



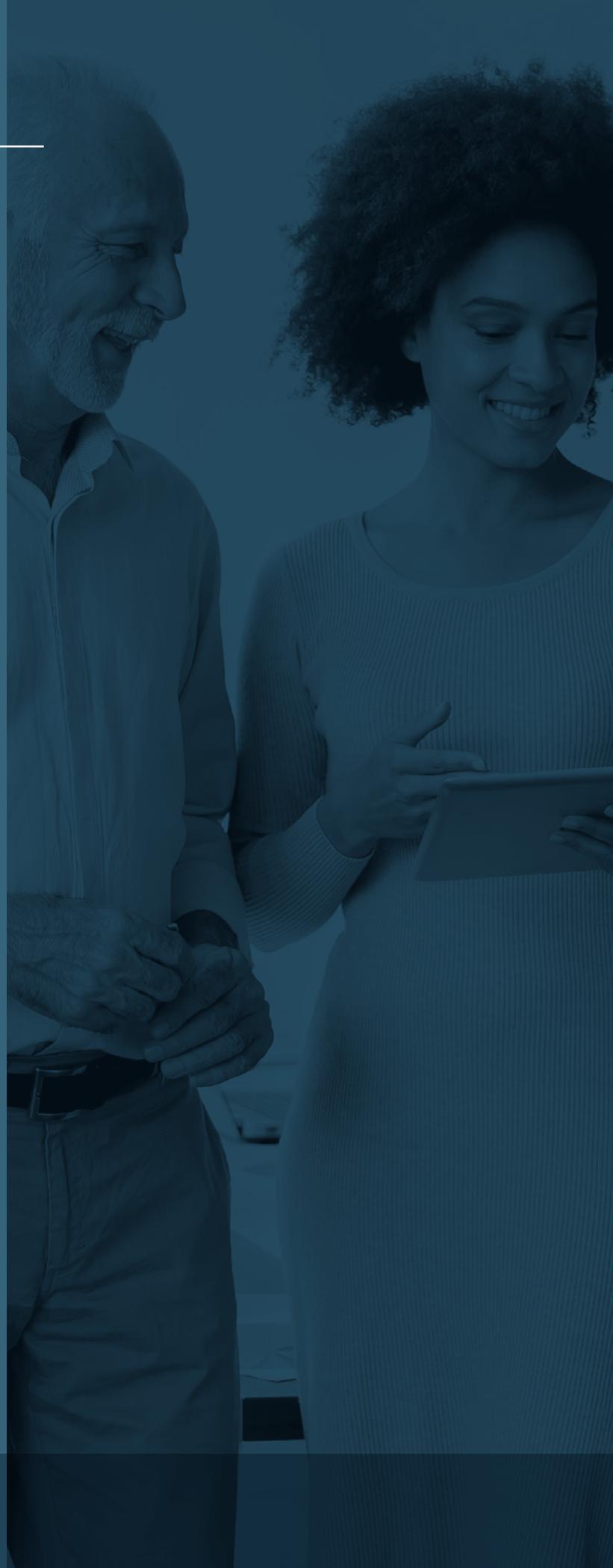
NEOGOV

JOB
SEEKER
REPORT

2019

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OVERVIEW

With the US jobless rate down to a near record low of 3.9%,¹ attracting candidates is more competitive than ever.

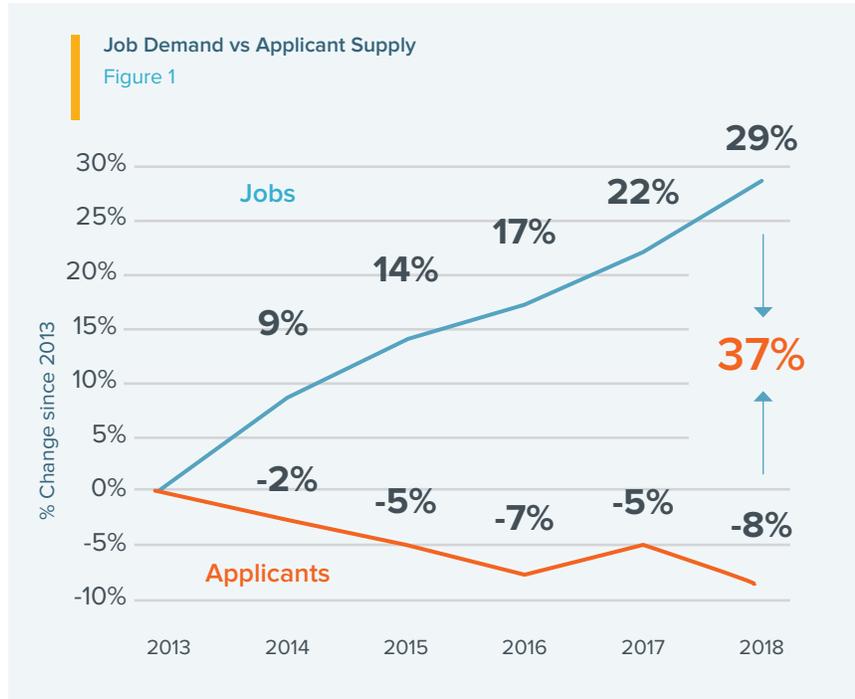
Simply advertising open jobs in more places is not enough. What motivates applicants to apply for public sector jobs? Do motivators vary among different demographics? How are candidates searching for new jobs and what makes them stay?

NEOGOV answers these questions and more in the **NEOGOV Job Seeker Report**.

WORK MOTIVATORS

Over the last 6 years, there has been an expanding gap between public sector job openings and the number of job seekers applying to fill those positions. The gap has grown to 37% (See Figure 1)². All signs lead to a continued widening of the gap, which could ultimately impact the quality of service provided by government organizations. Therefore, it is critical to make jobs more attractive in the public sector.

