

What Candidates Really Want



A 2020 research study conducted by TriCom provides data and insights to empower employers to attract, hire, and retain top technical talent.



What Does Your Company Need to Do to Find and Hire the Top Technical Talent?

TriCom Went Straight to the Source to Find Out.

Developing talent acquisition strategies to attract top technologists is difficult – so do not leave it to chance. To help organizations answer the critical question, “[what do today’s tech candidates really want?](#)” we surveyed 831 of our Midwest consultants, past and present.

In this eBook, you will learn how to best attract, hire, and retain top technical talent for your team.

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Part 1: Attract Talent



The Right Message to the Right People

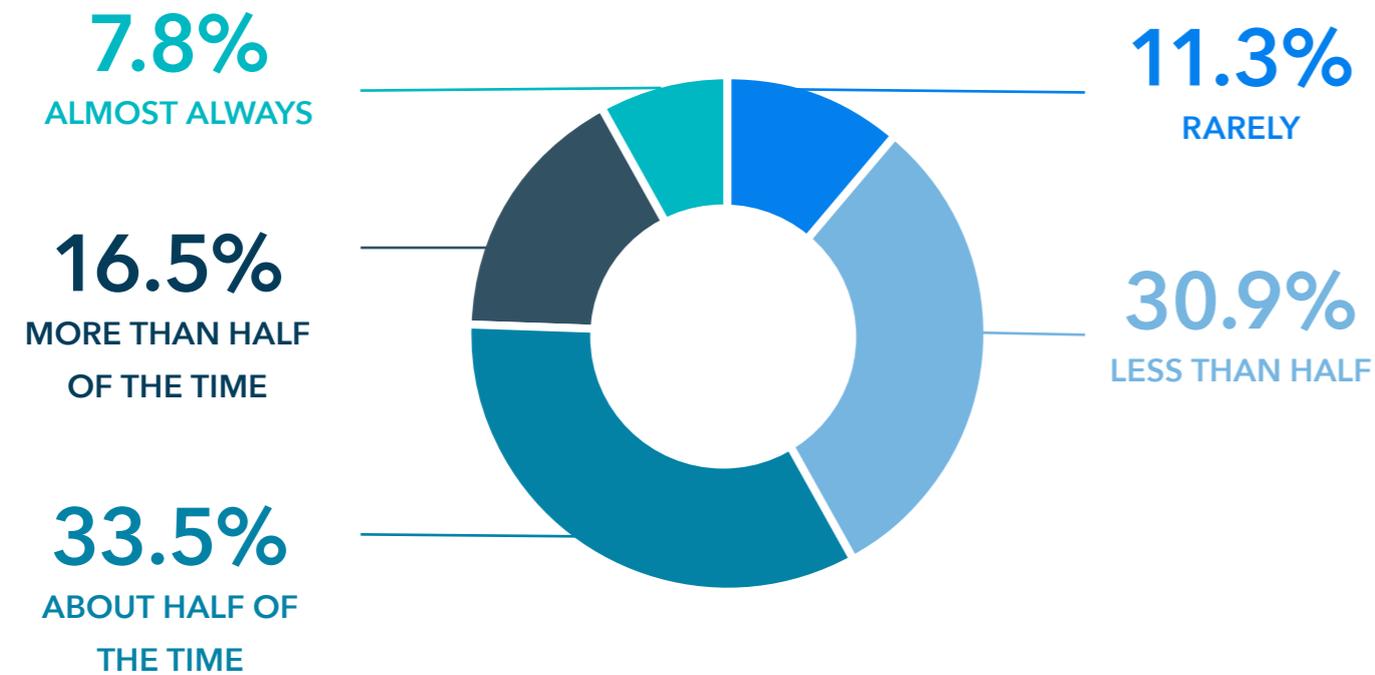
Of our survey respondents, 78% were frequently presented with positions that were not relevant to their background while job searching.

Whether your internal HR or talent acquisition team is actively recruiting, or you've employed a 3rd party recruiter to help fill your team's open roles, make sure they fully understand the position you're hiring for. If they don't, they're not going to know who to look for, and will end up wasting a lot of candidates' (and potentially your) time.

The best and brightest candidates will quickly lose interest in a role or a company at the first misstep, especially if it's right at the beginning of the interaction. If you have a sloppy recruiting process, you are sending candidates a message that you don't understand what they do or value their time.



