



Job Application vs. Candidate

White Paper | June 2017

CHARITY **JOB**

What prompts candidates to complete a job application? What stops them? Is salary really a decisive factor? Based on a large scale candidate-survey ran in May 2017, this CharityJob white paper explores the process of a candidate application from their point of view.

Too long, didn't read?

That's okay, here's a quick recap!

MAIN FINDINGS OF THIS WHITEPAPER

FINDING 1

76%

candidates said to be searching jobs based first on the cause the organisation supports.

FINDING 6

ADDING A CLEAR ORGANISATION MISSION & VISION as well as some insights into the organisation's culture, or even examples of recent campaigns are all positive points that will prompt candidates to complete the application.

FINDING 2

A CLEAR JOB DESCRIPTION

is the number one reason that prompts candidates to complete a job application.

FINDING 5

53%

candidates stop if the application process is too long. The more steps there are, the more likely candidates are to stop applying.



LONG FORMS



REDIRECTION TO ANOTHER @ WEBSITE

FINDING 3

69%

candidates said that a too low

SALARY

would stop them from completing a job application.

FINDING 4

24%

Do not know what to expect when it comes to salary in the charity sector compared to the private sector.

Who do you recruit?

82% of the candidates visiting CharityJob are actively looking for a job in the not-for-profit sector. Among these candidates, a large majority are here first because they are specifically looking for jobs in organisations that matter to them. In fact, 76% are said to be searching for jobs based on the cause an organisation supports first, before salary and location.

“ 76% are said to be searching for jobs based on the cause an organisation supports first, before salary/location ”

So, what prompts these candidates to look for a job in the charity sector? The response is overwhelmingly close to why charities exist in the first place: “to make a difference” was quoted 44 times out of 144 answers from candidates, alongside “to follow a passion” and “to help people”.



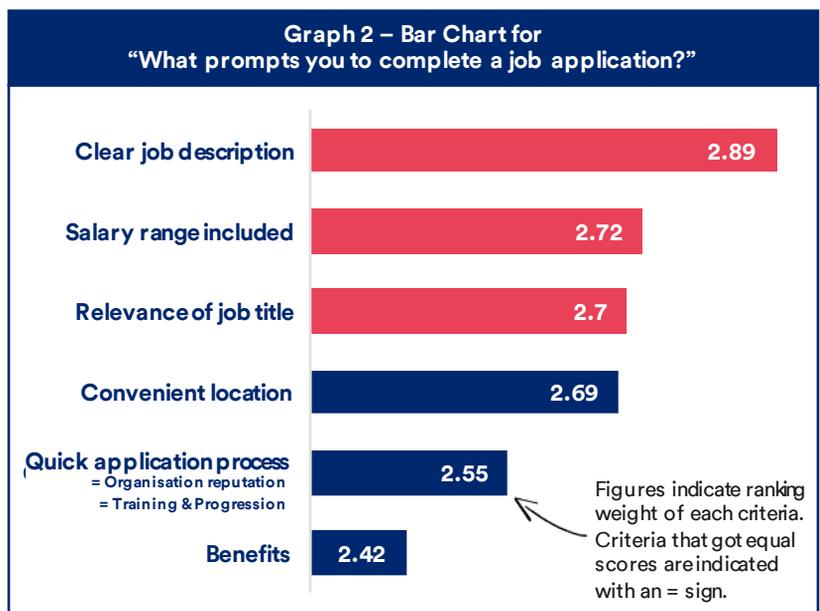
What attracts them?

So, what prompts a candidate to complete a job application? The answer is fairly straightforward: the more detailed and clear the job description is, the more likely candidates are to apply. In the graph below, we asked our survey participants to rank a list of criteria, from most important to least important.

“ the more detailed & clear the job application is, the more likely candidates are to apply ”

The first three criteria quoted by candidates are “clear job description” (first), “salary range included” (second) and “relevance of job title” (third).

These results were also expressed directly by some of the survey participants who added comments like: “a job description that sounds exciting” or “clarity and honesty”.



Does salary matter?

Yes. Salary is definitely decisive when it comes to job applications. As we just showed before, including the salary in the job description is the second criterion that will prompt a candidate to complete a job application. But it ranks even higher when taking the opposite approach: when questioned about what stopped them to complete a job application, the large majority ranked “*too low salary*” as their first criteria, with 69% answering “it stops me”.