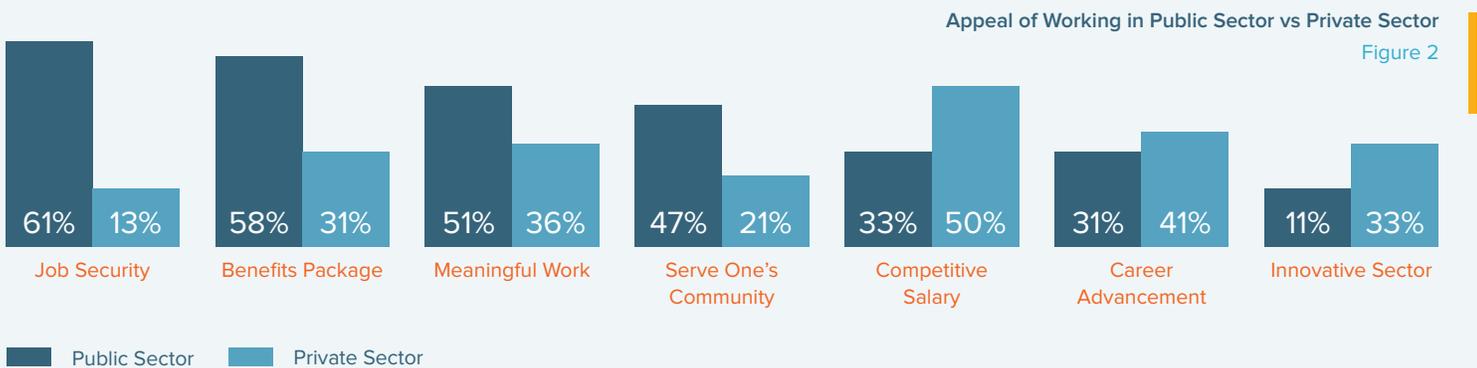
To improve the attractiveness of public sector jobs, understanding what motivates candidates to apply is critical. According to findings from the NEOGOV Job Seeker Report, motivations vary by demographic. By understanding these motivators, employers can more strategically attract candidates in today's competitive job market landscape.



NEOGOV collected responses from 2,959 respondents through a 20-minute online survey. Responses were gathered Sept 6, 2018 - Oct 3, 2018. Results for public sector jobs show **job security (61%)**, **benefit packages (58%)**, **the opportunity to do meaningful work (51%)**, and **the opportunity to serve one's community (47%)** hold the most appeal for job applicants interested in the public sector (See Figure 2).

Salary (50%) is the most attractive aspect of working in the private sector, followed by **career advancement opportunities (41%)**, **the opportunity to do meaningful work (36%)**, and **working in an innovative sector (33%)** (See Figure 2).

Competitive salaries and career advancement opportunities are stronger motivators to work in the private sector compared to the public sector (33% & 31%, respectively). Promoting job security and benefits packages generally will appeal to the pool of job seekers interested in the public sector. However, in order to prevent job seekers from entering the private sector, public sector salaries will need to be addressed.



Comparison of top motivators. Respondents select all that apply. Public sector n=2871. Private sector n=1246.

WORK MOTIVATORS BY JOB TITLE

Public Sector

While job security is the most attractive aspect of working in the public sector, it holds greater appeal for those in law enforcement. For nurses, on the other hand, job security is not as important as doing meaningful work or having an appealing benefits package. Compared to other job fields, serving one's community has stronger appeal to those working in law enforcement or the firefighter/EMT field (See Figure 3). In general, understanding what motivates different job functions will help recruiters to understand motivators specific to candidates by job category.

Appeal of Working in Public Sector by Job Title

Figure 3

| | Law Enforcement | Correctional Services | Equipment Operator | Firefighter or EMT | Nurse | Maintenance | Transportation | Social Work | Mental Health |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------|-------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Job Security | 73% | 69% | 68% | 63% | 48% | 58% | 61% | 60% | 63% |
| Benefits Package | 54% | 53% | 63% | 47% | 51% | 67% | 61% | 54% | 58% |
| Meaningful Work | 57% | 60% | 41% | 57% | 54% | 28% | 43% | 52% | 55% |
| Serving One's Community | 63% | 51% | 49% | 60% | 50% | 38% | 41% | 42% | 54% |

Top motivators, select job titles. Respondents select all that apply. Sample size varies by job category.

n=2871

Private Sector

For the private sector, salary is the most attractive aspect of work. Salary holds even greater appeal for those looking for jobs in law enforcement, maintenance, equipment operation, firefighting, and IT (See Figure 4). At the other end of the scale, job seekers in the nursing, mental health, transportation, and social work fields think salary is important but not as important as other aspects, such as doing meaningful work.

Appeal of Working in Private Sector by Job Title

Figure 4

| | Law Enforcement | Maintenance Worker | Equipment Operator | Firefighter or EMT | IT | Nurse | Mental Health | Transportation | Social Work |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----|-------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Competitive Salary | 69% | 65% | 63% | 65% | 61% | 39% | 37% | 38% | 26% |
| Career Advancement | 31% | 48% | 44% | 38% | 48% | 47% | 34% | 26% | 38% |
| Meaningful Work | 13% | 26% | 6% | 15% | 30% | 44% | 60% | 41% | 68% |
| Innovative Sector | 38% | 26% | 13% | 12% | 43% | 24% | 34% | 32% | 24% |

Top motivators, select job titles. Respondents select all that apply. Sample size varies by job category.

n=1246

WORK MOTIVATORS BY AGE

Public Sector

While job security and benefits continue to be strong for all age groups, when attracting those age 18-34 (primarily Millennials), promoting career advancement and professional training will help attract this segment (See Figure 5).

