



# What's on candidates' minds?

**Diversity recruiting**

**PathMotion collaborates with Talent Board and uses proprietary research to help you understand what candidates from diverse backgrounds want to hear from organisations, and how Talent Attraction and Employer Branding leaders should adapt their communication across touchpoints for attracting diverse talent.**

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# Introduction

The schedule for the 2019 HRPA Annual Conference lists no less than three panels dedicated to the topic of diversity. Over the last few years, Talent Attraction (TA) and Employer Branding (EB) conferences worldwide have continuously demonstrated that diversity and inclusion were high on the leaders' agenda.

However, if you are one of those attendees hoping to improve diversity recruiting, here is one statistic that immediately sets the tone:

**While 98% of companies say they have diversity programs in place, only 25% of employees in diverse groups say they have benefited from them.**

[Boston Consulting Group](#)<sup>1</sup>

This highlights a significant disconnect between the perception of employers, and that of employees, whether currently at the company or in the talent pool they are trying to attract.

At PathMotion, we want to shift the perspective from that of HR leaders to candidates in diversity groups, in order to truly pinpoint the source of this complex problem.

Using data from new proprietary research collected by PathMotion and Talent Board, who collaborated on this study, we investigated where and why companies lose diverse candidates in the recruitment funnel, and what specific actions companies ought to take.



**200**

HR leaders surveyed

**1,000**

candidates surveyed

**25,000**

candidate questions to employers analysed

*Includes Talent Board proprietary research*



# Why you cannot afford to miss out on the diversity talent pool

Every TA leader and HR recruiter knows we are currently in a candidate-driven market. By 2020, employers in Europe and North America will require 16-18 million more college-educated workers than will be available<sup>2</sup>. No wonder 76% of hiring managers claim attracting top talent is their greatest challenge<sup>3</sup>.

So how do you increase the odds with a shrinking talent pool? By casting a wider net. More often than not, this means **boosting diversity recruiting efforts**. And if you were to question if that talent pool is really there, consider the following statistic:

**1/4 babies born from 2010 has one or both parents born outside the United Kingdom.**

[Office for National Statistics](#)<sup>4</sup>

Besides, employers do not lack awareness. According to the latest Talent Board candidate experience benchmark research, diversity and inclusion is a top 5 recruiting focus for employers of all sizes, and in all industries. As many HR leaders already know, the benefits are numerous, and well documented.

The [McKinsey Diversity Matters study](#)<sup>5</sup>, for instance, provides tremendous **insights on diversity and company performance**.

**Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15% more likely to have financial returns above the national industry median.**

We also know a culturally diverse company increases customer satisfaction through better representation. As one of our clients, Citi puts it: "Our clients are so diverse, they expect to see a diverse workforce".



**49%**

of hiring managers focus on diversity to improve customer representation  
[LinkedIn](#)<sup>6</sup>, 2018

**80%**

of purchasing decisions are made by women in the USA  
[McKinsey](#)<sup>5</sup>

**80%**

higher household income on average for gay men and women  
[McKinsey](#)<sup>5</sup>

Thirdly, employee satisfaction also increases with a more diverse workforce. This fact isn't lost on progressive companies, whose diversity policies have the grander ambition of creating a **striving company culture**.

**15% representation starts boosting work satisfaction levels for minority workers.**

[McKinsey](#)<sup>5</sup>

And yet, even with all these obvious benefits, the fact remains: diversity recruiting is still incomplete.

**85% of TA/EB leaders believe their diversity recruitment programs need improvement.**

[PathMotion](#)

Which begs the question:

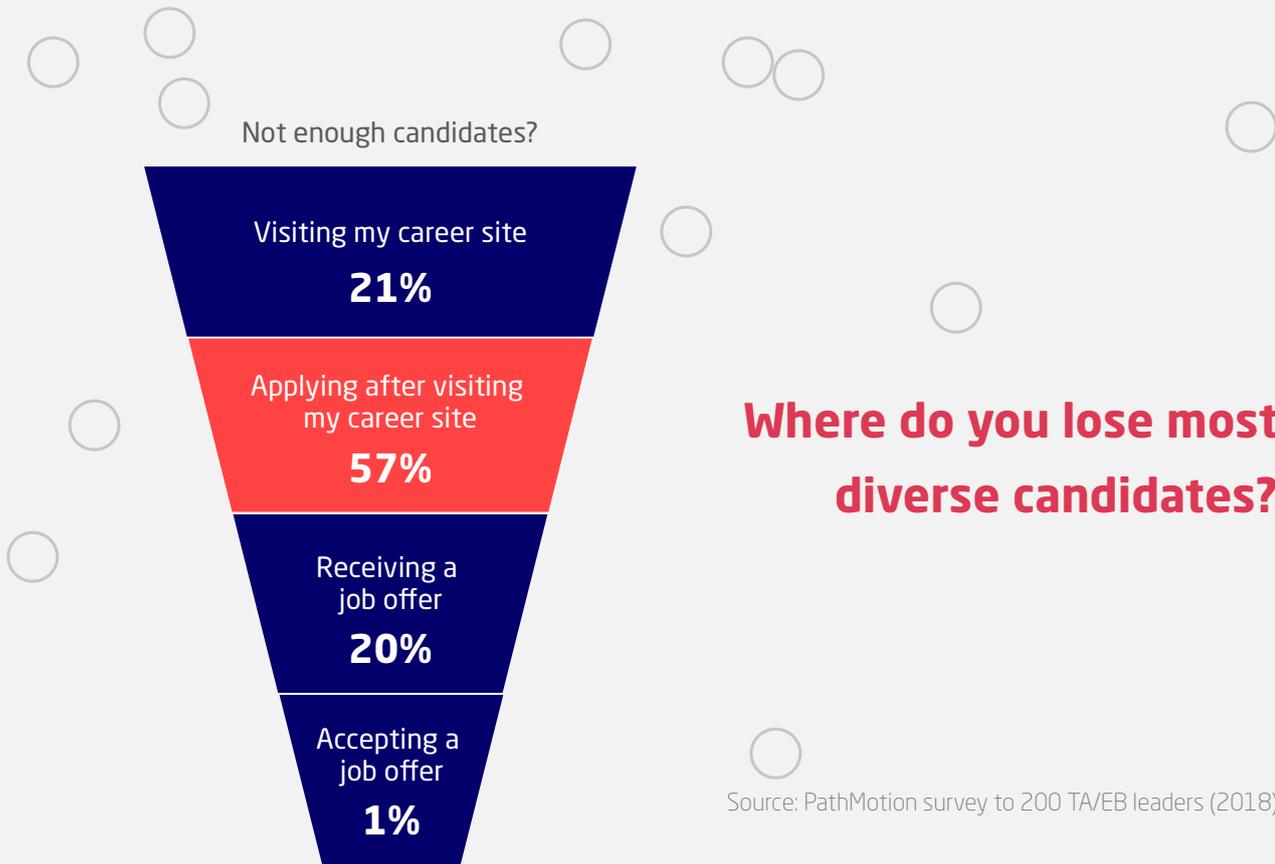
## **Where are you getting diversity recruiting wrong?**

According to TA/EB leaders, the consensus is that something is amiss early in the recruitment funnel. Our goal was to dig deeper. Where exactly did things go wrong? This is what we found:

Candidates fail to apply after researching your careers site

While there is clearly no shortage of diverse talent, it is indeed the career websites that fail to convert them into applicants.





**57% of TA/EB leaders surveyed believe they lose most of their diverse candidates after visiting their career site, but before applying.**

According to the 2018 Talent Board benchmark research, 69% of North American employers are sharing diversity and culture marketing content to attract candidates. 74% percent of EMEA employers and 86% of APAC employers are doing the same.

And yet, North American candidates found diversity and culture information valuable a mere 20% of the time. There is therefore clearly an issue in communication from the recruitment side.

But what exactly is said that puts diverse candidates off? Or more accurately: what information is missing to convince diverse candidates they should apply for the position?

Your career sites and recruitment collateral don't answer group-specific questions

One advantage of the PathMotion platform is its ability to aggregate granular data on questions that candidates ask employees at various stages of the recruitment process. We **analysed 25,000 of these candidate questions focusing on the ones relevant to diversity recruiting.**

We found that candidates questions fall into three categories based on their diversity group: eligibility, fit and workplace.

# 1. Am I eligible?

## No / no relevant degree

Hi Rachel, how difficult is it to getting into the field without previous accounting or finance experience?

## Age

Hi Karine! What is the maximum age to apply for Pernod Ricard's graduate programs? I graduated in 2014.

My husband has previously been to prison. Could that stop me from becoming a police officer?

## Convictions

### Groups affected: age, convicts, education

The first group of candidates needs reassurance that their application is not in vain. They want to know if they can even come to work in the first place. **Evidently, the employer's communication material failed to convey a sense of inclusion**, or to clarify the employer's diverse recruitment policy.

