



Smarter Hiring With Data-Driven Insights

Quality and Skills Edition

sg.indeed.com/hire

About Indeed

Indeed is the #1 job site in the world¹, with 580 million job seeker profiles and 3.5 million employers globally². 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 Singaporeans unlock new opportunities and employers meet their recruitment goals.

Visit sg.indeed.com/hire to discover how we can help you get exactly what you need.

3.5M+
global monthly
unique visitors

#1
job search site
in the world

1 Comscore, Total Visits, March 2024
2 Indeed data (worldwide), job seeker accounts that have a unique, verified email address

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Overview

Are you hiring people or paper?

Both job seekers and employers are navigating an increasingly complex hiring landscape. More than half of job seekers find it tougher to secure a job, a sentiment that resonates with Singaporean employers who are facing their own set of challenges³.

According to Indeed's research, job seekers think their biggest challenge is unrealistic role requirements, while Singaporean employers say there is a lack of candidates with the required skills. In reality, the problem is neither. The challenge lies in connecting the right humans with the right jobs.

At its core, helping people get jobs is about recognising humanity in one another. But for too long employers have been relying on the resume, past experience and qualifications to tell them about the candidate – which leads us to ask: Are you hiring people or paper?

This report draws on key insights from Indeed's Smarter Hiring with Data-Driven Insights Quality and Skills Edition, which is based on an extensive global online survey conducted with YouGov from 21 June - 12 July 2024. It focuses on findings pertinent to Singaporean employers and job seekers, and offers insights into how employers can go beyond the resume and make their hiring more human.

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

The reign of the resume

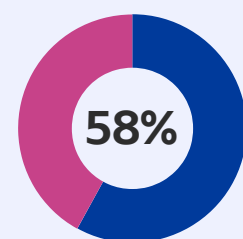
Resumes have been around since 1482, ever since Leonardo Da Vinci applied for a job as a military engineer. So why are we still relying on them today – 543years later?⁴

The data shows that resumes remain the most important factor for both job seekers and employers when progressing through the hiring process.

For job seekers, the focus is on one part of the resume specifically – demonstrating relevant on-the-job experience. In fact, a majority of Singaporean job seekers rely on the experience listed on their resume to demonstrate their skills. In addition, Singaporean job seekers and employers both believe the most important question to ask when assessing the quality of a candidate is, “Do they have relevant on-the-job experience?”⁵

Which is the most important question to ask when assessing the quality of a candidate?

“Do they have relevant on-the-job experience?”



of job seekers rely on professional experience listed on their resume to demonstrate their skills⁵

4 [Open Culture](#)

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

What Makes Someone a “Quality” Candidate?

Both job seekers and employers say that on-the-job experience is the top priority when assessing candidate quality-and that education requirements are least important.

Technical skills the job requires – 55%



Relevant on-the-job experience – 54%



Completion of required skills tests and evaluations – 40%



Work samples that demonstrate their abilities – 39%



Meeting requirements for minimum years of experience – 32%



Meeting education requirements – 25%



Skills certificates or qualifications – 24%



J5. If you were an employer or a recruiter, what would be the key questions you would ask to assess whether someone is a “quality” candidate?

E5. What are the key questions you would consider when assessing whether someone is a “quality” candidate?

Degree deal-breakers

Singapore employers are doing the same with qualifications and education. Traditionally, hiring in Singapore has focused on evaluating candidates on degrees and qualifications first, before using other criteria. Data from the Boston Consulting Group showed that in Singapore the requirement for a degree even increased from 2017 to 2022⁶.

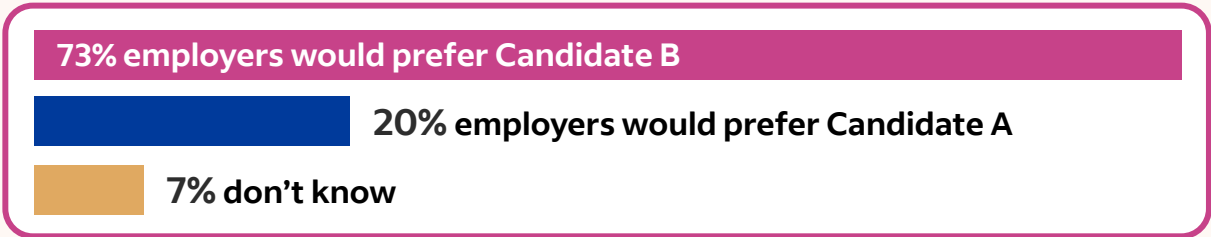
Indeed’s research asked employers and job seekers to consider two candidates:

- *Candidate A* has a degree in the field but no experience in the industry.
- *Candidate B* has no degree but does have on-the-job experience.

