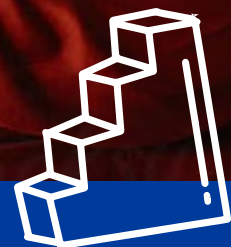


Indeed Talent Index 2025

Take the guesswork out of hiring: what job seekers *really* want



indeed
Get what you need

About Indeed

Indeed is the #1 job site in the world¹, with 580 million job seeker profiles and 3.5 million employers globally.² If you're feeling stuck in your career or facing challenges staffing your business, Indeed has what you need. We provide a seamless experience for job seekers and employers alike, helping Australians unlock new opportunities and employers meet their recruitment goals. Visit au.indeed.com/hire to discover how we can help you get exactly what you need.



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¹Comscore, Total Visits, March 2024

² Indeed data (worldwide), job seeker accounts that have a unique, verified email address

OVERVIEW

What do Australian job seekers *really* want?

If you could hear exactly what Australian job seekers were thinking, here's what you'd hear loud and clear:

“Be upfront and clear. Let us know what to expect — and don't leave us hanging.”
Male, 24, NSW

“Be transparent and don't drag it out too long.”
Female, 63, VIC

“Treat every candidate with respect.”
Male, 35, WA

“Kill the generic job descriptions.”
Male, 33, SA

“Specify salary, always.”
Female, 55, VIC

Sound familiar? Or maybe a little uncomfortable?

That's because the hiring experience many employers are offering doesn't match what candidates expect anymore.

We know because we *asked*.

Our latest research, conducted by Indeed in partnership with YouGov, lifts the lid on what working-age Australians really want from employers today, and where hiring practices are falling short.

The bottom line?

Job seekers want hiring to feel like the start of a real relationship, not a

transaction. They're looking for clarity, communication, respect, and trust — not cryptic job ads, radio silence, or endless hoops to jump through.

At Indeed, we believe hiring works best when it's more human: more transparent, more respectful, and more candidate-first. And that's exactly what job seekers want too.

The employers who get this, and act on it, will be the ones winning the best talent in 2025 and beyond.

Let's dive into what candidates *really* want, and how you can deliver.



Methodology

This report draws on insights from a survey of 1,027 working-age Australians (18–64, excluding the self-employed) conducted by Indeed in partnership with YouGov. The results are weighted to be nationally representative, offering an unfiltered view of the talent market you're competing in.

³⁻⁵ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024. Total N=5,650 job seekers and 3,651 employers

PART 1

Key insights: What Australian workers want in 2025



Hiring isn't a one-way street — it's a shared journey. But right now, many job seekers feel like they're walking it alone. Confusing processes. Radio silence. Mystery around salaries. A lack of respect for their time and effort.

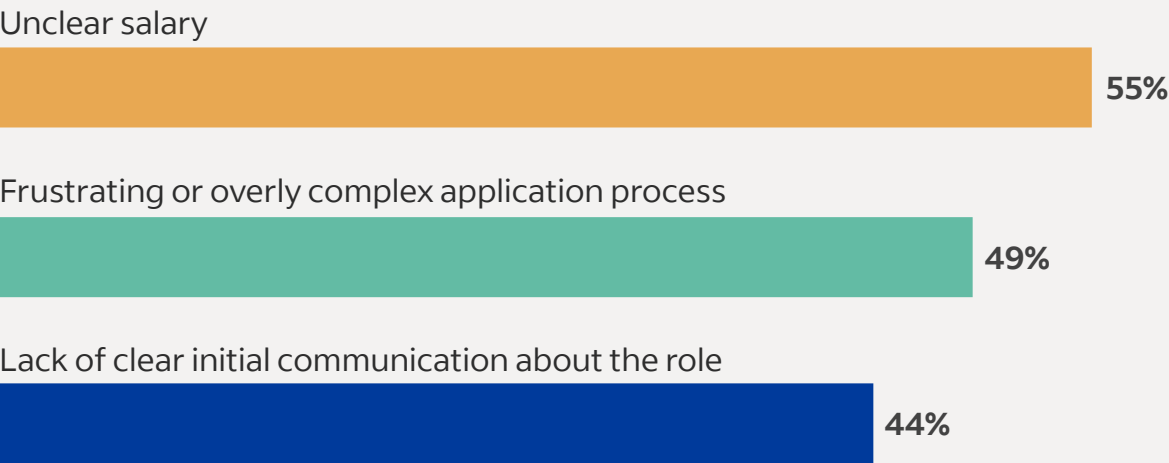
These aren't just gripes — they're red flags. And if employers want to attract great talent, it starts with listening, removing friction, and delivering the kind of hiring experience candidates actually want.

