



What candidates really want to know in 2022

Hire the best talent by addressing their concerns before they apply



CONTENTS

Introduction

3

Key Finding 1: Candidates want to know about everyday life in the role

4

Key Finding 2: Flexible work continues to be a popular topic

8

Key Finding 3: Candidates want to picture a long-term career path

11

Key Finding 4: Suitable candidates may mistakenly self-disqualify before even applying

14

Key Finding 5: Candidate concerns vary by industry

17

Conclusion

22

INTRODUCTION

Within the last 12 months, the global recruitment market has changed dramatically. The impact of the pandemic and Great Reshuffle continues to be felt. Candidates in most fields are now in short supply, and that has empowered them to choose where, when, and how they work. Jobseekers know the kind of employer they want to work for, and they are ready to walk away from organizations that don't meet their expectations.

In order to attract the right talent to help them grow their business, companies need to understand exactly what their ideal candidates are looking for and position themselves as an employer of choice.

Listening to candidates and honing in on the career topics they want information on has never been more challenging and critical to a company's future success. If they do not deliver a first-rate candidate experience, employers will lose the best talent to their competitors.

To help organizations understand what information candidates need to make a decision, we have put together this report. It covers what candidates want to know from a potential employer in 2022: all the hot topics job candidates have been asking for employee insights on.

It also includes practical next steps to leverage these insights within your organization.

Keep reading to discover our five top findings into what topics candidates want insights on and how this will shape your employer brand strategy in 2022.

Methodology

Clinch Employee Generated Content is a Q&A platform where employees engage and share stories with candidates and answer their specific questions. This creates trusted authentic employee generated content, which can be shared on your career site and social media.

We analysed 27,000 questions asked by candidates to employees of companies using the Clinch platform, as well as 900,000 views of these questions. The data covers 173 companies in 67 different sectors across the world.

We then used our AI model to group these questions into topics and compared the differences between topic popularity in 2021 and 2022. In this report, we focus on the five most thought-provoking findings from this data

76.4% of professionals intend to look for a new job in 2022.

Source: [CV-Library](#)





Key Finding 1

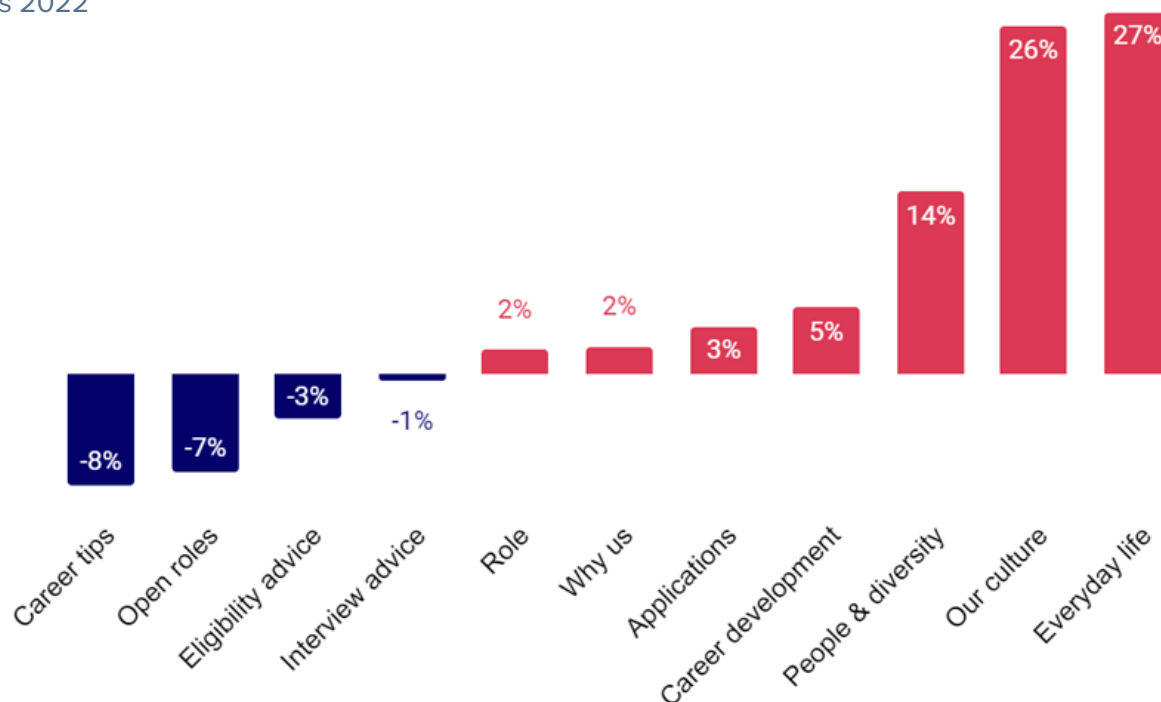
Candidates want to know about
everyday life in the role



We first looked at the increase or decrease in popularity of different employment-related career topics in 2021 vs 2022. Although questions on traditional employment topics such as eligibility, career advice, or interview tips are still among the most popular, the percentage of questions asked in those areas have declined. Instead, candidates have become more interested in details around people & diversity, corporate culture, and the minutiae of day-to-day life within an organization.

