



## WHAT MARKET CONDITIONS MEAN FOR THE WAY YOU COMMUNICATE WITH CANDIDATES

**Elements impact approach. Just look at how weather reports affect daily commutes or how intangibles can influence people's moods — and how they interact with others.**

**No person, place, or thing is immune to external factors beyond their control, including the job market. For proof, look no further than the two most recent economic downturns.**

Though the Great Recession started in 2008, long-term unemployment (i.e., 27 weeks or more) was a reality for 6.7 million Americans during parts of 2010; and it still accounted for **30% of all jobless Americans as recently as 2015.**

Meanwhile, after a quick and historic unemployment jump to 15% at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, **that figure was halved six months later as industries** — namely essential ones — scrambled to fill open positions and maintain operations.

The lesson? Context matters, especially when trying to tell candidates what these conditions mean for your hiring processes. As the market ebbs and flows, integrating those insights into your applicant engagement helps your hiring team provide potential hires with a transparent look at what lies ahead for your company.

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## THE UPCOMING MARKET FORECAST

While your local weatherperson is comfortable making forecasts five or 10 days out, that would be a little shortsighted for the job market. Looking 12 to 24 months ahead is more reasonable, and communication surrounding that outlook will likely need to focus on two significant factors:

**An Investment in Employees:** Most candidates want better wages, safer workplaces, and improved diversity efforts. While the economy will likely remain in flux for the foreseeable future, companies have to show potential candidates what they have to offer. Not only in terms of financial viability but also as it relates to cultivating a safe and diverse work environment.

As vaccines and other precautionary tactics begin to emerge, workers will want employers to invest in their physical and mental health. Research suggests that organizations that don't invest in employee health cost themselves **\$530 billion in annual productivity**. Moreover, prospective hires want to work for companies that have **diverse leadership** and promote unique solutions to age-old problems.

**Increased Flexibility:** Remote and flexible jobs have become increasingly relevant in the wake of the pandemic. Companies, especially those in light industrial, will need to treat that uptick as the new normal rather than a temporary trend.

A pre-pandemic survey found that **80% of workers** would be more loyal to companies that embrace flexible work arrangements. For companies looking to hire, that means offering hybrid work options, explicitly stating in job descriptions whether remote work is available, and generally positioning themselves as remote-friendly organizations.

While these will be key considerations moving forward, there are numerous other factors likely to impact the employment landscape. Navigating and communicating within this new status quo, however, will require some specific preparations.







# TALKING CANDIDATES THROUGH AN EVOLVING JOB MARKET

How can your HR and hiring managers effectively communicate with the talent pool as the job market transforms? Here are four ways to set them up for success:



## 1. Analyze your job descriptions.

A new landscape requires a new standard, which means you'll have to rewrite some rules. To connect with this new pool of applicants, you must look at how you communicate with them and determine whether that approach is still viable.

Look at the design of your application as well as the descriptiveness of your job posts. Assess whether the expectations of the role properly come through. Has the job added more responsibilities since you last revised the description? You'll also want to look at the candidate and employee experiences. Are a regular number of applicants being converted to hires? How is job retention in your organization?

All of these questions illustrate just how well candidates are grasping your hiring needs. No matter what the job landscape looks like, ensure that your applicants have a clear idea of what you're asking and promising.



## 2. Put your company culture on display.

An applicant's day-to-day responsibilities will be just one part of the overall experience with your company. People will also want to know that their personalities will fit in with the rest of the team – and that they will gel with the company's overall culture and mission.

To put their minds at ease, make sure your messaging matches that culture. Use every platform at your disposal (e.g., SMS, email, social media, etc.) to build rapport with candidates and provide them with a sneak peek of your company culture.

Use online reviews and social interactions as another arm of your recruiting team. Build a consistent company tone that permeates every one of your engagement channels. Culture and voice give outsiders a glimpse into what your company offers. Use them to show potential candidates where you stand and what you provide as an employer.





### 3. Personalize whenever possible.

In a time when everything — social timelines, music playlists, movie queues, etc. — can be tailored and customized, why shouldn't that extend to your candidate communications? Use whatever you can to adjust your engagement efforts to fit the current talent pool.

For example, the pandemic and subsequent shift toward remote work might mean some candidates will need an entirely virtual experience. Ask your talent pool whether contactless interviews are their preference, and then adjust your practices to ensure it mirrors traditional candidate communication as much as possible.

Once personalized processes are in place, try customizing your messaging. Replace one-size-fits-all correspondence with dialogue that speaks to individuals. Responsive and interactive SMS messaging, for example, can interact with your AI staffing solutions to provide an automated yet human message that gets to the heart of what you're trying to say.



### 4. Measure your outcomes.

As the evolving employment climate dictates that you change your messaging, it's necessary to make sure that messaging resonates with its intended audience. Measure success by tracking the kinds of responses you get.

More than application and retention numbers, monitor the kind of feedback you receive. Are you getting more questions than answers? Are your email open rates on the lower end of the spectrum? If you're not hitting the numbers you envisioned, it might be time to adjust your approach.

You could even take things a step further by running existing messaging by your current team members. More often than not, their on-the-ground knowledge will help spot holes in job descriptions and answer any obvious questions. Getting out ahead of potential communication gaffes puts the company and candidates in better positions to create more valuable relationships.



Like a weather forecast, the job market can change on a dime — but that's no reason to be unprepared. Accurate and insightful communication helps present your company in the best light, attracting the best and brightest to your most essential roles.

Let your candidate messaging evolve with the times to brighten your organization's hiring prospects well into the future.

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