During the job search, what % of the time are you being presented with positions that are relevant to you?



Actionable Advice 

Lose the generic HR terms and stick to skills and experience essential for the job.

Pick the Right Recruiting Partner(s)

Outsourcing your recruiting efforts can help you focus on relevant people, but due diligence is critical. It is important to have a partner who is committed to providing an excellent experience to every candidate who encounters your company, whether you're looking to bring on a contractor or a full time employee.

Make sure your technical recruiting partner understands and supports your brand.

You will need to ensure both that your internal hiring authorities are sharing the right information and that your talent acquisition partner properly grasps what the role and responsibilities are. Don't just hire any agency - you and your team deserve the right partner.

[Learn about what makes TriCom different](#)

Are You Putting Too Much Weight on Application Packages?

The adage that the best candidates are already employed is truer than ever. They're also in high demand. They have choices - which means they're not going to cater their resume to your job description.

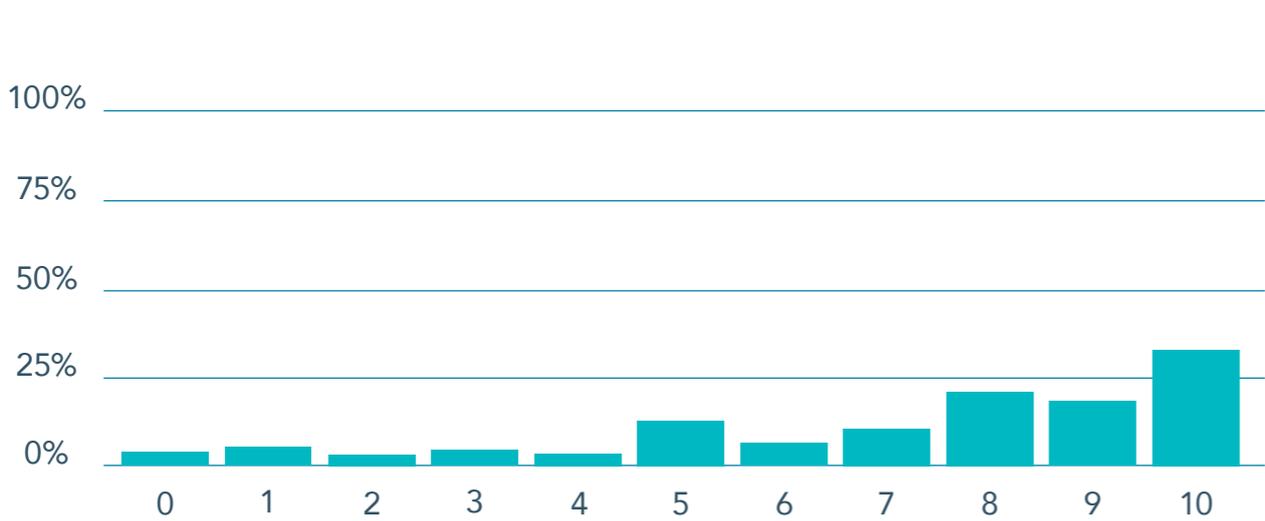
70% of our respondents agreed that they keep their online profiles such as LinkedIn or GitHub up to date with their latest job history and skillsets. Many tech professionals pursue passion projects in their spare time, and use GitHub as a way to showcase these or solicit feedback. If a candidate has a robust online profile but is lacking resume (or at least an updated one), don't be quick to disqualify them. You could be missing out on a great addition to your team.

On the other hand, when considering a candidate's resume, don't take it as a bad sign if a candidate has not updated their online profiles. With today's privacy concerns, not everyone wants a robust digital footprint. 30% of our respondents said they do NOT regularly update their online profiles. Often, these are the candidates who are consistently employed. Not only do they not have time to be worried about updating their online profiles, they don't need to be.

This lack of digital footprint does make them difficult for hiring managers to find, which is why working with a proactive workforce solutions firm like TriCom is so critical. Our large sourcing teams are adept at scouring the web for candidates who, though online might not look like the best fit for your role, are actually perfect for the job.

My online profiles (LinkedIn, GitHub, etc.) are updated with my latest job history and skillsets.