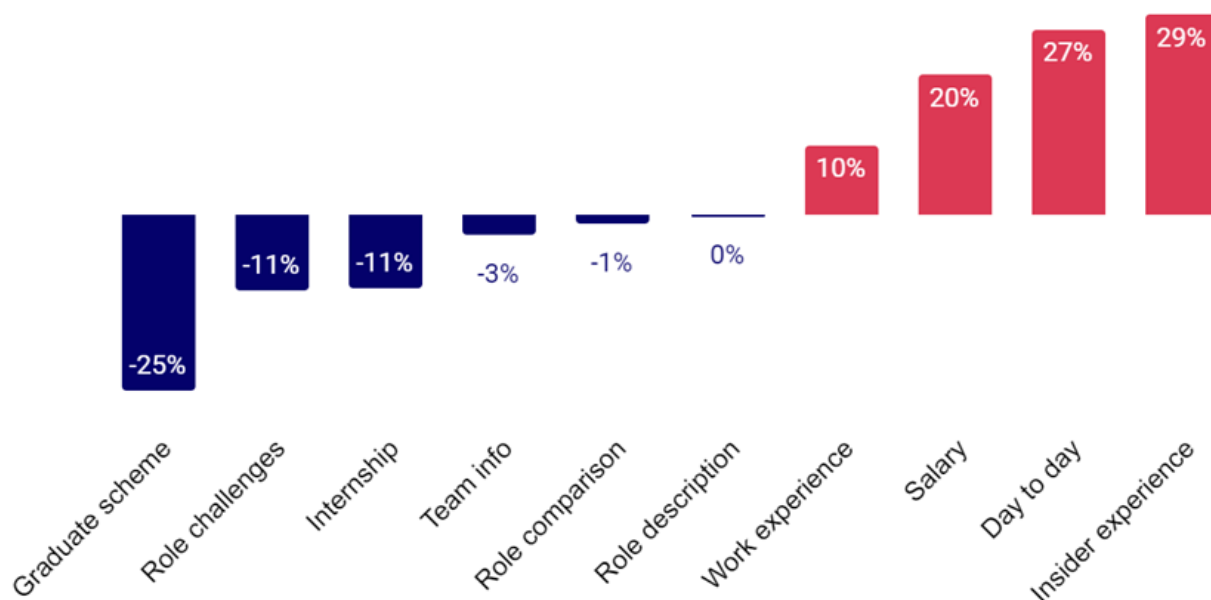
Change in popularity in main question topics

2021 vs 2022



When we explore the sub-categories within the **Role** and **Everyday life** topics, it's clear that the biggest increases in topic popularity are around day-to-day life and insider experience. "Insiders" are the employees within companies using the Clinch platform who have been nominated to answer candidate questions, usually because they have a unique perspective or insight.

Change in popularity in question sub-categories



The rise in popularity of these topics may partly reflect anxieties about returning to the workplace, particularly for new starters who have been on-boarded remotely during a pandemic. It may also signal candidates becoming more willing to shift roles and re-train, as well as a greater focus on long-term career progression (see [Key Finding 3](#)).

Candidates want a realistic idea of what working for your organization in a particular role and team will be like. They are less interested in help and advice on getting a new role and more interested in the real granular detail that will allow them to picture themselves in the role.

The best people to answer these “day in the life” questions are obviously employees who are currently working for your organization in a similar role. An honest answer from a real employee about what the working environment is really like will hold much more value for a candidate than any corporate information on values or policies. Previous research from Clinch showed that employee stories drive 20% more immersion than a careers site.



What does the business casual dress code look like at EY?

- EY

When working as auditors in BDO, do you regularly work in a fixed team or the people you work with often change?

- BDO

How has work-life evolved since the pandemic for a consultant at Roland Berger?

- Roland Berger

Being field based, are you given a manageable workload? How much time do you spend on the road/on your laptop?

- Coca-Cola EP

I would like to know what a typical day is like for someone working in wet process or thin film process development.

- Micron

Key Takeaways

Our top tips to help you put these findings into action:

- ✓ Give candidates insight into the day to day of a role, not just a list of responsibilities
- ✓ Paint a vivid picture with storytelling to help candidates picture themselves in the role
- ✓ Use your existing employees to give an authentic perspective

Previous research from our [Authentic Employer Branding: How to MAKE it WORK with Storytelling](#) report also highlighted why employee stories drive higher and more constant candidate immersion, and ultimately, candidate conversion.

The resounding evidence as to why candidates relate to personal stories is overwhelming. Real employee stories are one of the most powerful ways of communicating your organization's values, goals, and mission.



Employer Branding and Recruitment Statistics



Source: [Thrive My Way](#)



Key Finding 2

Flexible work
continues to be a popular topic



In today's candidate-short market, the best candidates are more likely than ever before to be choosing from multiple job offers. Employees are also more likely to see flexible working options as a necessity, rather than a luxury. With the best candidates increasingly being able to choose from multiple offers, flexibility could be the deciding factor.

Gallup's most recent [State of the American Workplace report](#) found that "37% of employees say they would change jobs for one that offered them the ability to work where they want at least part of the time." The report highlighted that more than half of employees (53%) say a role that allows them to have a greater work-life balance is "very important" to them when considering whether to take a new job. A further 51% shared they would change jobs for one that offered them flexitime.

On the Clinch platform, questions containing words like "flexibility", "balance", and "remote" have doubled from Q1 2021 to Q1 2022.

However, the number of remote roles sought by jobseekers is not even close to meeting the number of roles available. There is still a real opportunity for employers to stand out.

Types of roles employees currently have



Types of roles employees are actively seeking



Of course, not every role can be done remotely, and different employees at different life stages will be looking for different options. But there are still many ways to support employee work-life balance. From flexitime around core hours, flexible shifts, compressed hours, term-time work, and job shares, there is a wide range of flexible working options available for employers to explore.

For example, Sealed Air, a global packaging manufacturer with 16,500 global employees, began a [targeted transition to flexible work](#) in January 2021. They explored ways for those in production roles who needed to be on-site to get improved personal time and family leave support, while ensuring they were able to do their work effectively and safely.