73% of job seekers believed that employers would prefer Candidate B – the one with no degree. And this turns out to be true – 70% of employers preferred Candidate B. According to the World Economic Forum, 49% of people work in jobs unrelated to their formal education.⁷

Which employee would you/employers be most likely to hire?

Based on Singaporean job seekers



The reality is many jobs do require a relevant degree or qualifications. However, ensuring you’re not missing out on hidden talent while focusing on qualifications is essential. Make it clear in the job description whether a certain degree is “required” or “preferred”. If you say it’s preferred, be open to considering strong candidates even if they don’t have a degree.

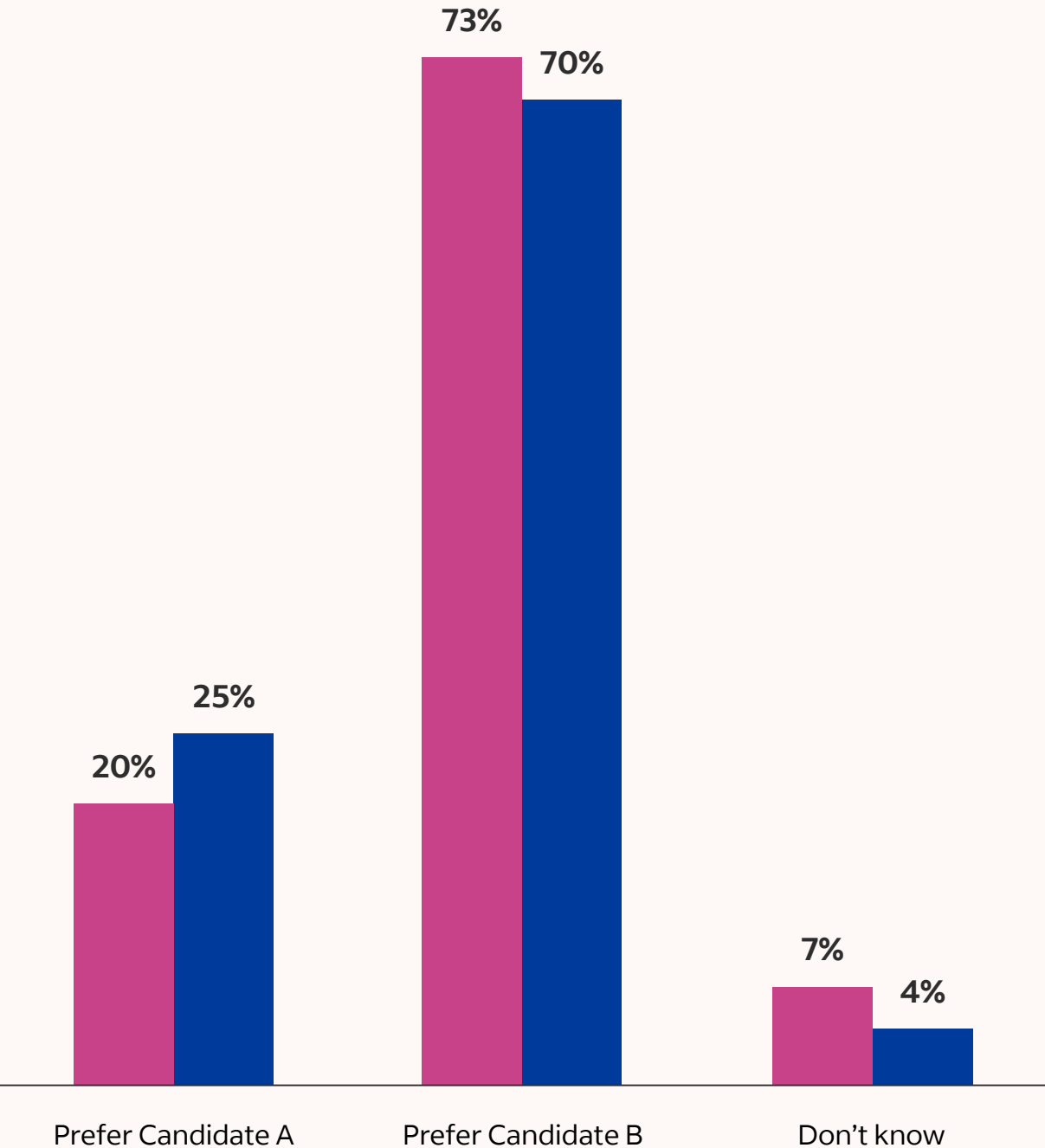
6 [Competence over Credentials: The Rise of Skills-Based Hiring](#)