Agree - Disagree 10= Strongly Agree | 5= Neutral | 1= Strongly Disagree



Actionable Advice 

A conversation and technical challenge (short coding/problem-solving exercise) will be able to tell you much more accurately than a resume or an online profile whether someone is capable of doing the job you need them to do.

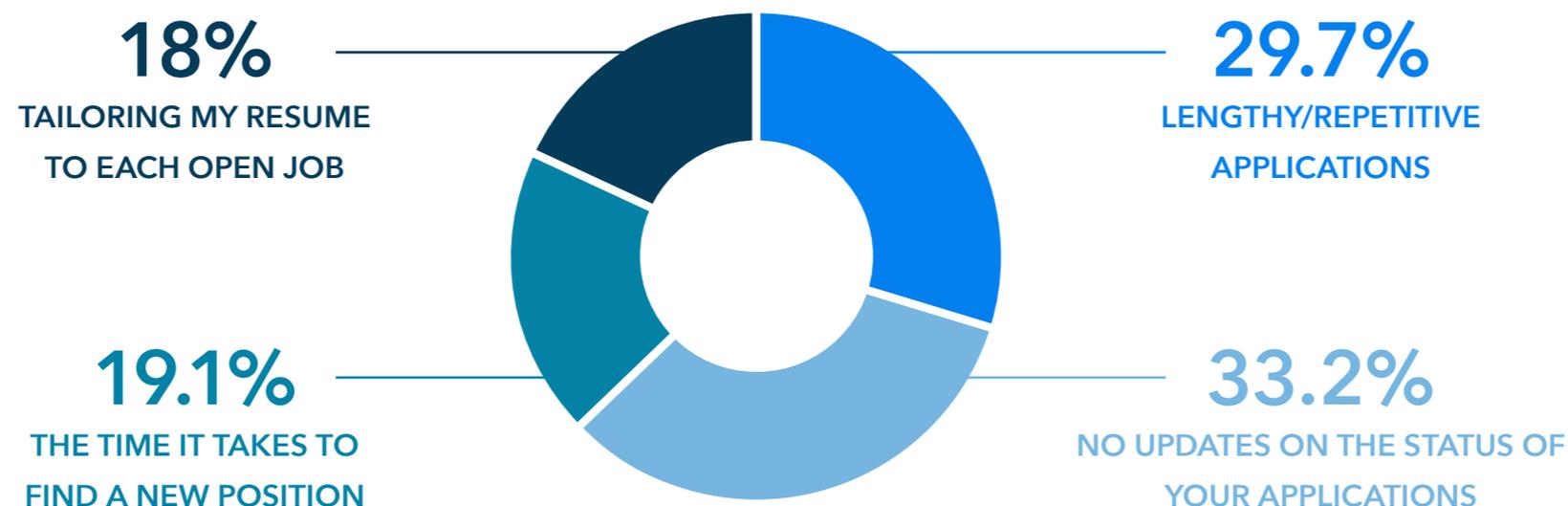
Learn about TriCom's Vetting Process

Simplify Your Hiring Process

Many organizations tend to make the hiring process a complex obstacle course. The most in-demand candidates will probably jump over a hurdle or two, but certainly not five or six. Make it easy for the right people to work for you, and this will help them want to work for you.

The easiest way to leave your candidates with a strong positive impression of your company and team is by being responsive and communicative.

What do you find most frustrating about the job search process?



While 33.2% of our respondents find silence around the status of their application the most frustrating part of the job search process, another 29.7% are most frustrated by lengthy and/or repetitive applications.

Do not turn great candidates off by making them endure lengthy, repetitive interviews with many rounds. To a candidate, this gives the impression that your organization operates slowly with lots of red tape, and if they find the hiring process frustrating, they will likely find the job even more so.

An efficient hiring process has no more than three rounds: A phone screen, a technical interview, and an in-person meeting. Sometimes the technical interview and in-person can be combined into one.

Always communicate, even to the candidates you are passing on. Be aware that candidates are more likely to share bad experiences online or with their friends than if they had a good one.

Using a partner like **TriCom can take** the burden **of communication off you** and your **team**.

Are You Flying Red Flags?