Appeal of Working in Public Sector by Age

Figure 5

| | TOTAL | Age 18-34 n=861 | Age 35+ n=2010 |
|------------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Job Security | 61% | 64% | 60% |
| Benefits Package | 58% | 55% | 59% |
| Meaningful Work | 51% | 51% | 50% |
| Serve One's Community | 47% | 49% | 47% |
| Work Life Balance | 37% | 38% | 36% |
| Competitive Salaries | 33% | 36% | 32% |
| Career Advancement | 31% | 39% | 27% |
| Professional Training | 23% | 31% | 20% |
| Innovative Sector | 11% | 11% | 10% |
| Political Career Advancement | 3% | 5% | 3% |
| Other | 2% | 1% | 3% |

Respondents select all that apply.
n=2871

Private Sector

The private sector sees similar trends for those age 18-34 (primarily Millennials); career advancement and training have the largest differences when comparing the 18-34 and 35+ age groups (See Figure 6).

Appeal of Working in Private Sector by Age

Figure 6

| | TOTAL | Age 18-34 n=378 | Age 35+ n=868 |
|-----------------------|-------|--------------------|------------------|
| Competitive Salary | 50% | 51% | 50% |
| Career Advancement | 41% | 46% | 39% |
| Meaningful Work | 36% | 33% | 37% |
| Innovative Sector | 33% | 33% | 32% |
| Benefits Package | 31% | 30% | 32% |
| Work Life Balance | 31% | 31% | 31% |
| Professional Training | 28% | 33% | 26% |
| Serve One's Community | 21% | 22% | 21% |
| Job Security | 13% | 17% | 12% |
| Other | 5% | 2% | 7% |

Respondents select all that apply.
n=1246



WORK MOTIVATORS BY REGION

Public Sector

Government job applicants in the West, Northeast, and South find job security and benefits in the public sector most appealing. The West and Central region put greater value on doing meaningful work and the Northeast and South are less motivated by salary. In the Central region, the benefits package and opportunity to do meaningful work provide greater appeal (See Figure 7). By being more aware of regional trends, recruiters can more accurately create job postings that appeal to applicants by geography.

Appeal of Working in Public Sector by Region
Figure 7

| | West | Central | Northeast | South |
|-----------------------|------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Job Security | 62% | 52% | 65% | 61% |
| Benefits Package | 58% | 58% | 55% | 56% |
| Meaningful Work | 52% | 57% | 45% | 47% |
| Serve One's Community | 48% | 49% | 46% | 45% |
| Work Life Balance | 35% | 35% | 39% | 42% |
| Competitive Salary | 36% | 38% | 26% | 28% |

Top motivators. Respondents select all that apply. Sample size varies by region.
n=2871

Private Sector

Competitive salaries and opportunities for career advancement hold the greatest appeal among those applying for private sector jobs across all regions. Benefits packages have above average appeal for those in the South and Northeast, while more in the Central region are motivated by the opportunity to attain work life balance (See Figure 8).

Appeal of Working in Private Sector by Region
Figure 8

| | West | Central | Northeast | South |
|--------------------|------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Competitive Salary | 48% | 48% | 58% | 56% |
| Career Advancement | 40% | 44% | 46% | 42% |
| Meaningful Work | 38% | 41% | 35% | 31% |
| Innovative Sector | 36% | 29% | 33% | 29% |
| Benefits Package | 29% | 26% | 37% | 38% |
| Work Life Balance | 29% | 39% | 33% | 29% |

Top motivators. Respondents select all that apply. Sample size varies by region.
n=1246

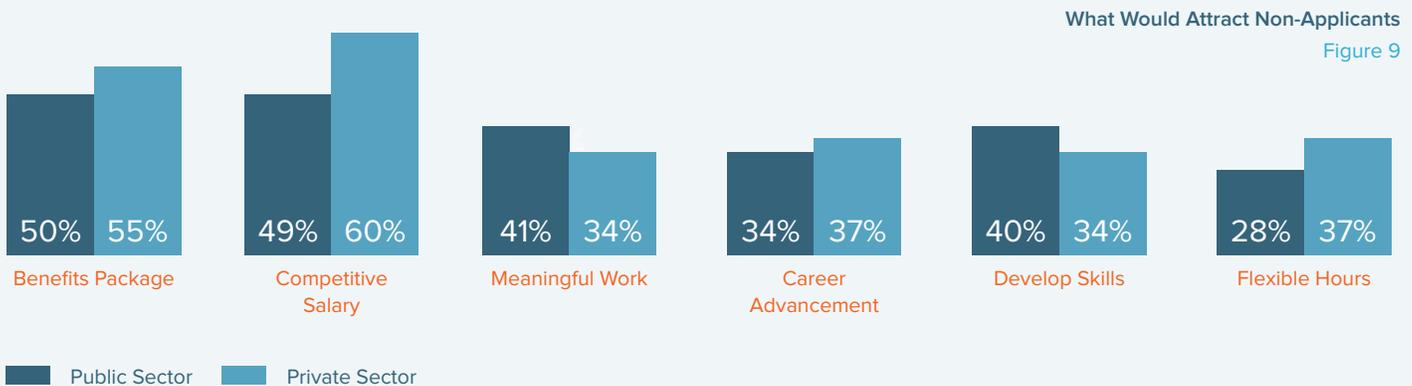
ATTRACTING NON APPLICANTS

Attractive benefits and competitive salaries would be the strongest motivators to work in the public sector (See Figure 9).

