JOB SEEKERS TO JUMP THROUGH MORE HIRING HOOPS AS INTERVIEW PROCESS LENGTHENS BY 27%

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• Interview process for a new job lengthens by 1.5 hours
• Number of roles requiring aptitude or technical testing doubles to 29%
• Employers take 5 weeks and 6 days to fill a role, up from 3 weeks and 4 days five years ago
• Interviewees relying on internet to prepare take twice as long to secure a role

Over the past five years the interview process has lengthened by more than a quarter for the average successful applicant, according to research by the specialist recruiter Randstad.

Brits who successfully changed jobs in the last year spent 27% longer on the interview process for that role compared to 2008, according to an independent poll of 2,000 members of the Great British public. On average, they spent 7 hours either preparing for, or taking part in, interviews – an increase of 1.5 hours compared to five years ago. In fact, nearly 7% of respondents took more than 20 hours in preparing for and attending their successful interviews.

As a result, the total time taken to find a new job has risen by 23% since 2008. Job hunters in the UK spend an average of ten weeks and five days in the process of finding and securing a new job, compared to the eight weeks and five days taken five years ago.

More than half (52%) of those who have interviewed for a job in the last year state the process was harder than five years ago.

Mark Bull, UK CEO of Randstad, said: “Employers have become increasingly selective when it comes to interviewing staff. Prospective employees have to jump through many more hiring hoops today than they did pre-recession. Employers are often looking for more bang for their buck, and a skill set that was satisfactory for a job five years may no longer be now, as employers look towards the long-term potential of new hires. It’s not enough to demonstrate you can do the job they’re currently advertising for – you need to show you can develop in the role and bring something valuable to that organisation in the future.”

The number of interviews employers conduct with a successful candidate has also risen sharply over the past five years. For a junior role, employers required an average of 1.6 interviews five years ago, a figure that has risen to 2.4. Employers now interview successful candidates for senior roles an average of 3.4 times, up from 2.6 five years ago.

A separate poll of Randstad’s UK consultants suggests that the level of testing during the application process has increased, too. Five years ago, 14% of roles required some form of psychometric, technical or aptitude test, a figure which has now more than doubled to 29%.

The number of vetting checks carried out after the interview process has concluded has also increased. Five years ago, employers vetting credentials such as qualifications, CRB checks and references delayed the hiring process by an average of 10.1 days. Currently, consultants state this delay has increased to an average of 15.2 days.

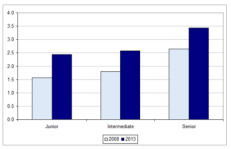
As a result, the increased number of tests, interviews and level of checking, has lengthened the hiring process from the employer’s perspective too. Employers now spend an average of five weeks and six days on securing a new hire for a specific role, a figure that has risen by 71% from three weeks and three days five years ago.

Interview Preparation: Google is Not Enough

Despite the increasingly demanding nature of the hiring process, one in five Brits (18%) still didn’t perform any research prior to their last interview other than to read the job specification and application. A further 9% relied solely on a company’s website for their research.

Just over a third of respondents (35%) conducted an internet search as part of their preparation. One fifth (20%) of respondents spoke to employees and former employees of their prospective employer, while 15% consulted colleagues in industry as part of their preparation, and one in eleven spoke to a recruitment consultant for a briefing.

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Alongside undertaking internet research and browsing an employer's website, candidates with ideal preparation would read the company's marketing literature, check for news about the company as well as seeking information from former or current staff, industry colleagues, and their recruitment consultant. Currently, just 1% are doing this.

Personal insight is proving invaluable in interview preparation. The average time of those who at least spoke to a former or current staff member AND their recruitment consultant secured a job, on average, within eight weeks and three days (two weeks and two days faster than national average).

Whereas, the average time it took for those who just conducted internet research to successfully interview was eighteen weeks and five days.

Mark Bull concludes: "The importance of thoroughly researching a potential role can't be overstated. A Google search is simply not enough in today's competitive market. It's clear from our research the longer people prepare from a wider variety of sources, the more likely they are to be the successful applicant in the shortest possible time.

"The rise of condensed information sources such as Wikipedia has added a certain laziness to interview preparation. People are seduced into thinking the Internet has all the answers. It certainly offers a valuable insight but the perspective of former employees – not to mention the insight of a recruitment consultant, will fill in many blanks about a company that an online search can't. In today's marketplace it is the candidate who understands the nuances of an organisations' culture and skills requirements that really stands out."

Notes to editors

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In the UK, Randstad's business lines serve the public and private sectors across Accounting and Financial services; Business Support; Construction, Property and Engineering; Education; Health and Social Care; Interim Management and Search; Human Resources; IT; Legal; Retail; Sales, Student and Worker Support and In-House and Managed Services.

At the end of 2012, Randstad had 1,750 corporate employees in the UK, working in 203 locations. UK revenue in 2012 was €799 million. Randstad Holding nv was founded in 1960 and is headquartered in Diemen, the Netherlands and listed on the NYSE Euronext Amsterdam. For more information see www.randstad.co.uk and www.randstadstaffing.co.uk

Company Contact:

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Randstad

T. 0205695911
E. b.walmsley@randstadukholding.co.uk
W. https://www.randstad.co.uk

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