Inconsistencies and poor messaging drive quality candidates away from your company. 27.9% of our respondents said the disconnect between advertised job duties and title is the biggest red flag when interviewing. What you [title](#) your open job signals the role's status within the company, as well as your expectations for performance.

At a close second, 26.5% of our respondents said the biggest red flag was their interviewer speaking negatively about the organization. Whoever is involved in your interview process is a direct representation of your company. They will have a massive impact on who wants to join your team.

At the end of the day, your company culture is not a list of traits or values. It is an embodiment of your employees. And each person you hire has an impact on that culture.

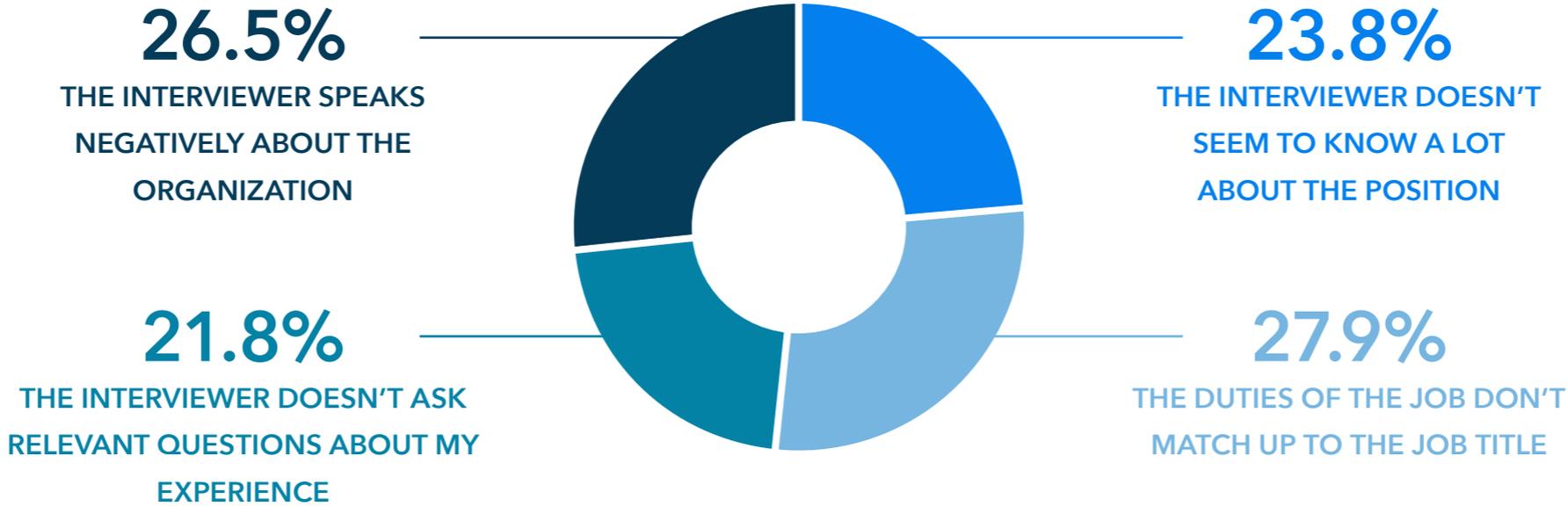


Actionable Advice



Make sure everyone who interviews candidates is bought into your company's mission, culture, and goals so that when they talk about the company, it comes across positively and accurately.

Out of the options below, what is the biggest "red flag" during an interview?



Your chosen vendors are also an extension of your company's brand and culture. If you use a firm that doesn't understand the role or requirements, calls the role something that it's not, or doesn't understand your culture, that's going to reflect poorly on you. Don't choose a vendor that will turn off potential candidates before you even get a chance to talk to them.

[Learn what makes TriCom different.](#)

Part 2: Hire Talent



Want to Hire Top IT Talent? Sweeten the Deal

You've found the right person for your team, so what can you do to increase the likelihood that they'll accept your offer? For our survey respondents - and today's new generation of workers in general - many are willing to sacrifice salary for a better work/life balance.

If your organization already offers a great work/life balance, great! Make sure you're detailing it in job descriptions and talking about it throughout the interview process, including details about time off, overtime, and telecommute policies.