“Governments don’t do a great job of talking about all of the attractive features that we have particularly vis-à-vis the private sector,” said Robert Lavigna, director of the Institute for Public Sector Employee Engagement at CPS HR Consulting.³

In order to attract candidates, government organizations need to provide more awareness of what they offer. For example, Kitsap County, Washington is currently marketing its tuition assistance and tuition advancement programs. “We’ve recognized we have to go find people who aren’t looking for us and convince them to make a leap into the public sector,” said Nancy Buonanno Grennan, the human resources director for Kitsap County.³

Like the public sector, attractive benefits and competitive salaries would be the strongest motivators to work in the private sector (See Figure 9). Therefore, it is important to clearly identify and market the additional benefits of working in the public sector, such as job security and the chance to do meaningful work.



Comparison of top attractions. Respondents select all that apply.
Public sector n=88. Private sector n=1713.

ATTRACTING NON APPLICANTS BY AGE

Public Sector

Despite the small sample size of those not applying for jobs in the public sector, significant differences were found among age groups. While benefits and salary would attract non applicants to the public sector across age groups, those age 18-34 (primarily Millennials) are more likely to be attracted by opportunities to learn skills of interest, serve their communities, and work in attractive cities. The ability to work remotely and flexible work hours hold greater appeal for older job applicants.

What Would Attract Non-Applicants to Public Sector by Age

Figure 10

| | TOTAL | Age 18-34 n=21 | Age 35+ n=67 |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Benefits Package | 50% | 57% | 48% |
| Competitive Salary | 49% | 48% | 49% |
| Meaningful Work | 41% | 38% | 42% |
| Learn Skills I'm interested in | 40% | 48% | 37% |
| Career Advancement | 34% | 38% | 33% |
| Work Remotely | 32% | 14% | 37% |
| Serve One's Community | 32% | 38% | 30% |
| Flexible Hours | 28% | 14% | 33% |
| Available Jobs in Profession | 25% | 19% | 27% |
| Innovative Environment | 20% | 19% | 21% |
| Fast / Simple Hiring Process | 19% | 19% | 19% |
| Attractive City | 14% | 19% | 12% |
| Political Ideology Represented | 5% | 5% | 4% |
| Advance Political Career | 5% | 10% | 3% |
| Other | 3% | - | 4% |

|| Respondents select all that apply. || n=88

Private Sector

Like the public sector, across age groups competitive salary and benefits would attract non applicants to the private sector; however competitive salaries hold greater attraction for older respondents. The ability to work remotely holds greater attraction for older respondents, while younger ones place greater emphasis on potential advancement and working in attractive cities (See Figure 11).

What Would Attract Non-Applicants to Private Sector by Age

Figure 11

| | TOTAL | Age 18-34 n=378 | Age 35+ n=868 |
|--------------------------------|-------|--------------------|------------------|
| Competitive Salary | 60% | 56% | 61% |
| Benefits Package | 54% | 54% | 55% |
| Career Advancement | 37% | 41% | 36% |
| Flexible Hours | 36% | 38% | 36% |
| Learn Skills I'm Interested in | 34% | 36% | 34% |
| Work Remotely | 34% | 28% | 37% |
| Meaningful Work | 34% | 34% | 34% |
| Available Jobs in Profession | 31% | 30% | 31% |
| Serve One's Community | 25% | 26% | 25% |
| Fast / Simple Hiring Process | 22% | 23% | 22% |
| Innovative Environment | 19% | 19% | 19% |
| Attractive City | 14% | 17% | 12% |
| Political Ideology Represented | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| Other | 4% | 4% | 4% |

|| Respondents select all that apply. || n=1246

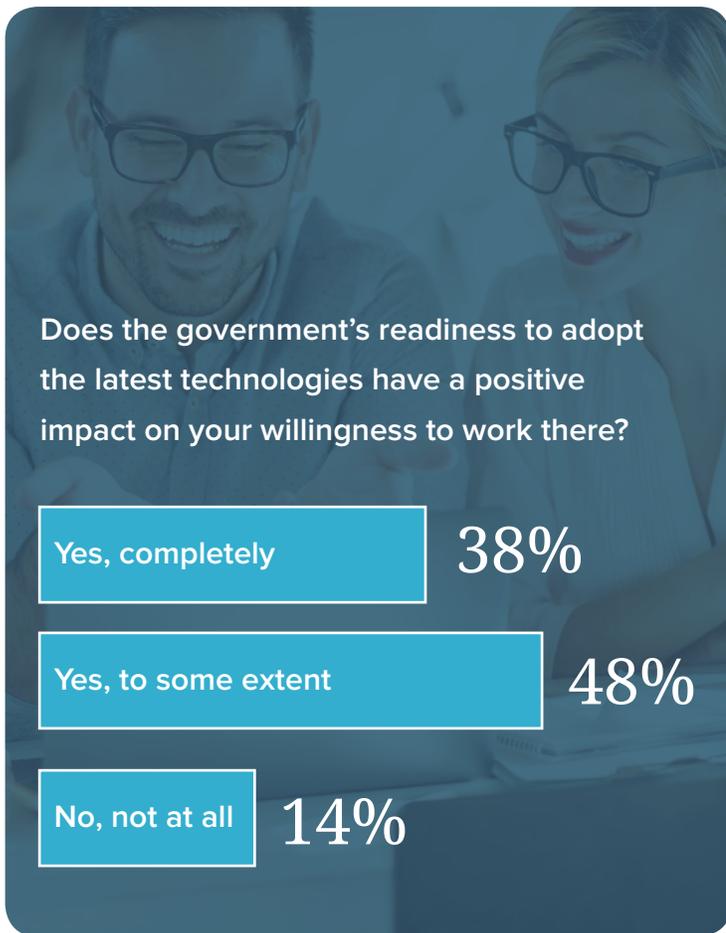


READINESS TO ADOPT LATEST TECHNOLOGIES IMPACTS WILLINGNESS TO WORK

Most job applicants (86%) believe that government's readiness to adopt the latest technology is likely to have an impact on their willingness to work for the public sector (See Figure 12).