7 World Economic Forum, Putting Skills First: A Framework for Action, 2023

Which employee would you/employers be most likely to hire?

Candidate A has a degree in the field but no experience in the industry.
Candidate B has no degree but does have on-the-job experience.

■ Singaporean job seekers ■ Singaporean employers





Retire the Resume?

Putting more weight on resumes, experience and qualifications would be acceptable if it weren't for one crucial fact: it isn't working.

Singaporeans are facing serious hiring challenges. Indeed's data revealed that three-quarters of job seekers are finding it harder to secure a job. 85% say it is difficult to find quality roles to apply for. Their biggest challenge? Unrealistic role requirements.

At the same time, Singaporean employers say their biggest challenge is high expectations of candidates, followed by a lack of candidates with the required skills. The result? A broken system. Job seekers find it harder than ever to secure roles, and employers struggle to find the talent they need.

Relying on the same process that Da Vinci used 543 years ago⁸ is no longer working – if it ever truly did. Employers are making hiring decisions based on what a person has done and not what they have the potential to do.

Relying on resumes, qualifications, and past experience doesn't reveal candidates' true skills, strengths and potential talent. It's time for employers to rethink how they fill these roles by focusing on the future, not the past, and empowering candidates to showcase their potential.

How do you hire for human potential? Someone's direct experience may show they can "get the job done" – that's the easy part. But does that mean they can adapt and succeed as the working world changes around them? Employers need to identify their true potential.

Hire for human potential

Consider potential as being made up of two elements:

- **Soft skills:** Transferable skills such as adaptability, resilience, communication, and collaboration.
- **Motivation to learn:** Also known as a growth mindset.

Building these elements into your hiring strategy enables you to see the whole person and their potential. This requires a **skills-first hiring strategy**.

What is skills-first hiring?

Skills-first hiring (also known as skills-based hiring) shifts the focus to job seekers' skills and aptitudes rather than less effective proxies for job performance, such as degrees, prior positions or years of industry experience. It involves deliberately seeking out candidates based on their skills and evaluating them based on the skills required for the job.

Indeed's data shows just over half of Singaporean employers have already applied skills-first hiring⁹. Among those that do not currently have a skills-first hiring strategy, more than half (59%) are planning to implement one¹⁰. The data shows that Singaporean employers are most likely to have implemented a skills-first strategy by assessing the skills needed for open roles (36%) and providing on-the-job upskilling (30%).

⁹ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024

¹⁰ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024

One of the top benefits of skills-first hiring, highlighted by 39% of employers, was that it has led to a higher influx of candidates with transferable skills. The top benefits for job seekers are that a greater emphasis on skills would reduce barriers in hiring (49%) and it would save them time by avoiding interviewing for roles that don't fit (46%).

Now we understand the foundations of skills-first hiring, let's revisit the two elements of potential in more detail to understand how they can help recruiters uncover a candidate's potential.



36%

job seekers surveyed say they are familiar with skills-first hiring.

67%

employers say they are at least "quite familiar."¹¹

¹¹ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024

1. Soft skills

Selecting a candidate based on their soft skills helps employers understand their potential. What's their ability to adapt? How resilient are they? And critically, what's their ability to acquire new skills in the future?