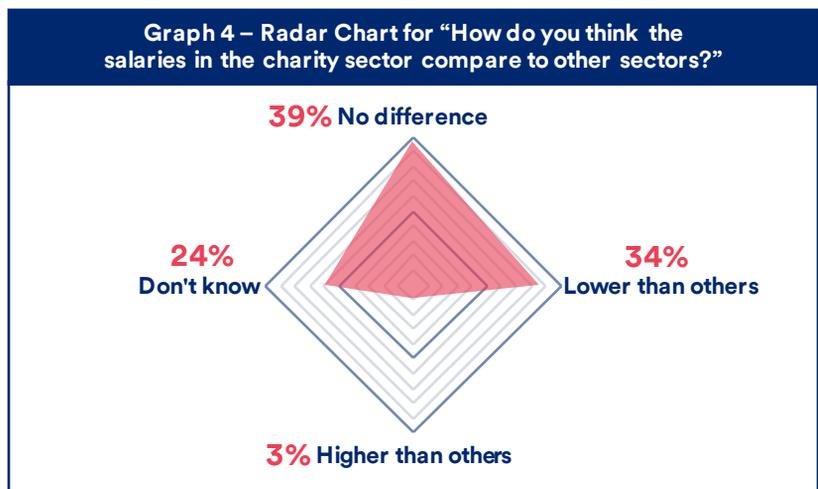
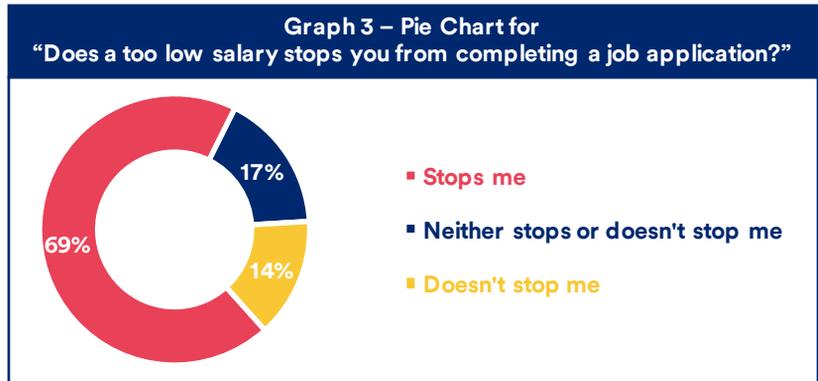
“ 69% would not complete an application if the salary was too low ”

This finding is even more striking compared to the perception candidates have of the charity sector.

Indeed, it seems that candidates actually lack the proper knowledge regarding salaries in the not-for-profit sector: they just don't what to expect.

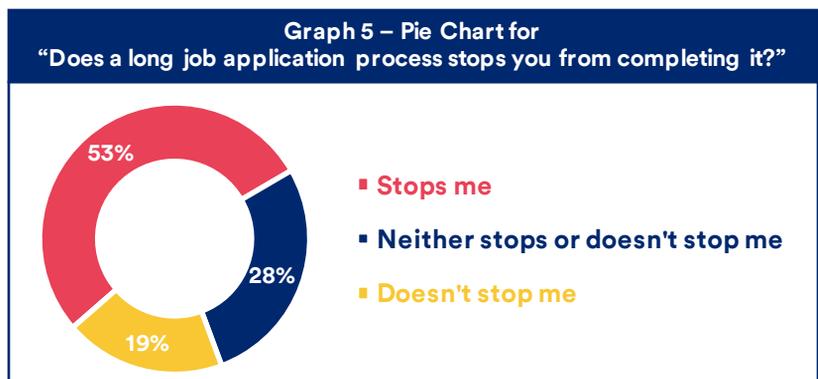
“ 24% did not know what to expect when it came to salaries in the sector ”

When asked about the salary difference between the private and the not-for-profit sectors, the participants were torn: 39% expected no difference, 34% expected lower salaries and 24% didn't know what to expect.



How long is too long?