“Don't feel like it's all about what you want. It takes two to tango.

Male, 31, NSW³

What employers get wrong

Top 3 complaints by Australian job seekers



Source: Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers.

³ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers.

Speed is the new superpower

Application burnout is real, and slow hiring is costing you candidates.

For many job seekers, applying for roles feels like running an obstacle course. Almost half (49%) say they've hit frustrating or overly complex application processes.⁴ From re-entering the same resume details across multiple systems to grinding through endless interview rounds with no clear endpoint, candidates are over it, and they're walking away.

Most job seekers believe one or two interviews is enough. In fact, 63% say three or more interviews feels excessive, which drains time, energy, and goodwill.⁵

As one candidate told us: "If I could change one thing about how companies hire, I would change the vigorous interview stages."⁶

It's not just the number of steps – it's the length of time it takes:

- 24% of candidates said they've walked away from an application because the process simply took too long.⁷
- 51% believe two weeks is the maximum reasonable time from application to offer — and after that, their interest plummets.⁸

When employers move slowly, candidates aren't waiting around. They're applying elsewhere. They're accepting other offers. Or they're losing trust in you altogether.

And if you're still asking for cover letters? Expect resistance there, too.

More and more candidates are questioning the value of extra application hoops — especially when they're often met with ghosting.



TAKEAWAY

Application friction is talent loss. If the right candidates are dropping off before you even notice, it's not a talent shortage, it's a process problem.

“Do not ask for a cover letter. These can take many hours to prepare, so if you are applying for several jobs, it is basically a full-time job just writing cover letters, many of which may never get read.

Female, 50, NSW⁹

“If I could change one thing about how companies hire, it would be the unnecessary number of interview days. It makes the whole job process boring and frustrating.

Female, 36, VIC¹⁰

QUICK TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS



Streamline the process to two interviews max where possible.



Set clear expectations upfront about timelines and next steps.



Acknowledge every application quickly, even if it's automated.



Reconsider "optional extras" like cover letters unless they're truly essential.

⁴⁻⁸ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

⁹⁻¹⁰ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

Smarter, not colder: The role of AI in hiring

Is AI helping or hurting? As many as 71% of candidates have used or encountered AI in the job search and hiring process.¹¹ Over half of those (56%) say it made things better.¹²

Here's where AI shines:

- **Speeding things up:** Removing repetitive steps like re-uploading resumes or filling out endless forms to make the application process faster (22%).¹³
- **Enhanced communication:** Helping candidates get faster feedback or timely updates (22%).¹⁴
- **Better matching:** Surfacing jobs that fit skills and preferences more accurately (21%).¹⁵
- **Interview prep support:** Helping candidates feel more confident and ready for interviews (19%).¹⁶

But there's a catch. Candidates don't want to feel like they're applying to a robot.

The biggest turn-off was when AI made the process feel colder, more transactional, or less personal.

Used thoughtfully, AI can be a brilliant tool for removing friction, but it can't replace the human elements that candidates value most: empathy, feedback, and real communication.

The future of hiring isn't AI vs. human. It's AI and human, working smarter together.

QUICK TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS



Use AI to remove admin barriers, speed up response times, and surface better matches.



Don't use AI to replace real human conversations, especially at critical touchpoints like interviews or feedback.



Balance automation with empathy. If the experience feels cold, you're doing it wrong.



¹¹⁻¹⁶ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

Stop ghosting, start communicating

Ghosting. It's rude and it's ruining your reputation.

It already happens in dating. Now it's happening in hiring everywhere. A staggering 88% of Australian job seekers say they've applied for a role and never heard back.¹⁷

Not a note.

Not a "thanks, but no thanks."

Not even an automated email.

For job seekers who've spent hours tailoring resumes, crafting cover letters, prepping for interviews, and putting their best foot forward, silence is worse than a rejection. It feels like disrespect.

“Please respond to all applicants, regardless of how many there are. It is just rude to not even bother to provide a polite response after someone puts in the effort to apply to join your company.

Female, 53, VIC¹⁸

And they don't forget it.