The good news is that Indeed's data shows that 70% of employers already believe that soft skills are valued more than hard skills in skills-first hiring¹², meaning we're more than halfway there.

If employers can evaluate soft skills, they can understand whether a person has what it takes to continue to learn and adapt. In other words, we can see their potential.

70%
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12 Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024



2. Motivation to learn

According to psychologist Carol Dweck, who coined the term, individuals who have a growth mindset believe their talents can be developed through hard work, good strategies, and input from others¹³. A growth mindset is about seeing challenges as opportunities to learn and grow, learning from failure, seeking feedback, being open to criticism, and being open to new experiences and learning opportunities. As such, focusing on the growth mindset in hiring has incredible potential to help solve our hiring challenges.

Indeed's data shows that 46% of Singaporean job seekers want employers to review open roles to identify what skills are needed to perform them, 45% want to see employers hiring

with the mindset that they will train a candidate and 45% want them to encourage those without a degree to apply¹⁴. In short, they want employers to hire for who they could be.

Job seekers are also craving learning and development opportunities. 79% of job seekers in Singapore say learning and development opportunities are important to them when deciding to apply for a role¹⁵. This trend is strong across multiple generations, reflecting their commitment to skilling and growth.

Significantly, over half of job seekers say they would rather take a job with lower pay but more learning opportunities than one with higher pay but limited learning opportunities¹⁶.

¹³ Harvard Business Review, [What Having a "Growth Mindset" Actually Means](#), 2016

¹⁴ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024

¹⁵ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024

¹⁶ Indeed Survey with YouGov 2024





Hiring people, training talent

Hiring for potential is a paradigm shift. Rather than focusing on candidates' qualifications and experience, employers need to find candidates with the right soft skills and a growth mindset and give them the opportunities to learn and develop.

However, it's important to understand that qualifications and experience still matter. There are some jobs where a degree is essential. But if somebody doesn't have the right opportunities or access to qualifications, employers shouldn't shut them out of careers that didn't require that in the first place.



How to hire for potential: key strategies

1 DEFINE.

Start by redefining job requirements to focus on the skills that are truly essential for success. This begins with a deep understanding of both current and future organisational needs.

2 SCREEN.

Once your skill requirements are clear, refine your screening process to efficiently identify candidates with the necessary skills.

3 ASSESS.

Adopt a skills-first mindset in your evaluation process, valuing transferable skills from diverse backgrounds. Use assessments and behavioural-based interview questions to evaluate candidates' potential and growth mindset.

4 ADVANCE.

Recognise that skills-based hiring is just the beginning. Invest in ongoing development to fully realise its benefits.



Technology: An untapped opportunity

We can't ignore that technology is transforming the recruitment landscape, particularly artificial intelligence (AI). It's a powerful tool that, when used correctly, can help employers find qualified talent efficiently and swiftly.



Employers believe that reducing the time required to post a job is the main benefit of technology when hiring – and they're not wrong. While it sounds paradoxical, AI can actually help bring humanity to the hiring process. At Indeed, AI has powered job search from the very beginning and is now driving matching in [new and even more exciting ways](#)¹⁷:

- When job seekers visit Indeed, our recommendation AI delivers each one a personalised feed of the best matches.
- When you post a job on Indeed, our AI leverages data about every job and job seeker on Indeed to help you see how many applications you are likely to get. Our AI also recommends the right budget to meet your hiring needs.
- Our AI recommends candidates who match your requirements before they even see your job. You can choose the best fit and invite them to apply with a single click.¹⁸

We are combining the power of AI with the incredible power of human judgment. It's smart, fast and incredibly effective.

¹⁷ Indeed, Making Hiring More Human in the Age of AI, 2023

¹⁸ Indeed, Making Hiring More Human in the Age of AI, 2023



Wrapping up

Solving today's hiring challenges means shifting focus from the resume, qualifications and experience, and instead seeking to unveil the true potential of candidates. What can a candidate offer to your organisation not just today but in the future? Remember, it's not about throwing direct experience out the window. It's about balancing experience with potential. Both have their place in building a future-ready workforce.



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