Another concern expressed by respondents was the length of job applications themselves. More than half of them (53%) indicated a long application process would stop them from completing it. But what do candidate call “long” when it comes to job applications? According to our survey results, the number of steps >>

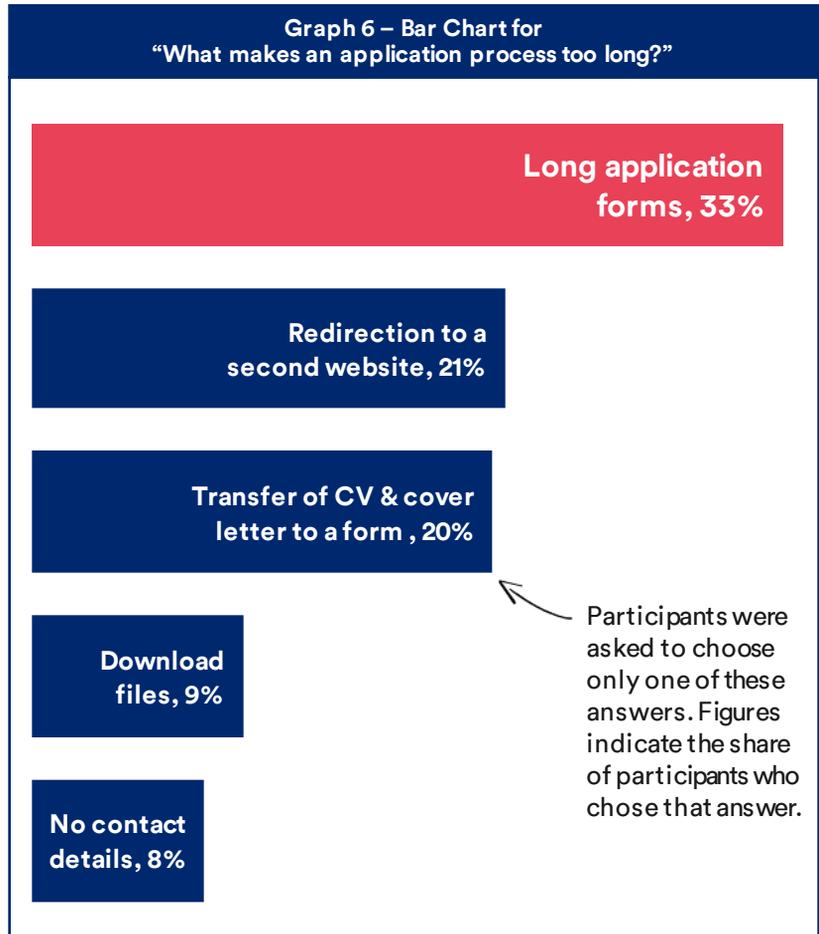


>> included in the application process is the main reason why some candidates drop out. Almost a third of the respondents chose “*long application forms*” as the reason why they would drop out. Having to sign-in into another website was also a major deterrent for them (15% chose is as a number one reason to drop out).

Obviously, adding these things leads to even more frustration, as one of the respondent pointed out in the survey comments: “*It is not one of these specific things that will stop me, but more their combination. Once the website starts to redirect to other places, then ask me to download and complete a document... I'm gone.*”

“the more steps you cut down in your application process, the more likely candidates will apply”

This behaviour is why our Account Managers always advise recruiters to opt for the ‘*Apply Now*’ rather than ‘*Apply on website*’ or ‘*Application details*’ option. The more steps you cut out of your job application process, the more likely candidates will apply.

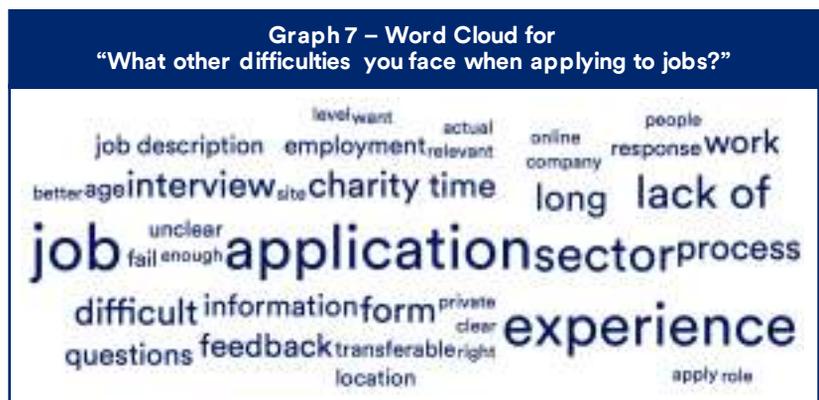


Additional difficulties...