- 9 out of 10 candidates check company reviews before applying.¹⁹
- 56% say positive employee reviews increase their trust and likelihood to apply.²⁰

Your employer brand isn't built by marketing, it's built by every interaction candidates have with you, even the ones you never hire.

Ghosting sends a loud, clear message: "This company doesn't respect people." And once that message spreads, through reviews, Indeed Company Pages, Glassdoor ratings, social posts, and word of mouth, it's incredibly hard (and expensive) to fix. The bottom line? Ghosting is a reputation killer.

Why do employers ghost?

Sometimes it's a matter of scale: hundreds of applications, too little time. Sometimes it's discomfort: rejection conversations aren't easy.

But here's the reality: candidates don't expect a personalised novel. They just want basic respect. A simple update. A clear "yes" or "no." A rough idea of next steps.

In a talent market where speed, clarity, and reputation are your biggest weapons, ghosting is a self-inflicted wound.

“Be upfront and clear, let us know what to expect, and don't leave us hanging. A little communication goes a long way.

Male, 24, NSW²¹



TAKEAWAY

People don't expect hand-holding, but they do expect honesty. Clear communication shows respect and builds trust – even with those you don't end up hiring.

¹⁷⁻²⁰ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

²¹ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

QUICK TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS



Acknowledge every application, even if it's automated. (It matters.)



Communicate regularly during the process, even if the update is "we're still deciding." You can automate this too!



Close the loop: Send a clear, respectful "no" to unsuccessful candidates.



Own the rejection, it's part of building trust, not burning bridges.



Good communication is now a competitive advantage.



Treat every candidate like a customer, because in today's market, that's exactly what they are.

“Be transparent and empathetic—candidates appreciate knowing where they stand, and clear communication helps build trust and a positive reputation.

Male, 37, SA²²



²² Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

Gain trust from the get-go with transparency

Today’s job seekers aren’t applying blindly — they’re constantly scanning for red flags. Today’s workforce and job seekers know what they want, and are quick to walk away if they don’t see it. When companies are vague about salary, fuzzy about responsibilities, or silent on what the process involves, they’ll move on without hesitation.

Salary transparency: The new deal breaker

If you’re still hiding salary info, you’re not being strategic — you’re turning candidates away:

- **97%** say salary transparency helps them decide if a role is worth applying for.²³
- **96%** say it reduces time wasted on unsuitable roles.²⁴

The cost? You lose trust. You lose candidates. You lose credibility.

Our research shows transparency isn't just a “nice-to-have.” It’s non-negotiable. It’s the first thing candidates check, and the first thing they’ll punish you for leaving out of a job ad.

- **72%** want salary information to be communicated upfront.²⁵
- **63%** of working-age Australians are significantly more likely to apply for a job if the listing clearly states the salary.²⁶
- **55%** name unclear salary as the #1 complaint when applying.²⁷

“Please be more transparent.
Male, 40, NSW²⁸

“Salary range should be disclosed upfront so they don't waste everyone's time.
Female, 54, NSW²⁹

Hiding the salary from a job ad actually hurts employers. 86% of candidates say that when companies don’t disclose salary upfront, they’re more likely to miss out on great people.³⁰

Salary transparency matters

| | |
|--|--|
| <div>55%</div> <div>rank unclear salary as the top complaint when applying for a job</div> | <div>97%</div> <div>say it helps them decide if a role is worth applying for</div> |
| <div>86%</div> <div>believe companies that don't disclose salary upfront miss out</div> | <div>67%</div> <div>say transparency increases trust and attraction</div> |

Source: Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers.