Employees work better and harder when they feel refreshed and recharged. As an employer, you don't have much control over what stressors occur in your employees' personal lives, but you can give them some time away from work stress by offering them vacation time, and by actually encouraging them to use it. It's not enough to offer a couple weeks of vacation a year. If your employees (especially the newer ones) don't see anyone on the team taking time off, they're going to feel uncomfortable taking a break when they need it. This culture tends to occur from the top down.

Unless you're paying your employees overtime (and even then), avoid requiring them to work overtime on a regular basis if you want them

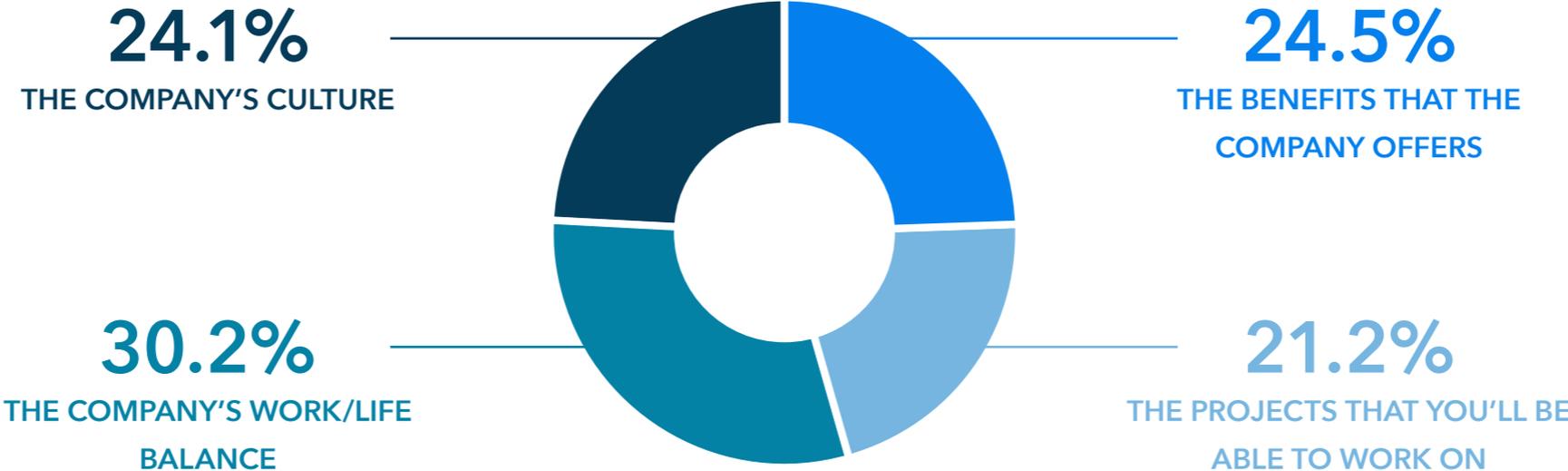
Actionable Advice



Make sure your managers are taking advantage of their vacation time so that their teams feel encouraged to take advantage of theirs.

to have a great work/life balance. Once in a while is fine, but regular overtime is an easy way to add stress and make your employees feel undervalued and under paid. Again, overtime culture tends to trickle down from management.