We also asked our survey participants to describe the additional difficulties they might have faced when applying to jobs. Some of the original findings we wrote about earlier were quoted again. For example, unclear job description: “*Many job adverts expect lots of very specific experience and don't allow for transferable skills, or use industry specific jargon which is unclear and off-putting.*”

However, other answers are more specific to the sector, which some candidates find difficult to enter when they don't have previous paid experience for nonprofits.

“candidates find difficult to enter [the charity sector] when they don't have previous paid experience for nonprofits”



As one of the respondents puts it: “I am transferring from the private sector, and (...) my resume often gets screened out without being given an interview, despite years of professional experience and level of education.” This is backed-up by another respondent: “the transition from the private to charity sector has been far more difficult than I imagined it would be”.

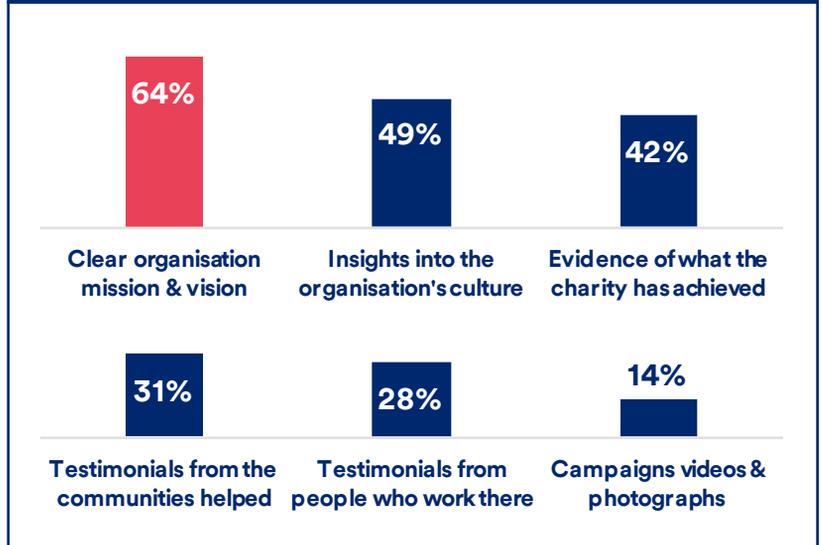
... and positive points.

As some additional difficulties can prevent candidates to complete a job application, some additional positive points can also lead them to complete it.

As we learned earlier in our study, a clear & comprehensive job description is key for candidates. Thus there is no surprise that a “clear organisation mission & vision” is the first additional feature quoted by our survey participants when answering the question “What additional information makes you more likely to complete a job application?”.

Right behind is quoted “insights into the organisation’s culture” (49%) as well as “evidence of what the charity has achieved” (42%). Both indicates that once again, candidates are all about getting as much information and details as possible so that they can effectively apply to a job.

Graph 8 – Bar Chart for “What additional information makes you more likely to complete a job application?”



What to do next?

First, learn from these results. There is no magic here: candidates’ applications are influenced by very concrete factors, like the clarity of a job description or the number of steps the application take them through.

Second, spend some time looking at your most recently posted jobs or volunteer roles and use the **question tree** on the last page of this white paper to review them.

Lastly, don’t panic if you aren’t sure your job ad will be appealing enough for candidates to apply. Our account managers are here to help – they all have extensive experience of the sector and will be able to answer all of your questions. Just give them a call!