²³⁻²⁷ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

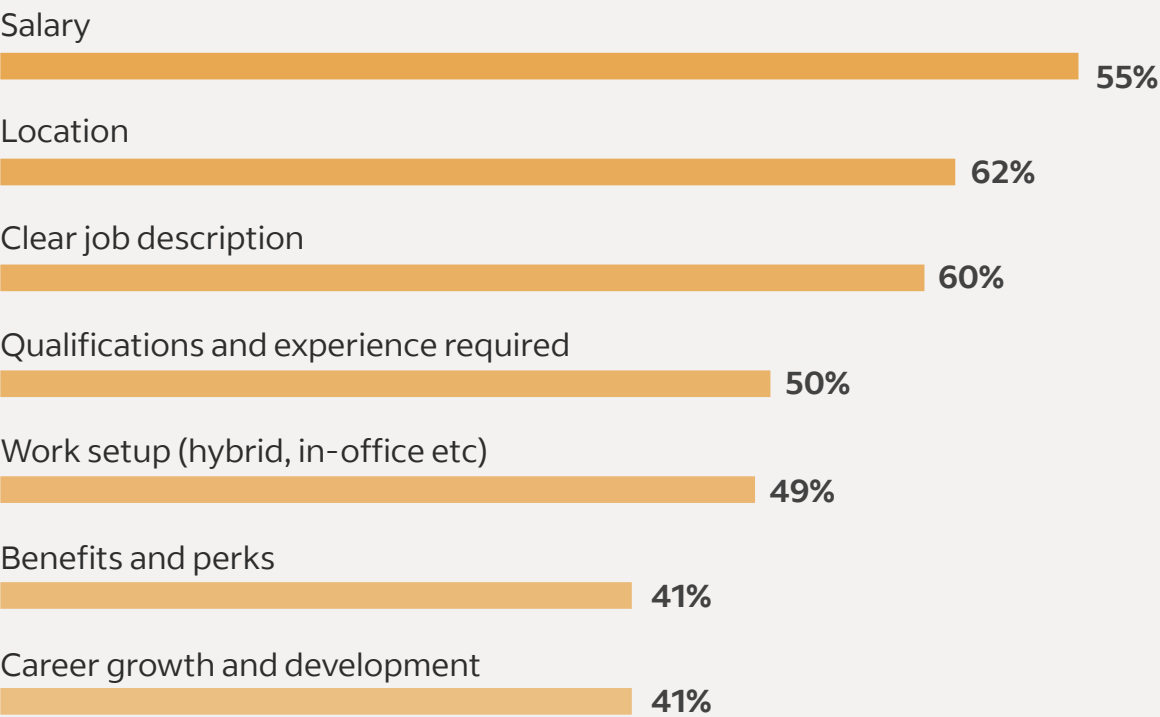
²⁸⁻³⁰ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

Clear role expectations:
No more guessing games

It’s not just about pay — candidates want to know what they’re signing up for. Nearly half of job seekers (46%) say vague job descriptions are a major turn-off.³¹ When expectations aren’t clear upfront, it creates room for confusion, mismatched roles, and disappointment down the track.

“*I’d kill the generic job description nonsense.*
Male, 33, SA³²

Must-haves for job listings

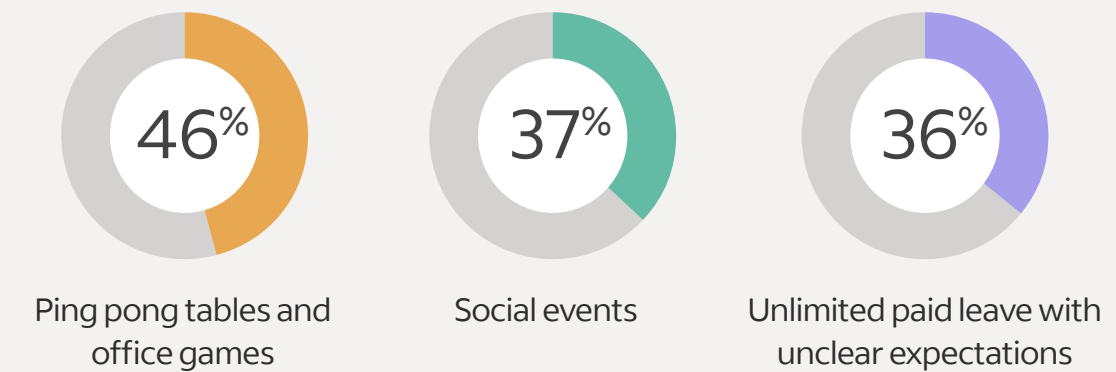


Source: Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers.

Forget the gimmicks: Candidates want substance
(not ping pong)!

Flashy perks don’t make up for a lack of clarity or fairness. In fact, many are viewed as distractions from what really matters. Give Australian workers what they really want: job security, fair pay, clarity, and growth.

Top 3 most overrated perks



Source: Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers.



TAKEAWAY

Stop playing guessing games. Today’s candidates expect transparency from day one – on salary, role expectations, timelines, and communication. It builds trust, saves time, and lays the foundation for a stronger relationship.

³¹⁻³² Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

QUICK TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS



Disclose salary upfront. If you don't, candidates assume you're hiding something, and they move on.



Set clear expectations in your job ads. Job title, responsibilities, requirements, benefits, no surprises later.