Even when working flexibly or remotely, candidates also expect to be supported in their role and receive an equitable experience. This should happen no matter where or when they work, which will often require change in corporate culture. Candidates want a workplace that prioritizes their mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

Employees define flexibility in a number of ways, including the amount of autonomy/control they have in their work, the benefits and leave they receive, and their work location as well.

Source: 2021 Lighthouse Research & Advisory The Great Reprioritization Study

Key takeaways

Our top tips to help you put these findings into action:

- ✓ Even if working from home is not an option in your organization, there is a wide range of different ways to offer flexible working
- ✓ Let your candidates know that you are open to considering different options
- ✓ Give them real-life examples from current employees wherever possible

What makes EY different from the other firms in the Big Four?

- EY

Is work-life balance one of Nokia's core values? Or does it depend on the manager you have?

- Nokia

How does RB manage the home-office situation? E.g. is it expected to be present at the office at least X% of the time?

- Roland Berger

Is it possible to study whilst in deployment and for around how many hours a week?

- British Army

What are the realistic working hours? Do you have a good work life balance?

- Coca-Cola EP



The background of the slide features a teal-to-green gradient. Scattered across this background are several stylized, light blue flag icons. Each icon consists of a vertical pole with a horizontal bar and a flag-like shape at the top, oriented in various directions. There are approximately 10 such icons distributed around the central text area.

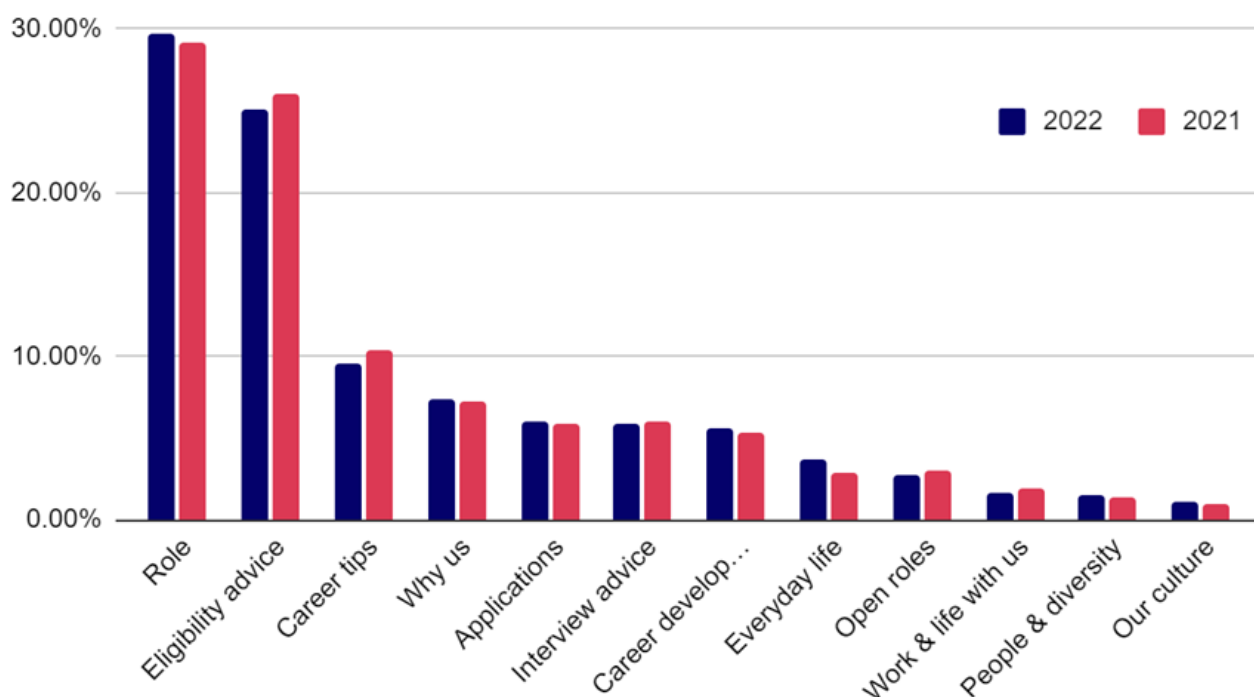
Key Finding 3

Candidates want
to picture a

long-term career path

Traditional topics around the role itself, such as eligibility advice and career tips are still very popular among prospective applicants. Candidates are trying to imagine what their role will be like and how it will fit in with their long-term career path.

Question topics by popularity



9 in 10 diverse candidates prefer to hear about future career opportunities during the hiring process.

Source: 2022 Lighthouse Research & Advisory Talent Acquisition Trends Study

Candidates want to know about their potential career paths if they join the company. Organizations seeking to strengthen their Employee Value Proposition (EVP) and add value to the candidate experience need to look beyond the specific role a candidate is applying for and provide insight into how they might progress within the organization.

[Recent research from Rally Recruitment Marketing](#) shows that content that showcases career progression and training opportunities is out-performing traditional career advice. Career progression engagement is up 103%, whereas career advice engagement is down 77%. Right now, candidates don't need tips on how to find a job. Instead they want to know how this particular job could benefit their longer-term career.

Improving the candidate experience is more important than ever. This aligns with our previous findings on why the candidate experience matters, seen in our [Content is King – Human is Ace: The Truth About Candidate Experience](#) white paper. We find that 99% of those surveyed believe improving candidate experience would “enhance” and “protect” their brand.



What is the career progression like after completing one of the apprenticeships?

- Coca-Cola EP

What does growth and development look like here?

- Micron

What training and development can I expect a few years into the role?

- Clifford Chance

How is your company supporting your personal career growth?