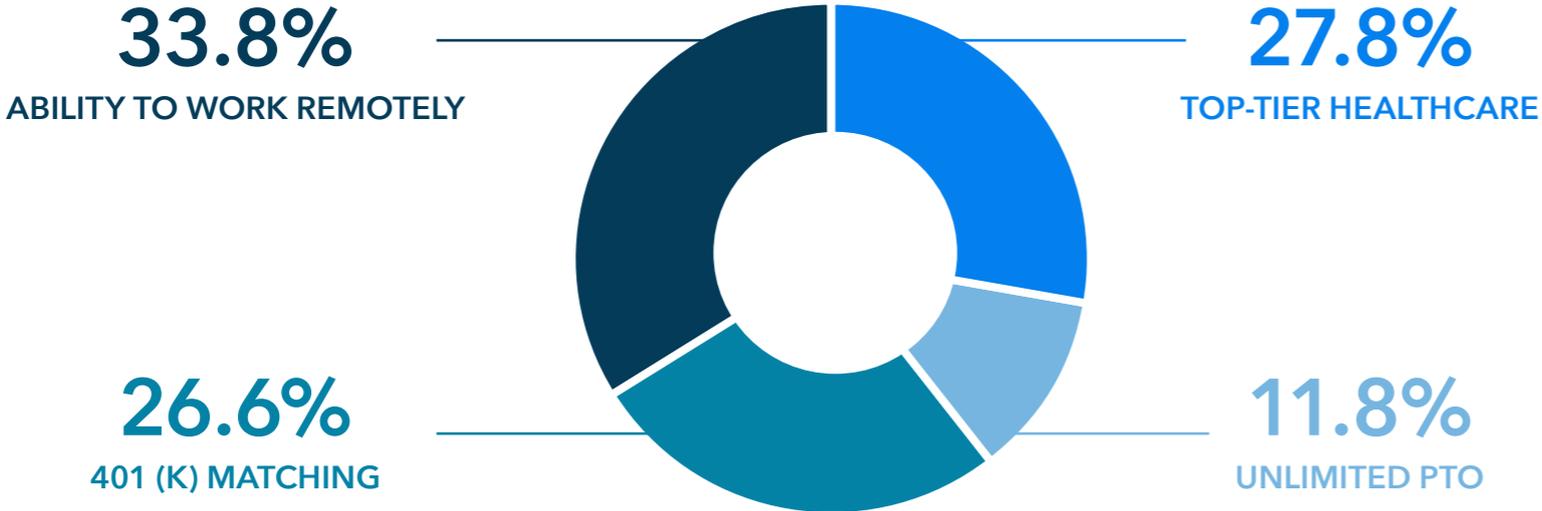
Outside of salary, what factor holds the most weight for you when accepting a job offer?



The most important benefit our respondents noted was the ability to work remotely. 33.8% selected remote work as the most important benefit to them. This was important to tech professionals even before COVID-19 caused a surge in work-from-home. Companies who might not have previously had remote work policies had to adapt to weather the pandemic. The great work-from-home experiment, in most cases, was a success. Many firms have discovered that a large number of IT professionals are actually [more productive working remotely](#). And now that the workforce has proven it can be done and done well, remote work has become the expectation.

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, many companies have already adapted and adopted new or updated work from home policies. Some companies have already decided that this is their [new normal](#) and they won't be requiring their employees to return to the office full time. If your organization does not plan to adopt a post-pandemic remote work policy, you will likely need to really impress candidates with other benefits if you want to continue to attract and retain top talent.

What benefits are most important to you?



Actionable Advice 

Provide options for flexibility. Your employees will be more loyal and engaged.

Need help getting **candidates to accept your** offers? [TriCom can help!](#)

Part 3: Retain Talent



Happily Employed, but with One Eye Open

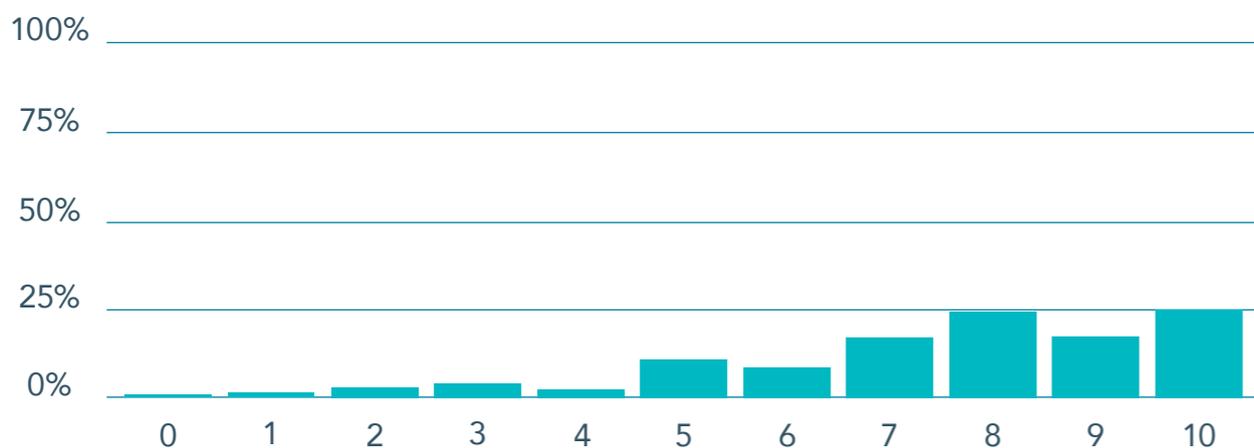
Employers need to accept that even satisfied employees are open to considering new opportunities. 79% of our survey respondents agreed that even if they're happy in their current role, they still have an eye open to new opportunities.