Focus on substance over gimmicks. Showcase security, growth, and real benefits, not just surface perks.



Be transparent from the first interaction, because rebuilding trust later is much harder than earning it early.

“*Treat every candidate with respect, give clear feedback, and remember that behind every resume, there is a person who deserves consideration and transparency.*

Male, 35, WA³³



³³ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

Get specific or get ignored: Why clarity beats buzzwords

Job seekers aren't just looking for a job. They're looking for security, meaning, and belonging — and every part of your hiring experience either proves you offer it, or proves you don't.

Salary still matters — but it's not the only reason someone hits “apply.”

Job security is now a top priority. In fact, 63% of job seekers say it's a key motivator (after salary and flexibility) when considering a new role.³⁴

And it cuts across every generation:

- 55% of Gen Z
- 58% of Millennials
- 75% of Gen X/Boomers³⁵

It's about survival. In our February 2025 survey, job seekers listed lack of job stability as their second biggest fear (17%), just behind burnout and work stress (21%).³⁶

The vibe is clear:

- Nearly **1 in 4 workers (26%)** say they don't feel secure in their current job.
- **92%** believe the job market will be more competitive this year, with fewer roles available.

Add in rising living costs, and it's no surprise that:

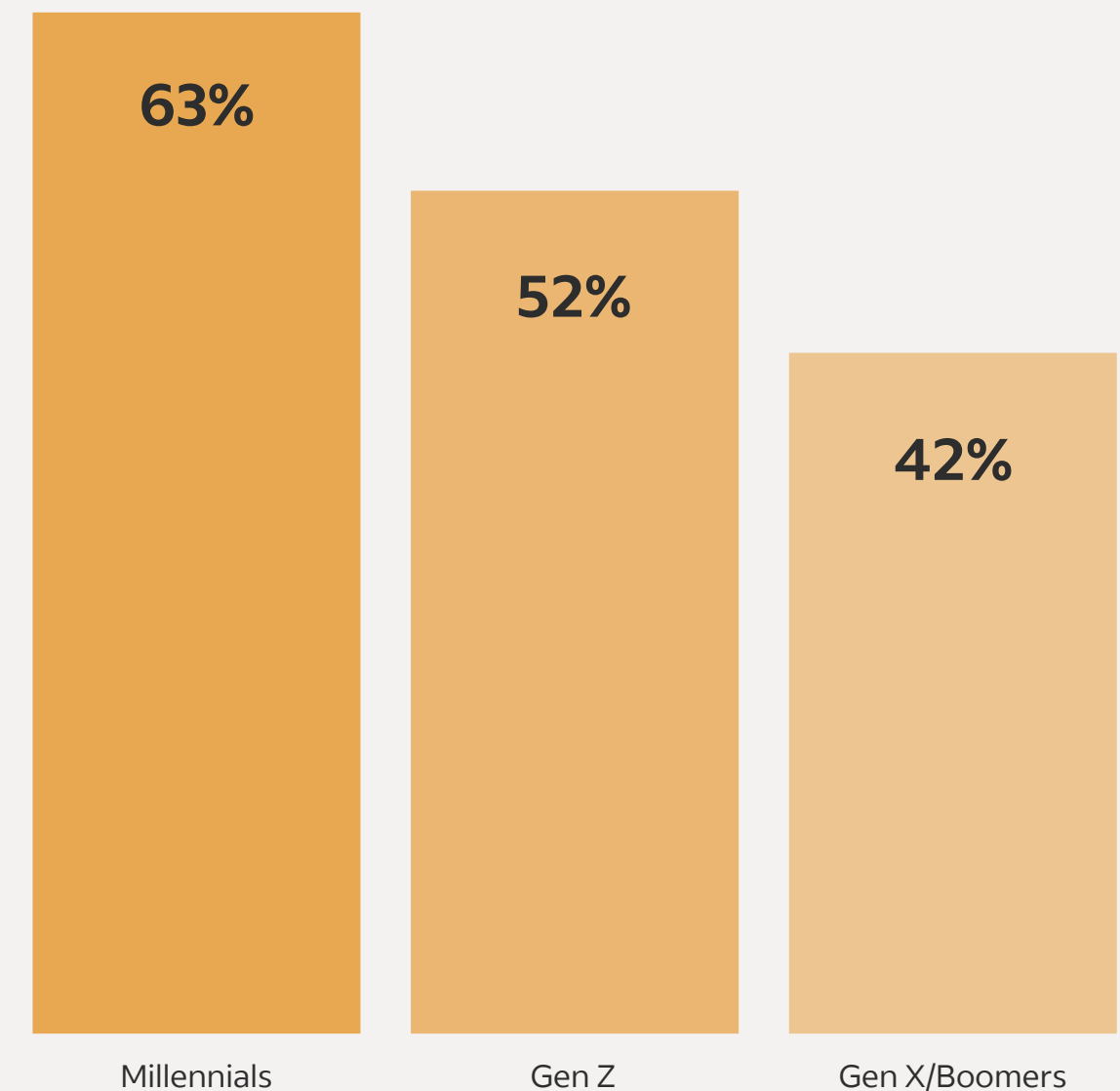
- **38%** have faced financial worries in the past year.³⁷
- **48%** have experienced stress or anxiety.³⁸