- Merck

Key takeaways

Our top tips to help you put these findings into action:

- ✓ Don't just focus on the current vacancy - let candidates know how their role might progress in the future
- ✓ Give examples of different career paths wherever possible
- ✓ Highlight existing employees who have been promoted and grown their skills at your company





Key Finding 4

Suitable candidates
may mistakenly

self-disqualify

before even applying

Even though most job descriptions have a list of required experience and qualifications, most employers are likely to be flexible on these for the right candidate who shows the potential to grow into a role. Unfortunately, it's very common for candidates to assume they won't even be considered without 100% of the specified requirements.

Self-disqualification is a subconscious process whereby a candidate assumes that they won't "fit" within an organization and therefore decides to not waste their time applying. It particularly affects women and those from diverse backgrounds. A widely quoted statistic is that men apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women apply only if they meet 100% of them.

[More recent research](#) suggests that thought processes such as, "I didn't think they would hire me since I didn't meet the qualifications, and I didn't want to waste my time and energy" is by far the most common reason for not applying for a role for both men and women (41% of women and 46% of men give it as their top reason).

In this candidate-short market, it pays to think outside the box and have the widest possible talent pool to pick from. It's difficult for your career site to address every issue that might come up, so it's important to present candidates with a wide range of employee voices. Welcoming questions from candidates allows you to address issues that might otherwise cause jobseekers to self-disqualify themselves for the role. For example, if a job seeker feels they don't fit the profile of a typical employee, they can ask whether other employees have the same backgrounds or experience.

This helps to improve diversity and inclusion in traditionally under-represented groups. It can also help you encourage people who might feel nervous about applying as they don't have exactly the right qualifications, or feel excluded by age or neurodiversity

The content generated through individual jobseekers' questions can then be kept and displayed on your careers site. This helps to reassure candidates who are simply browsing that your organization is one which will welcome them.

Hello. How do you value applications with adequate education but previous experience in a complete different field?

- Nokia

Can you apply without a degree?

- Teach First

Is the programme for young people only? I'm a 54 year old man with a passion for teaching. I'm a postgraduate - can I apply?

- Teach First

I have ADHD which means I sometimes have to adapt my working day. Will Rolls-Royce support me with this?

- Rolls-Royce

As a trans person can you be a guardsman?

- British Army

Can I have dreadlocks when joining?

- British Army

You need to answer the questions at a granular level like the examples above on “Diversity” and “Company information”. If you are not providing this level of detail, you simply are not answering your candidates’ questions and will lose them.

As we also highlighted in our [Diversity Recruiting: What’s on Candidates’ Minds](#) white paper, 57% of employers believe most of their diverse candidates are lost before they click apply after visiting their career site. You need to be transparent and give job seekers the platform to ask granular questions in order for them to make an informed decision before applying.



Key takeaways

Our top tips to help you put these findings into action:

- ✓ Widen the talent pool for your vacancies by ensuring candidates know you welcome applications from all walks of life
- ✓ It's impossible to cover every potential topic on your career site, so make it as easy as possible for candidates to ask questions about their eligibility before the application process to prevent them from self-disqualifying
- ✓ Use employee stories as proof of hiring outside of the box





Key Finding 5
Candidate concerns
vary by industry



Analysis of the most popular topics for candidates by industry shows that candidates in different industries want different information.

For example, the role is usually the most popular topic category across the board, but for sectors which can require a specific qualification or training —such as the armed forces, education, government administration and transport sectors —candidates are more concerned about eligibility.

For the Healthcare sector, where roles are divided into clear pay bands and application and interview advice is less needed, questions on the role make up over 50% of the total.

Make sure that your career site, social media, and other employer branding channels address the most popular topics for candidates in your industry. Wherever possible, encourage candidates to ask questions around those subjects and make the answers accessible to everyone by adding them to your careers site.

Explore the following graphs to find out which topics candidates are most interested in for your sector. Use this information to enhance your employer brand strategy, messaging, and content.

Key takeaways

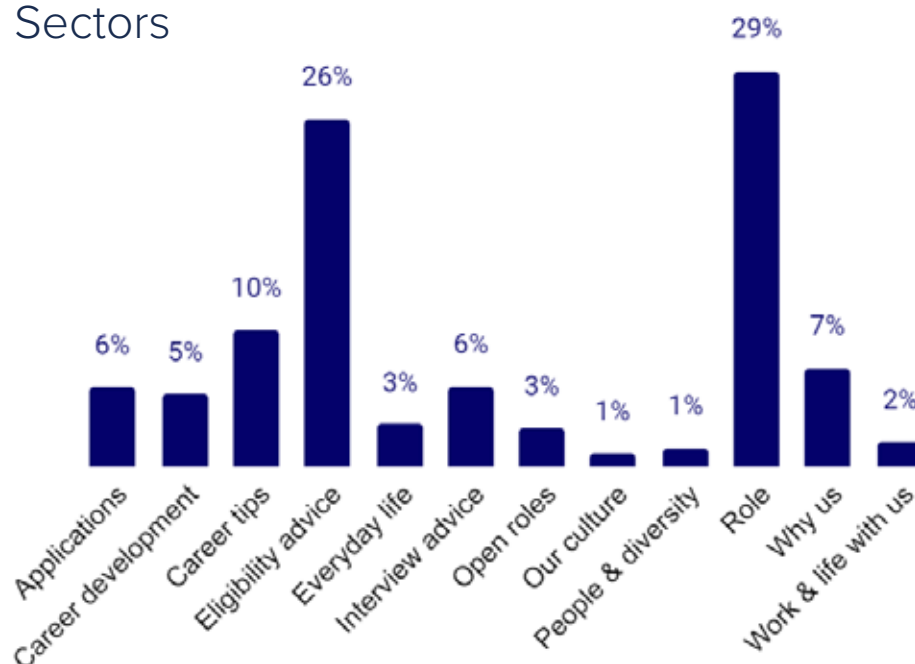
Our top tips to help you put these findings into action:

- ✓ Create a specific strategy to target candidates in your sector
- ✓ Monitor talk in industry forums and groups to help you gain further insight
- ✓ Watch for trends in job descriptions in your industry

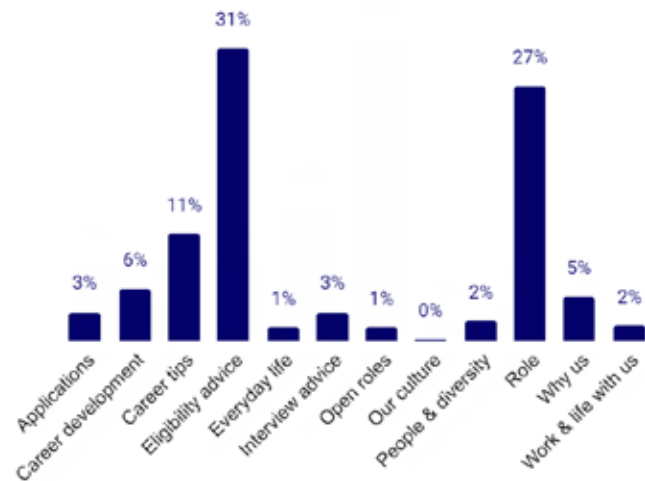


If your sector is not represented here, or you'd like some further insight around specific roles, get in touch with us today at www.clinchtalent.com and we'll supply you with the information you need.