In the IT world, hot technology can rise and fall seemingly overnight. Stay too long in a role using outdated tech and it could impact the overall health of your career. The pressure on IT professionals to keep up with an ever-growing market can translate to an insatiable search for new and better, always looking for ways to keep their [skillsets](#) sharp and up to date. Not to mention, a new role is often the fastest way to achieve [salary increases](#).

If you're not providing opportunities for learning and growth, your team is going to look for those opportunities elsewhere. It's only a matter of time before that elsewhere is a new job.

Agree - Disagree 10= Strongly Agree | 5= Neutral | 1= Strongly Disagree

If I was happy in my current position, but a recruiter reach out to me - I would hear them out



Actionable Advice



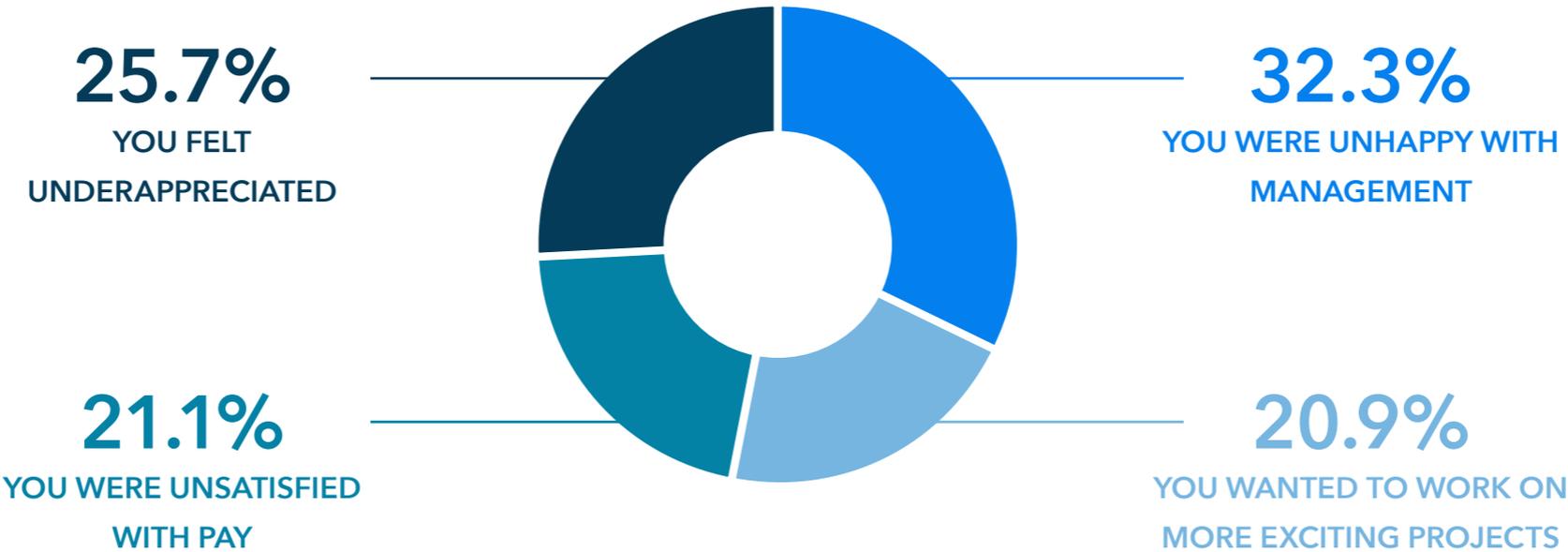
Provide your teams with learning opportunities, whether through education reimbursement, passes to conferences, or even in-house training or mentorship. You'll keep them happier longer if they're encouraged to keep improving their skills. (not to mention, on-going training and education will give you stronger employees as a result!)

What... Or Who Makes Them Leave?

People quit people, not jobs. 32.3% of our respondents cited being unhappy with management as the main reason they've chosen to leave a job. 82% said they would leave a role over bad management, even if they were happy with their salary.