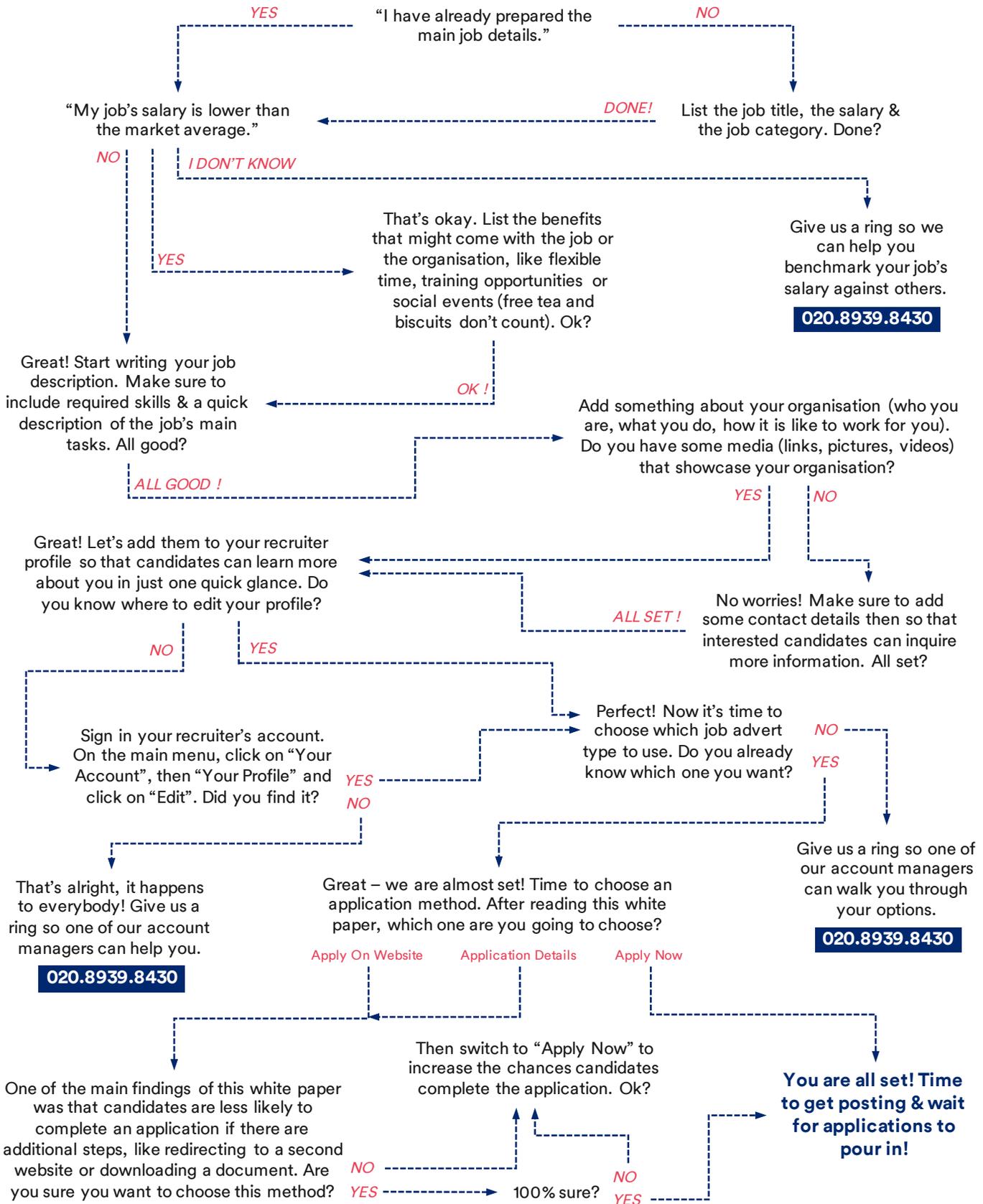
Now breathe, grab a cup of tea... and get posting!

Need some help? Get in touch!

Call us at
020.8939.8430

CJ'S QUESTION TREE

I have a job to post on CharityJob – please help!





Trust our expertise

For more than 17 years, CharityJob has been connecting the UK's best charities with its brightest talent. This allows us to constantly monitor and gather data from the sector, so that we can help charity people thrive in an ever more challenging climate. This white paper bases itself on the data extracted from the CharityJob database as well as statistics from two email surveys run in November 2016 and May 2017 on a sample of respectively 1,661 and 251 candidates.

More questions? Contact us on 020 8939 8430 or email info@charityjob.co.uk

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