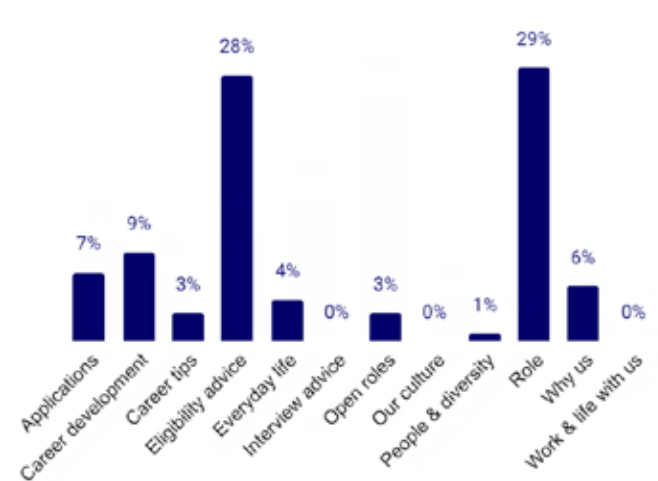
All Sectors



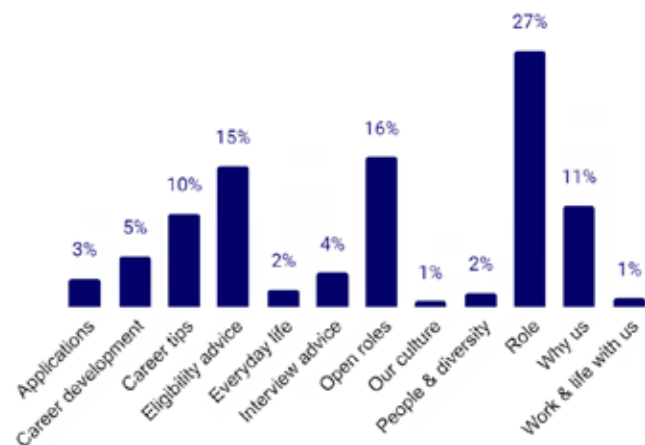
Armed Forces



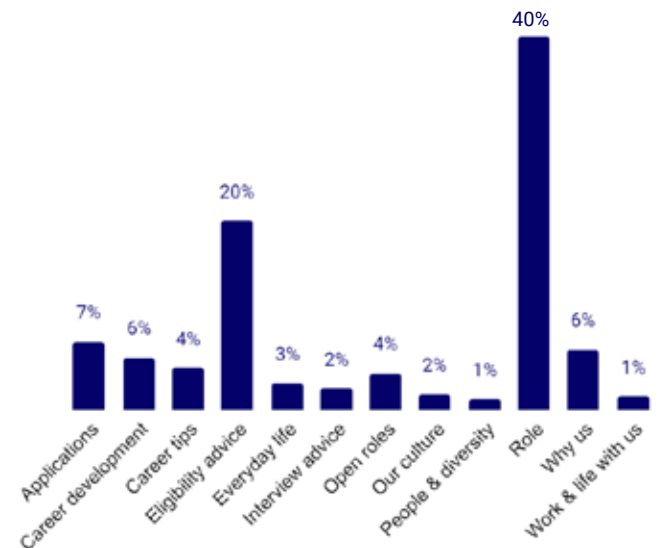
Automotive



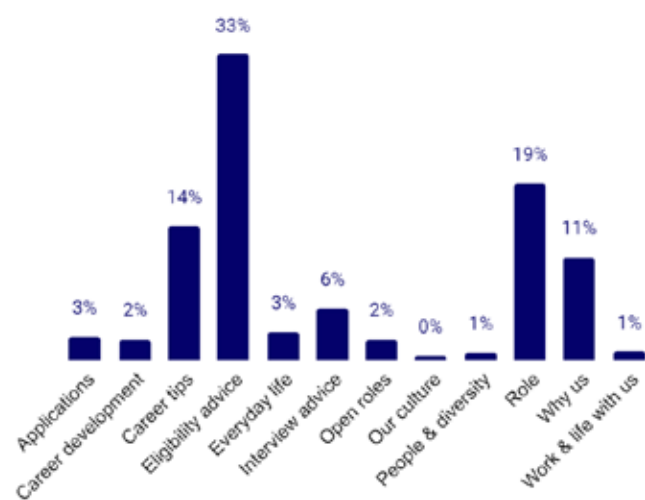
Aviation & Aerospace



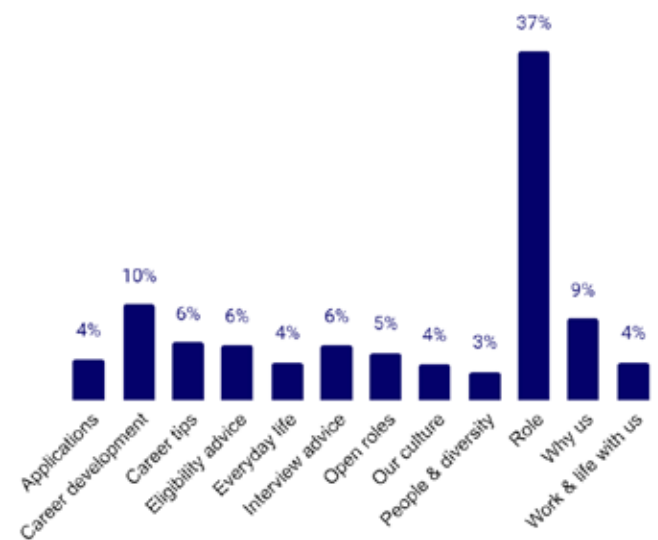
Construction



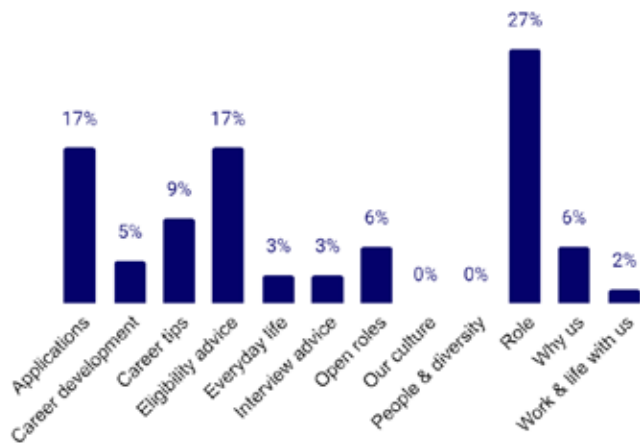
Education



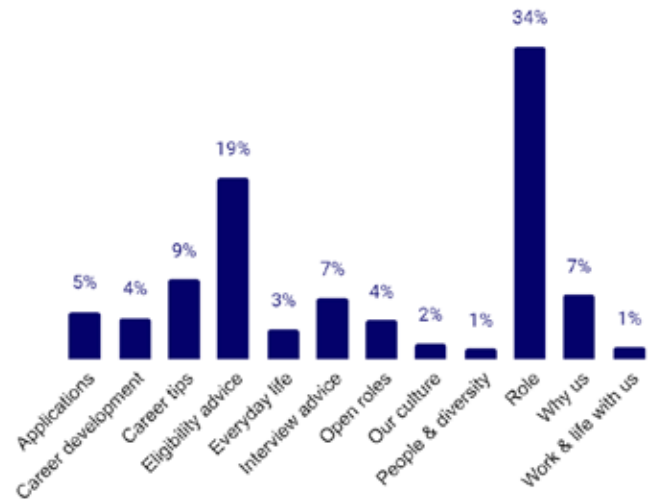
Engineering



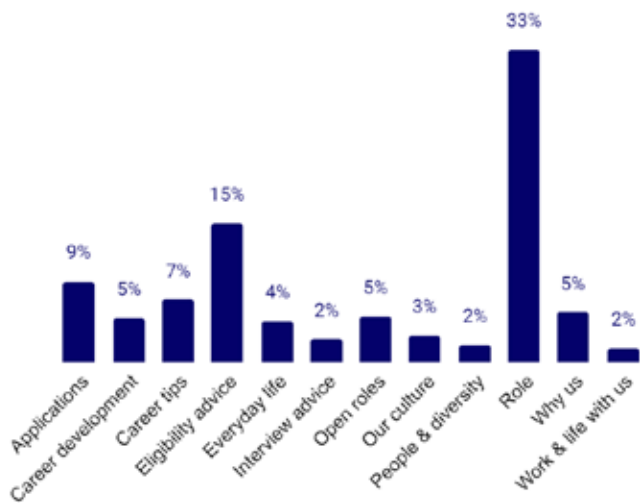
Environmental Services



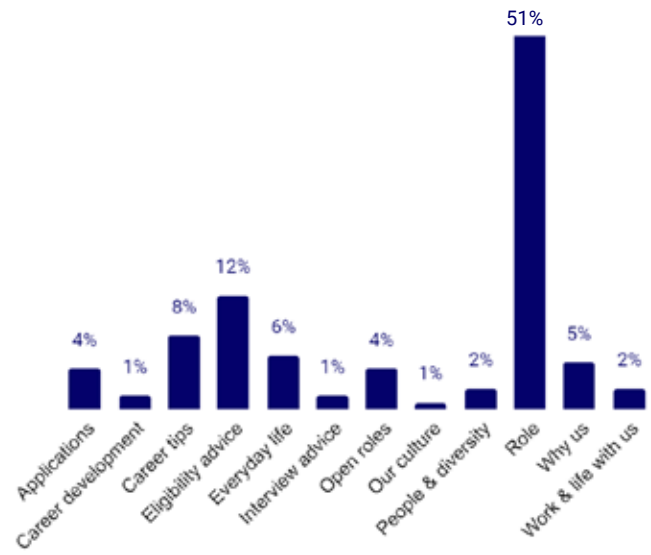
Financial Services



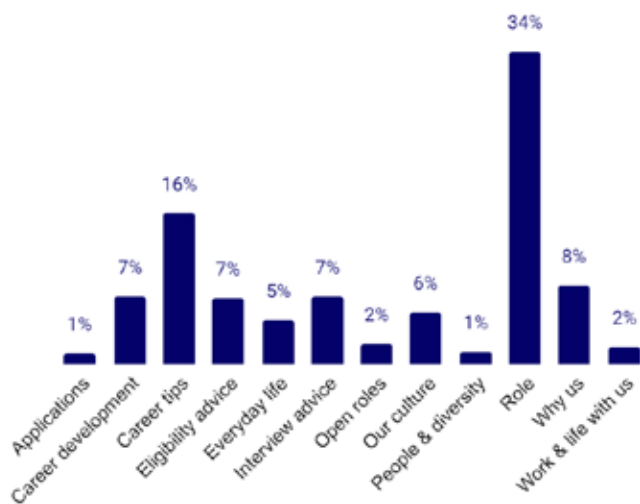
Food & Beverage



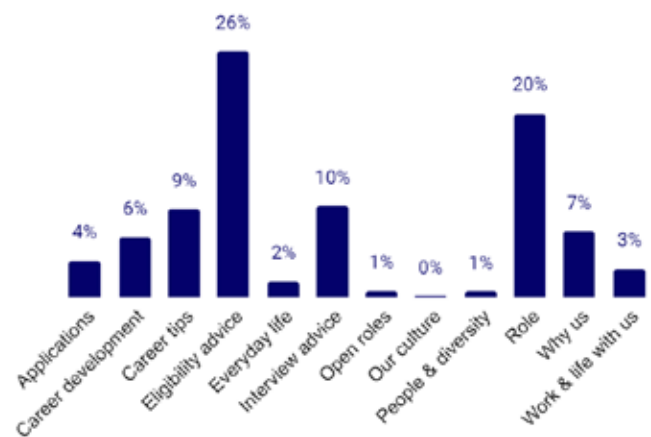
Healthcare



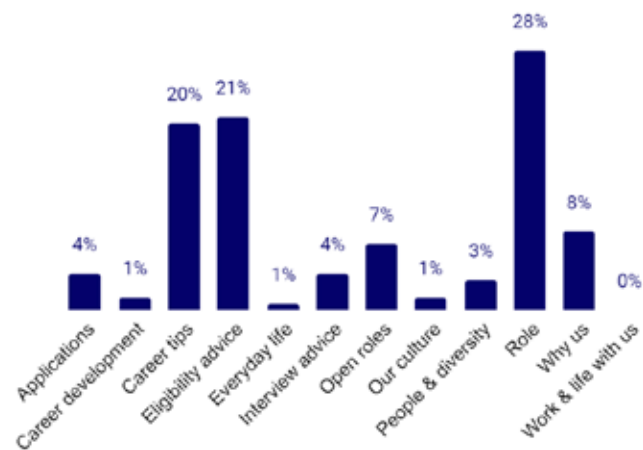
Information Technology



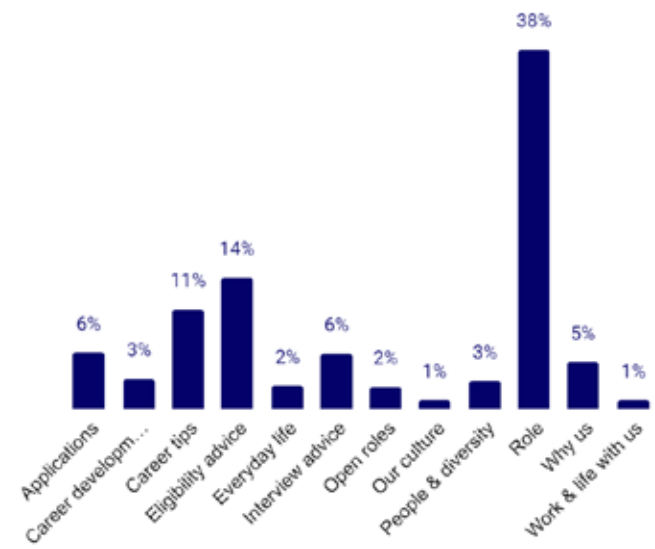
Government Administration



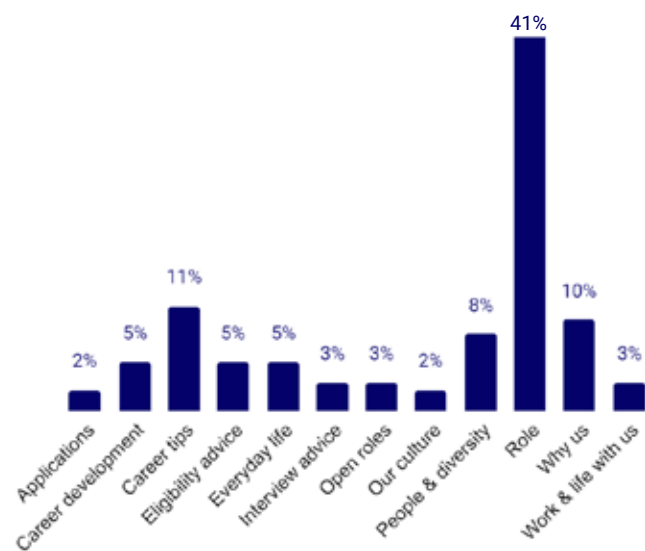
Legal



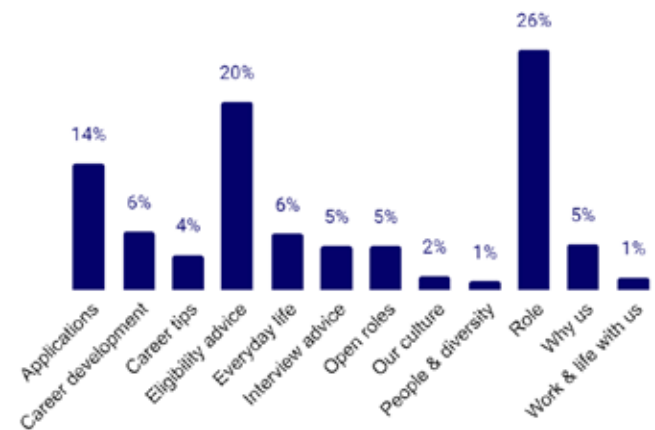
Management Consulting



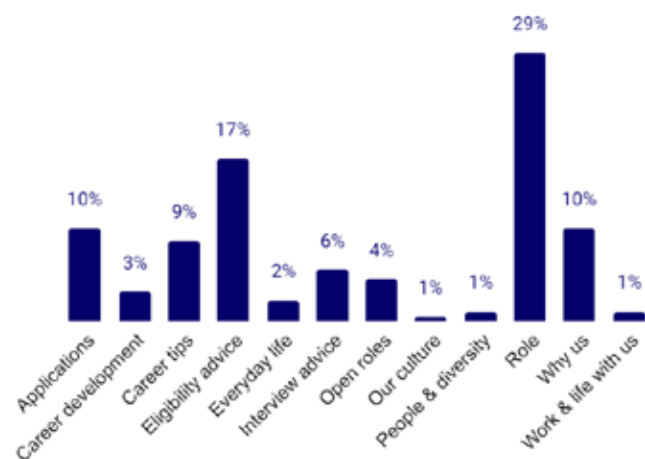
Pharmaceuticals



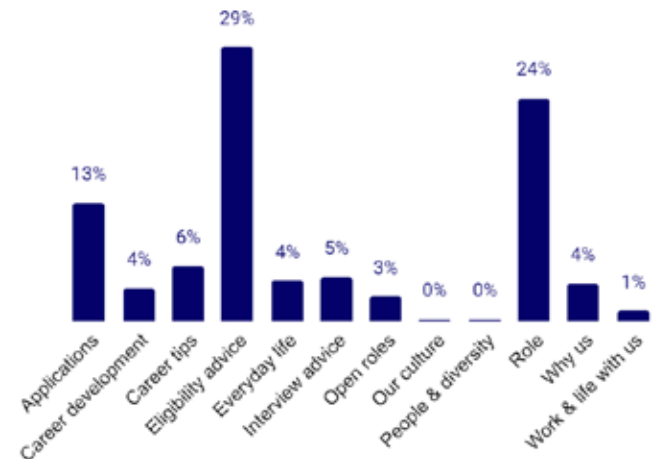
Retail



Telecommunications



Transportation



Conclusion

In the current high-vacancy, candidate-short market, jobseekers have the upper hand. It's vital that employers allocate resources to addressing candidates' concerns and questions long before the application stage, if they want to attract the very best talent.

Candidates want to know granular details about a role

Right now, jobseekers are less worried about whether they are suitable for a job and more concerned about whether the job is right for them.