It's up to managers to make their employees feel valued and appreciated. Another 25.7% of respondents cited the lack of this appreciation as the reason they've quit a job. Salary comes close (21.1% cited this as a reason for leaving) but it's ultimately who you work with, and more importantly, who you work for that trumps all else.

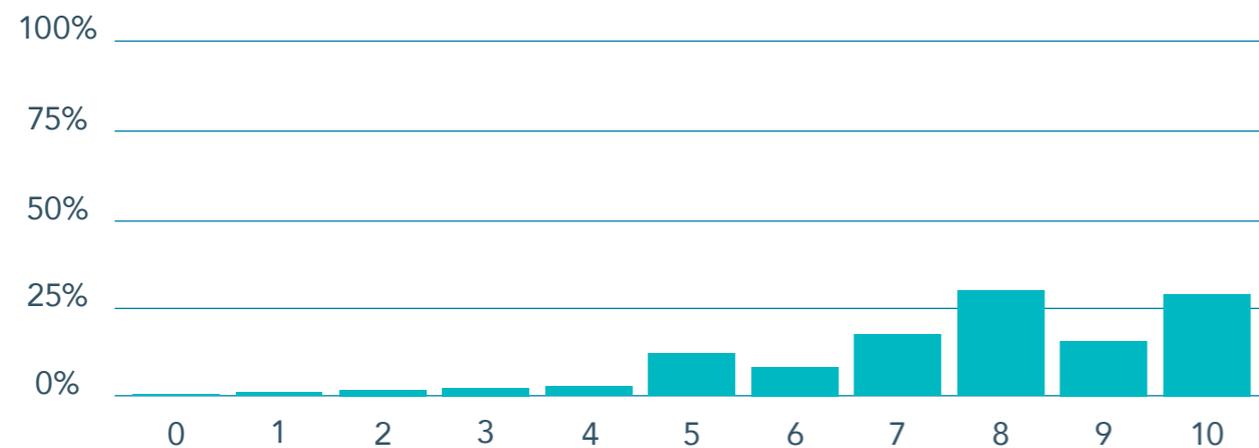
What are the reasons you've left a job before?



It matters who you work with.

Agree - Disagree 10= Strongly Agree | 5= Neutral | 1= Strongly Disagree

If I was happy in my pay, but not my manager, I would still be motivated to look for a new job.



So, what can you do to ensure your management isn't the reason for your turnover?

Training is key. Not everyone in management is an innately [strong manager](#). Many companies promote high performers, yet the skills that made them a top performer are not always the same skills needed to perform as a manager. Management training is often overlooked, but studies show that employees are [four times](#) more likely to look for a new role when they rate their manager's performance poorly. Neglecting to train your management team is a recipe for high employee turnover and low productivity.

Additionally, inspect your management team's expectations. Are they realistic? How do they react when someone falls short? Especially if you have multiple teams within your technology department, it can be helpful to [set uniform benchmarks](#) and success metrics. This will eliminate role confusion and will help facilitate clearer communication.

Actionable Advice



Encourage communication and feedback. The fastest way to understand what is important to your employees is to ask (much like we did with this survey). That you care enough to ask will resonate with your teams and drive engagement, which in turn will drive performance.

It matters who you work with.

25+ years
in business and over
4,000 candidates placed

3x the IT talent in
1/2 the time
of our competition

#1 scorecard vendor at
the largest-privately held
company worldwide

At TriCom, we're experts in finding top technology professionals for your team

130,000

candidates reviewed each year

2600 candidates

interviewed by the TriCom Recruiting Team annually

2,453

individual candidates submitted to jobs in 2019

200+

placements annually

4:1 Interviews

to placements ratio

Average Time to Fill:

26 days

Consultant Retention

Avg contract length: **7.4 months**

Avg number of contract extensions or conversions?

80% extend at least once.

40% convert

Redeployment rate: **~10%**

Awards and Recognition:



8X Best of Staffing winner for both
Talent and Client Satisfaction



Inc 5000 Fastest-Growing Private
Company for 2020



3X TechServe Alliance Excellence
Award winner



2019 and 2020 SIA Best Staffing
Firm to Work For winner

Reach out to expedite your candidate search today.

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