Younger job seekers who applied for a government job are more likely to indicate that the government's readiness to adopt the latest technology completely impacts their willingness to work in the public sector (See Figure 13).

Government's Readiness to Adopt Latest Technology Impact on Willingness to Work in Public Sector
Figure 12



n=2871

Government's Readiness to Adopt Latest Technology Impact on Willingness to Work in Public Sector by Age
Figure 13

| | Age 18-34 n=861 | Age 35+ n=2010 |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Yes, completely | 43% | 35% |
| Yes, to some extent | 46% | 49% |
| No, not at all | 12% | 15% |

n=2871



JOB SEARCH DURATION

Among respondents, nearly half of job applicants have been looking for a job for less than 6 months (47%) (See Figure 14). Many applicants are finding jobs quickly, so it is important for public sector organizations to **efficiently market available jobs and streamline the hiring process in order to capture qualified candidates.**

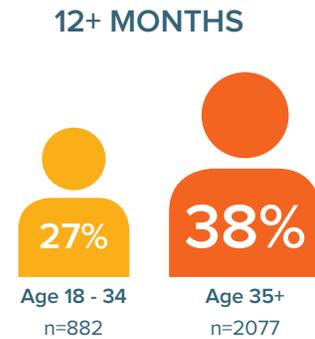
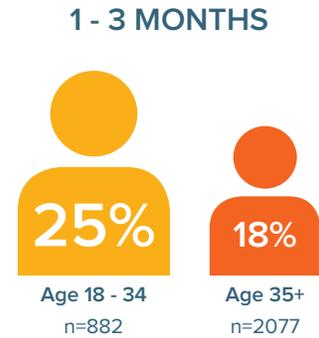
Younger job seekers 18 to 34 tend to spend less time looking for a job, while significantly more respondents 35 or older have been looking for 12 months or more (See Figure 15).

Length of Time Looking for a Job
Figure 14



n=2959

Length of Time Looking for a Job by Age
Figure 15



n=2959



JOB APPLICATION EXPERIENCE

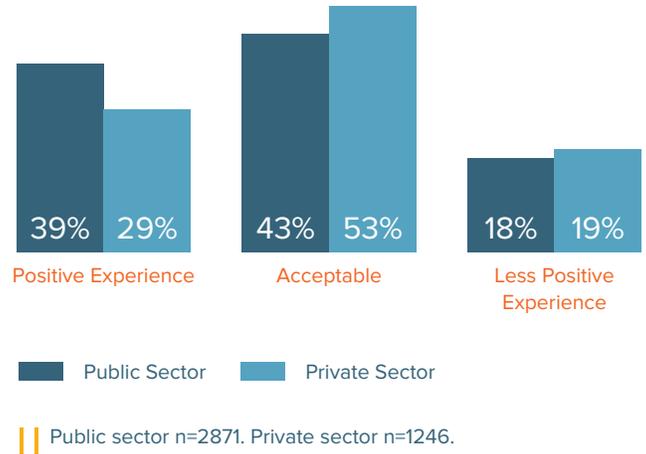
Public Sector

Overall, the experience applying for jobs in the public sector is positive with 39% of job applicants indicating the experience has been above average or excellent, and 43% saying it was acceptable (See Figure 16).

On average, the experience with the public sector job application process received higher ratings than that of the private sector (29% Above Average or Excellent).

Job seekers 18 to 34 are more likely to have had a positive experience applying for jobs in the public sector (42%) than older job seekers (37%) (See Figure 17).

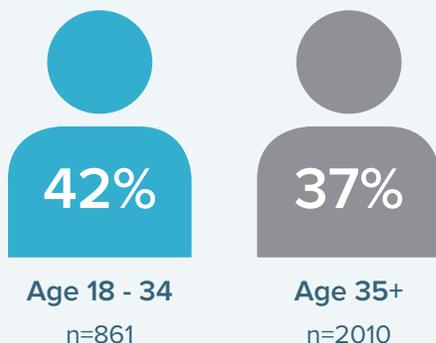
Experience With Public Sector vs Public Sector Application Process
Figure 16



Private Sector

Many job applicants had a positive experience submitting applications for jobs in the private sector, but fewer have had an above average or excellent experience (29%) compared to the public sector (39%). For slightly over half of job applicants (53%) the experience has been acceptable. The experience is similar across age groups.