You need to give candidates an easy way to ask you questions

Your career site will not have the level of detail they want on every individual role. You need to be able to let candidates ask questions directly before the application process even starts and then display those answers for future visitors. Giving visitors a good insight into your everyday life at your company will help to keep them engaged and prevent them going off to third party review sites.

Candidates will have a wide range of concerns

Bear in mind that the things candidates are most concerned about will vary, depending on their role and sector. Letting your candidates dictate the conversation will be most effective in keeping them engaged throughout the recruitment process.

When putting together your employer branding strategy for 2022, there are some potential pitfalls that you need to bear in mind:

- A) Although defining your EVP is extremely important, in isolation it will not answer your candidates' granular questions
- B) Use of employee testimonials and videos can be impactful, but the topics of these are best dictated by your candidates, rather than very general themes
- C) The answers to your candidates' questions should be freely available to all visitors to your careers site, to maintain transparency and save time answering repeat questions



About us

At Clinch, we take pride in revolutionizing the way companies attract, nurture and convert high quality talent into leads and successful hires both externally and internally.

Clinch Recruitment Marketing is an 'out of the box' solution that allows recruitment teams to do more with less effort, delivering high quality candidate experiences from first engagement, right through to application. It combines intelligent careers sites with an easy to use content management system, marketing automation for nurture campaign communications and workflows and candidate relationship management tools to build critical talent pipelines. Underpinned by industry-leading marketing analytics that delivers actionable insights into which channels, content, and talent networks demonstrate the best return on investment.

Want to find out more?

Want to find out about how Clinch can help to transform your recruitment marketing?

Book a short intro demo with us and we'll show you how organizations like yours are using Clinch to:

- Deliver an amazing candidate experience and increase conversion rates from your career pages
- Improve the quality of your applicants and increase retention
- Widen and diversify your talent pool and reduce time-to-fill for your vacancies
- Enhance the perception of your employer brand and build trust with your candidates
- Effortlessly create and share employee generated content
- Make your recruitment marketing budget go further

[BOOK A DEMO NOW](#)

Visit clinchtalent.com for more information