for future hiring needs.

Key Takeaway **6**

Invest in employer branding. Invest in employer branding initiatives to attract top talent in a competitive market. Highlight the company culture, values, and career development opportunities through social media, employer review sites, and employee testimonials.

Key Takeaway **7**

Diversify sourcing channels. Expand sourcing channels beyond traditional methods to reach a diverse pool of candidates. Explore niche job boards, industry-specific forums, and community partnerships to tap into underrepresented talent pools.

Key Takeaway **8**

Espouse continuous improvement. Adopt a mindset of continuous improvement by regularly evaluating and refining recruitment processes. Solicit feedback from candidates, hiring managers, and other stakeholders to identify areas for enhancement and innovation.

Key Takeaway **9**

Collaborate with hiring managers. Foster strong partnerships with hiring managers to align recruitment strategies with business objectives. Collaborate closely to understand role requirements, desired candidate profiles, and organizational needs to facilitate successful hires.

Key Takeaway **10**

Prioritize DEIB. Embed inclusivity and diversity into every stage of the recruitment process. Implement bias mitigation strategies, diverse candidate sourcing techniques, and inclusive interview practices to foster a more diverse and equitable workforce.

Key Takeaway **11**

Measure success. Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of high-volume hiring initiatives. Track metrics such as time-to-fill, cost-per-hire, quality of hire, and candidate satisfaction to evaluate performance and drive continuous improvement.

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