Positive Experience with Public Sector Application Process by Age
Figure 17



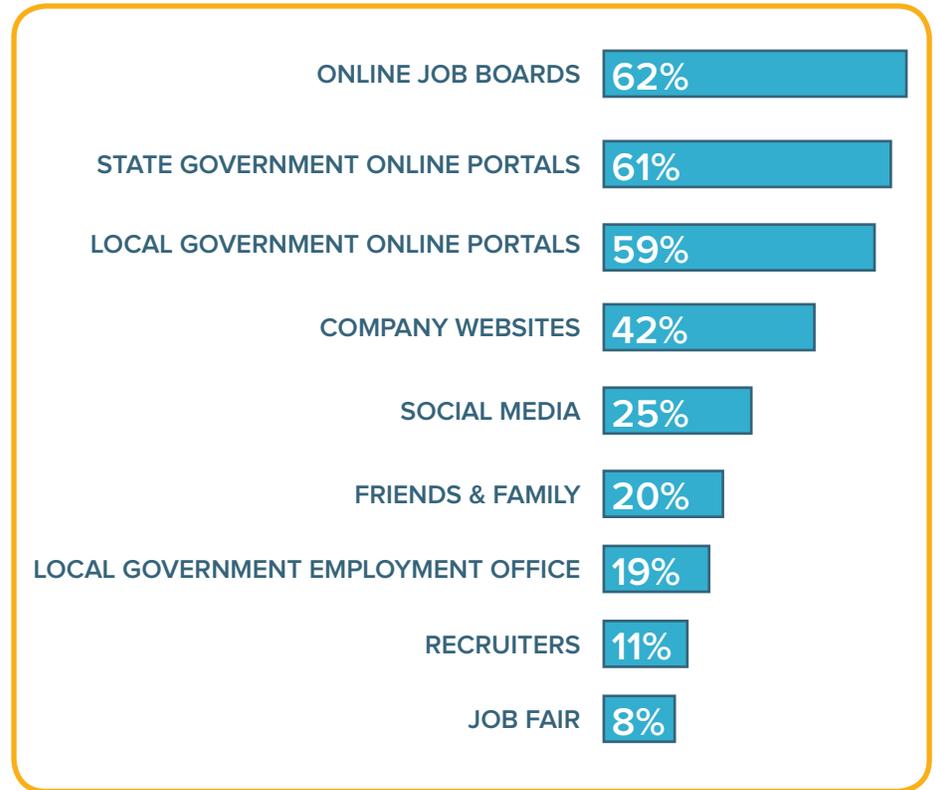
n=2871

JOB SEARCH CHANNELS

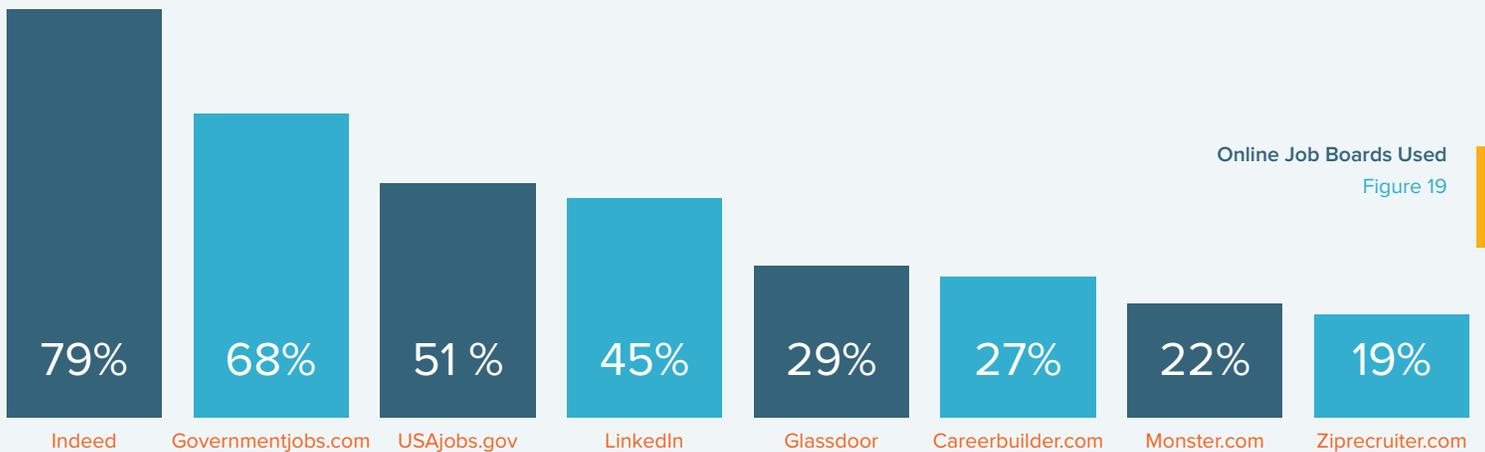
Overall, state government agencies' online job portals (61%) are as popular as general online job boards (62%) or local government online portals (59%) (See Figure 18).

Indeed.com (79%) and GovernmentJobs.com (68%) are the most commonly used online job boards among respondents of the study (See Figure 19).

Most Frequented Places to Look for New Job Opportunities
Figure 18



Top Places. Respondents select all that apply.
n=2959



Top job boards. Respondents select all that apply.
n=1825

JOB SEARCH & APPLICATION DEVICES

Computers/Laptops Preferred Devices for Applying

Computers/laptops are still the preferred devices for applying for jobs, while mobile apps are the least preferred (See Figure 20).

Significantly more respondents 18 to 34 (26% vs. 20% among 35+) visit websites on a phone or tablet when searching for jobs (See Figure 21).

Preferred Device for Applying for Jobs
Figure 20



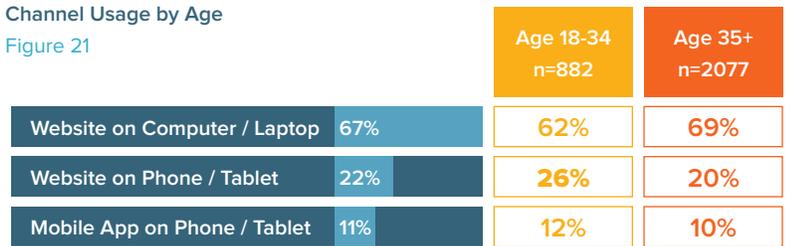
n=2959

Half of Job Seekers Very Confident in Their Tech Skills

Nearly half of job seekers are very confident (48%) in their ability to work with intelligent technologies (See Figure 22).

Consistent with the belief that knowing how to work with intelligent technology can increase job opportunities, over 6 in 10 job seekers think it is important or very important to develop skills in this field (See Figure 23).