Job seekers aren't just chasing titles or pay rises — they're looking for a future they can count on.

But security alone isn't enough. People want to grow, and they want their work to mean something.

- 21% say their top priority is doing work that has impact.³⁹
- 53% prioritise career growth and development.⁴⁰

Growth matters: Demand for growth opportunities by generation



Source: Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers.

The message is loud and clear: people aren't just looking for a job — they're looking for a future. And your hiring process needs to reflect that.

^{34-35, 37-40} Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

³⁶ Indeed Survey with Valuvox 2025. Total N=6126 employees and job seekers across Australia, Singapore, India and Japan

Employer signals matter

A great hiring experience should feel like a preview of what it’s like to work with you. If it feels cold, confusing or unfair, why would anyone say yes and stick around?

Human-centred hiring means treating candidates like people, not numbers. It’s about building a process that reflects your values from start to finish. Every touchpoint counts. A vague job ad, a lack of follow-up, a robotic interview — it all sends a message about what kind of employer you are.

Here’s what candidates are really looking for:

- Respect for their time
- A balanced, two-way interview process
- Inclusive, relaxed interactions that reflect your company’s culture

Because culture isn’t what you say it is. It’s what candidates experience — from their first impression to their daily interactions once hired.

“*Respect candidates’ time and effort as much as you value your company’s time and reputation.*

Male, 35, VIC⁴¹



TAKEAWAY

Australian workers and job seekers today are measuring more than pay. They’re looking for security, growth, and a workplace where they genuinely belong. Every part of your hiring process is either building that trust — or breaking it. Vague promises won’t cut it. Proof is what gets people to say yes and stay.

QUICK TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS



Get clear, not clever. Use specific, transparent language in job ads — ditch the jargon.



Make security visible. Highlight role stability, company performance, and long-term opportunities.



Show the growth path. Be upfront about career development, learning opportunities, and how people progress in your business.

⁴¹ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

Not just nice-to-haves: What workers and candidates expect today

This isn't about perks — it's about staying competitive.

Flexibility and inclusion are no longer just “nice-to-haves.” They’re the new baseline. And if your hiring experience doesn’t reflect that, you’re not just missing expectations — you’re losing talent.

Top candidates won’t waste time on rigid policies or empty promises. They’ll move on to employers who prove they trust their people and value belonging. In a tight market, ignoring these expectations isn’t just out of touch — it’s a hiring risk.

Show off your flex appeal

Flexibility is the norm. When flexibility is missing, so are candidates. More than half (56%) say they’d say yes to a job instantly if it offered highly flexible working arrangements.⁴² And 64% support a 4-day work week at full pay.⁴³ Australian workers today aren’t looking for control — they’re looking for trust.

Why employers can’t ignore it

In 2025, modern work means meeting people where they are, not where they sit. Rigid, outdated policies don’t just frustrate current staff — they actively push potential candidates away.

If your policies haven’t caught up, your talent pipeline will feel it. In 2025:

- 59% want hybrid work to stay.⁴⁴
- 28% want strict in-office rules gone where remote work is possible.⁴⁵
- 24% want employers to stop expecting them to answer emails outside work hours.⁴⁶
- 19% want flexible hours.⁴⁷

⁴²⁻⁴⁷ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

Belonging and DEIB: Proof not promises

Belonging matters. Candidates are watching. And they’re looking for more than lip service — they want to know you mean it.

One in three job seekers (33%) say a strong commitment to DEIB makes them more likely to trust and apply.⁴⁸ And the good news? Most Australian workers feel we’re getting it right: 56% say employers are striking a good balance⁴⁹, and 89% feel their workplace makes people from all backgrounds feel safe and included.⁵⁰

But that trust is fragile. A clear majority (63%) worry that rollbacks on DEIB overseas, especially in the U.S, could ripple into Australian workplaces.⁵¹

Don’t just talk about inclusion. Prove it. If candidates can’t see it in your process, they’ll assume it’s not part of your culture.

Your actions — from diverse interview panels to accessible application methods — speak volumes about your true values. Candidates are increasingly sophisticated at spotting the difference between performative statements and genuine commitment.



TAKEAWAY

In 2025, Australian workers shouldn’t have to ask for trust, flexibility, and inclusion — it should be the baseline. If your policies and processes don’t reflect that, your hiring outcomes will.

⁴⁸⁻⁵¹ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2025. Total N=1027 job seekers

QUICK TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS



Be clear about flexibility upfront. Spell out hybrid options, hours, and expectations in your job ads.



Audit for inclusivity. Ensure diverse representation and inclusive language across every stage of the process.



Trust your team — and show it: Focus on outcomes, not office hours or seat time.



Embed DEIB in the process. Don't just say you care about inclusion — make sure your panels, language and decisions prove it.



PART 2

Employer Resources & Action Steps



Winning talent today: A practical guide for employers

You've seen what job seekers want. Now it's time to bring it to life across your hiring experience. It's not about doing more. It's about doing better and smarter. It means rethinking your hiring experience to reflect what modern talent really values.

Follow these next steps:

Make hiring faster and simpler

Cut the friction so candidates stick with you.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Streamline the application process — no duplicate resume uploads.
- ☐ Minimise interview rounds (aim for 1–2 rounds max).
- ☐ Set and communicate clear hiring timelines upfront.
- ☐ Remove unnecessary steps like cover letters unless truly required.
- ☐ Make rejection decisions fast — delay costs you top candidates.

Communicate like a human, not a robot
Build trust through clarity, responsiveness, and basic respect.

- CHECKLIST**
- ☐ Acknowledge every application quickly.
 - ☐ Keep candidates informed at each stage, even if it's just a status update.
 - ☐ Use automation where it helps, but keep the tone human.
 - ☐ Deliver rejections with empathy — even short messages make a difference.
 - ☐ Offer feedback when you can. It's remembered.

Be upfront about what you offer
Transparency earns trust and saves everyone time.

- CHECKLIST TO IMPROVE YOUR JOB ADS:**
- ☐ List salary ranges and benefits clearly.
 - ☐ Be specific about job responsibilities and performance expectations.
 - ☐ Explain what flexibility actually looks like (hybrid, fully remote, flexible hours).
 - ☐ Avoid jargon, keep job ads real, relatable, and clear.
 - ☐ Highlight growth and learning opportunities upfront.



Build workplaces where people want to stay

Flexibility, inclusion and purpose aren't perks – they're the new baseline.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Offer real flexibility.
- ☐ Respect boundaries, no always-on expectations.
- ☐ Bake belonging into your hiring process not just policies
- ☐ Make sure candidates experience your values, not just read about them.
- ☐ Hire for potential, not just pedigree. Look beyond job titles.



PART 3

How can Indeed *help*?

Get your job ads in front of millions of Aussie job seekers

In hiring, relevance and visibility win. Sponsored Jobs are **4.1x more likely** to deliver candidates who move forward in the hiring process.⁵²

Over 610 million job seekers search for jobs on Indeed every month.⁵³ You can post jobs for free or pay to sponsor them for even better results:

- **More visibility** – Your ad stays on page one longer.
- **More reach** – You attract more candidates, faster.
- **Better results** – You connect with the right people at the right time.

Show candidates why they should choose you

Job seekers want the full picture. With **Indeed's Employer Branding tools**, you can give it to them.

- **Claim your [Company Page](#)** to share your culture, benefits, values and more.
- Use the **[Employer Branding Hub](#)** (Indeed + Glassdoor) to boost visibility and shift perceptions.
- Run **targeted branding ads** across Indeed, Glassdoor and beyond to boost awareness and shift brand perception.



Tap into smart hiring tech to move faster and hire with confidence

Use **Indeed Smart Sourcing** to match great candidates to your job and cut the time to hire.