Channel Usage by Age
Figure 21



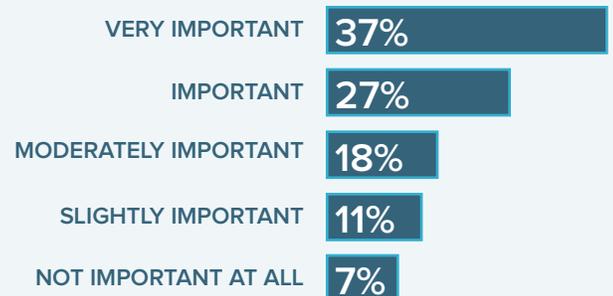
n=2959

Confidence in Ability to Work with Intelligent Technologies
Figure 22



n=2959

Importance of Developing Skills to Work with Intelligent Technology
Figure 23



n=2959

LEARNING MOTIVATORS

Career Advancement Top Motivator for Learning

Having opportunities to advance their careers (65%), receiving funds to cover training (63%), and being given time for training during the work day (51%) are the top motivators to look for learning opportunities (See Figure 24).

Helping them advance their career is more likely to motivate younger workers to look for opportunities to develop new skills. Older workers place greater motivation on being able to participate in customized or personalized training (See Figure 25).

Marketing the potential for new skills training in a job description could give applicants the ability to see growth within their public sector career.

Top 3 Motivators to Look for Learning Opportunities

Figure 24



Respondents select up to 3 choices.
n=2959

Top 3 Motivators to Look for Learning Opportunities
by Age

Figure 25

| | TOTAL | Age 18-34 n=882 | Age 35+ n=2077 |
|----------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Career Advancement | 65% | 70% | 63% |
| Funding for Training | 63% | 65% | 62% |
| Time to Learn | 51% | 53% | 50% |
| Increased Job Security | 35% | 37% | 34% |
| External Training Programs | 29% | 30% | 29% |
| Personalized Training | 24% | 19% | 26% |
| Job Rotation Programs | 11% | 10% | 12% |
| Other | 1% | 0% | 2% |

Respondents select up to 3 choices.
n=2959

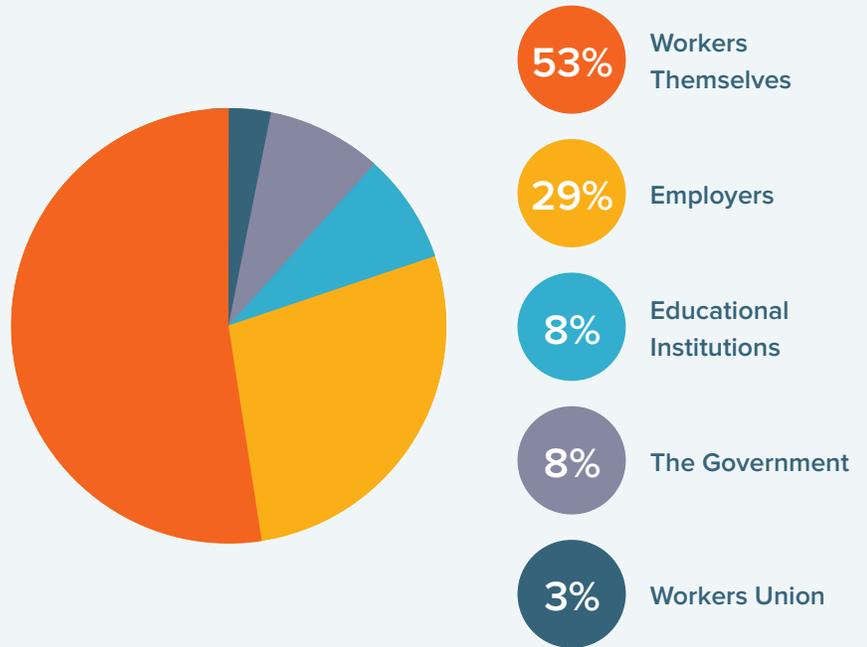
Personal Responsibility for Skill Relevancy

When it comes to ensuring that their skills stay relevant, most job seekers place the responsibility first on themselves (53%), and second on employers (29%) (See Figure 26).

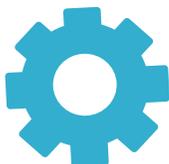
The majority of respondents 35 or older (56%) say they are responsible for keeping their skills relevant. While most respondents 18 to 34 agree (46%), this group is more likely to say employers share some of this responsibility as well (32%) (See Figure 27).

Most Responsible for Ensuring Workers' Skills Stay Relevant

Figure 26



Respondents rank in order.
n=2959



Responsibility for Skill Relevancy by Age

Figure 27

| | TOTAL | Age 18-34 n=882 | Age 35+ n=2077 |
|--------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Workers Themselves | 53% | 46% | 56% |
| Employers | 29% | 32% | 27% |
| Educational Institutions | 8% | 8% | 7% |
| The Government | 7% | 9% | 7% |
| Workers Union | 3% | 5% | 3% |

Respondents rank in order.
n=2959

JOB CHANGE MOTIVATORS

Higher salary (48%) is the top reason for pursuing a new job, followed by opportunities to improve knowledge and skills (30%), and finding jobs in line with education/expertise (29%) (See Figure 28).

Top 3 Reasons for Pursuing a New Job

Figure 28



Top Reasons. Respondents select up to 3 choices.
n=2959

WORKPLACE TRENDS

Skill Gaps & Contract Work

A growing skills gap (37%), the use of freelancers and contractors (32%), and the redesign of traditional jobs (31%) are the top three trends many workers have observed at their workplace. Significantly more older workers have noted an increase in the use of freelancers and contractors at their workplace (See Figure 29).