With 330 million+ sourceable profiles, you can:

- Instantly receive and evaluate quality candidates matched to your unique job criteria.
- Find talent for hard-to-fill roles using unlimited search.
- Seamlessly share candidate information and activity with your team and hiring managers
- Track team activity, recruiter adoption and activity from one admin dashboard.

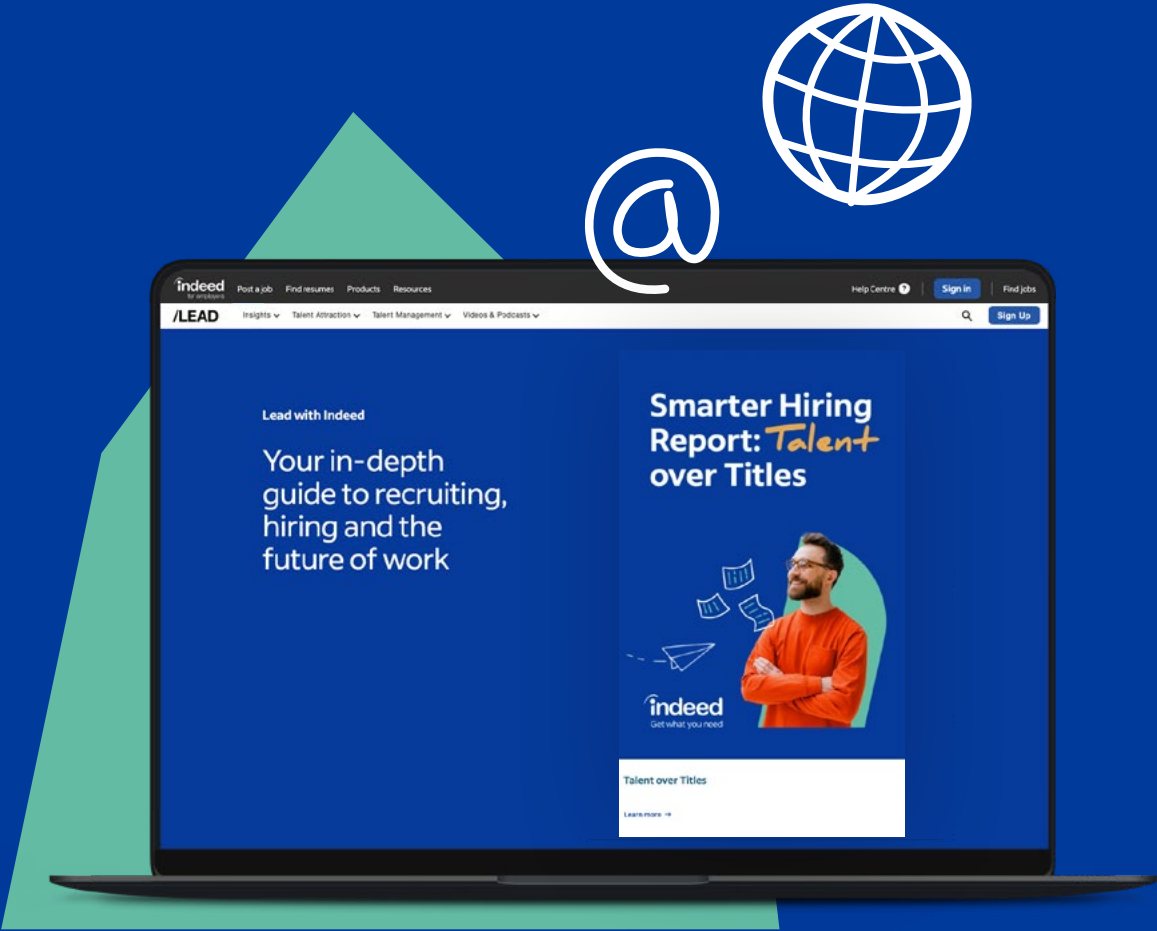
**Indeed is not just a platform;
it's your strategic partner in the competition for talent.**
Visit au.indeed.com/hire to get started.

⁵² Indeed data (AU)
⁵³ Indeed data (worldwide), job seeker accounts that have a unique, verified email address.

CONCLUSION

Wrapping up

What do Australian workers and job seekers want? It's not rocket science. Speed, clarity, transparency, stability, and flexibility are the non-negotiables in 2025. Employers who act on these insights — streamlining processes, communicating openly, and creating an environment that offers growth and trust — will stand out to attract the right candidates, and keep them.



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