Top 3 Workplace Trends

Figure 29

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Growing Skills Gap | 37% |
| Hiring Freelancers & Contractors | 32% |
| Redesign of Traditional Jobs | 31% |
| Changing Government Regulation | 29% |
| Flexible Work Arrangements | 29% |
| Process Automation | 28% |
| Shift to Project Based Work | 23% |
| Intelligent Tech Adoption | 18% |
| Human / Machine Collaboration | 14% |
| None of the Above | 20% |

Respondents select 3 choices.
n=2959

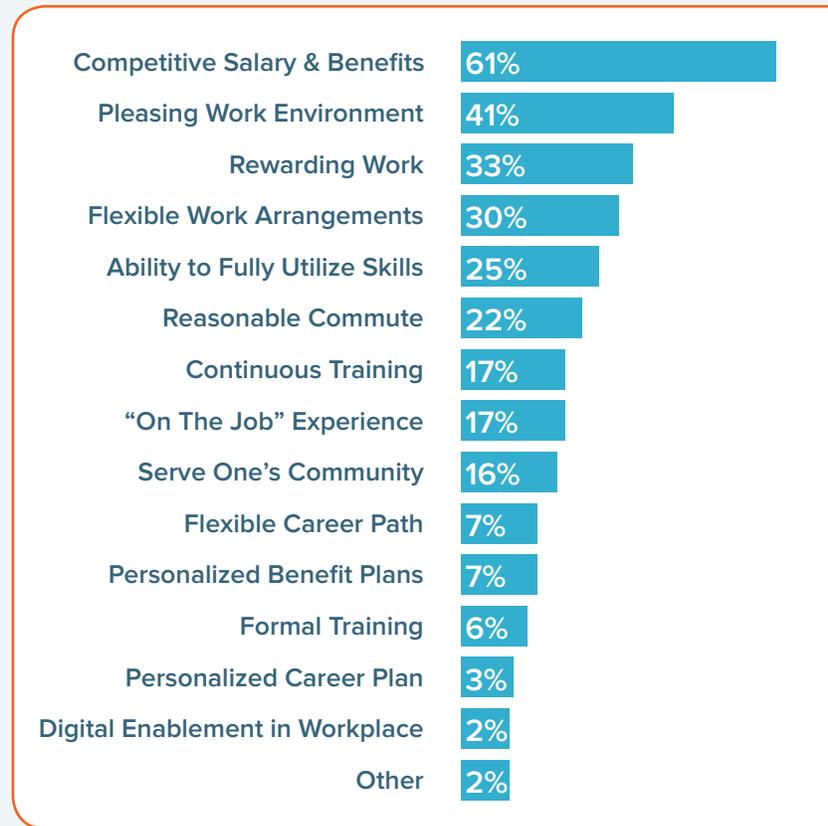
Competitive salary/benefit plans (61%), a pleasing work environment (41%), and challenging/rewarding work (33%) are the top 3 reasons for staying at a job across job categories (See Figure 30).

While most job seekers across categories have changed jobs 1 to 3 times in the past 5 years (64%), frequency of job changes declines with age (See Figure 31).

Respondents 18 to 34 are significantly more likely to have changed jobs two to five times in the past 5 years, while respondents 35 or older have changed once or not at all.

Top 3 Motivators to Stay at a Job

Figure 30

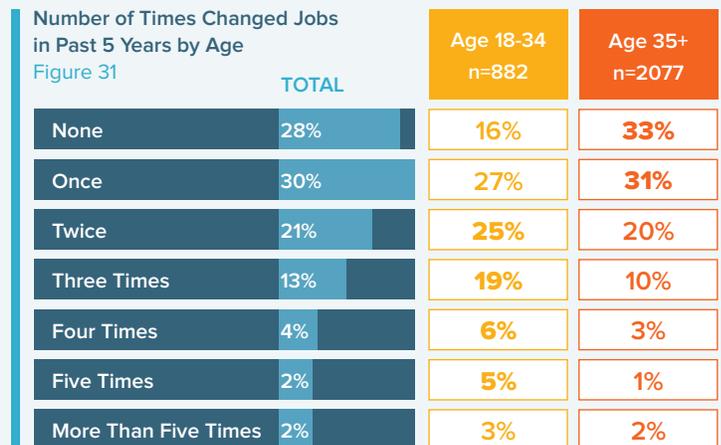


Respondents select up to 3 choices.
n=2959



Number of Times Changed Jobs in Past 5 Years by Age

Figure 31



n=2959

ONLINE EMPLOYMENT PLATFORM AWARENESS

Awareness of online employment platforms, which are part of the current “gig” economy, are still limited with TaskRabbit having the highest awareness (18%) followed by Freelancer (14%) (See Figure 32).

Awareness of these platforms is higher among younger respondents (18 to 34) compared to their older counterparts (See Figure 33).

Online Employment Platform Awareness
Figure 32



Online Employment Platform Awareness by Age

Figure 33

| | Age 18-34 n=882 | Age 35+ n=2077 |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| TaskRabbit | 22% | 16% |
| Freelancer | 15% | 13% |
| Upwork | 9% | 7% |
| Amazon Mechanical Turk | 9% | 7% |

n=2959

APPROACH

NEOGOV's 2018 Job Seeker Report included 2,959 respondents from the GovernmentJobs.com job applicant database. The 20-minute online survey, conducted by Relevant Insights LLC, was completed by respondents September 6, 2018 to October 3, 2018.

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NEOGOV provides a high quality and easy-to-use talent management system to service the public sector market.

Serving over 6,000 organizations, the company's suite of solutions supports the entire employee lifecycle, automating recruitment, onboarding, training, and performance management. Customers say NEOGOV helps them save time and money, reduce paper processes, improve regulatory requirement compliance, increase employee productivity and engagement, and provide better services to citizens.

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