# 2. Where do I fit?

## Military

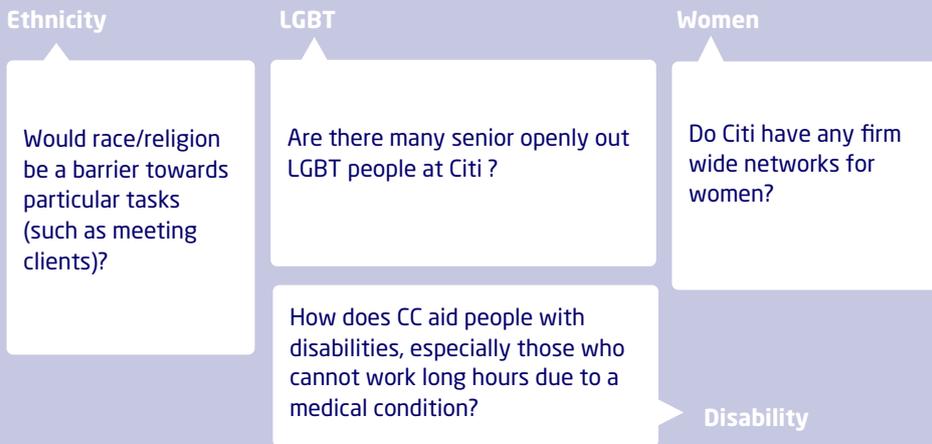
Are Santander looking to place ex-military personnel within roles outside HR (i.e in risk)?

What business area could I go into following a career in military intelligence?

### Groups affected: military, veterans

The second group includes those who are confident in their skills, but aren't sure the available position is best suited for that particular skillset. Once again, diverse employees appear to be missing crucial information as to where they should apply according to the skills they can offer.

### 3. Work environment?

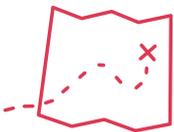


**Group affected: gender, racial and ethnic, religious**

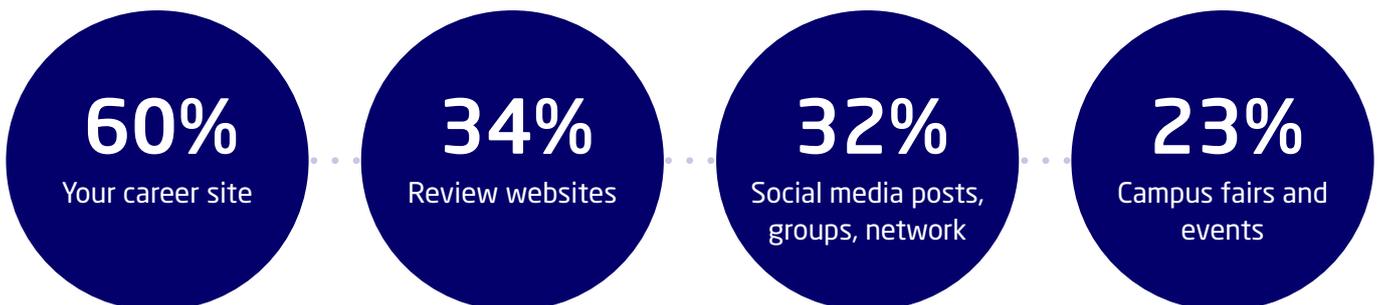
Finally, the largest groups of diverse candidates' question whether the company will support them in the long term. The company culture isn't properly depicted, and the organisation **fails to answer the specific, concrete questions real-life candidates have.**

### You overlook other early candidate touchpoints

The third insight we gleaned was that, while **candidates first and foremost rely on the career section of your website**, they also form ideas of your diversity recruitment efforts at other touchpoints.



### Where candidates seek out answers about whether your company is serious about diversity recruitment



Campus fairs and events channels where companies have complete control, yet seldom consider how they can fully demonstrate their commitment to diversity, for instance by sending diverse employees to represent them.

According to testimonies we collected from diverse candidates, many were surprised by how under-represented they felt at these events.

As for the positive example: employers who won a Candidate Experience from Talent Board for the highest positive candidate ratings said they make diversity culture marketing content available 84% of the time. This is 19% competitive difference over the average employers, who only offer this kind of material 69% of the time on average.

## What can you do to fix it?

The good news: as a Talent Attraction and Employer Branding leader, you do not need to wait until the picture is perfect to start communicating what makes your company truly 'diversity-friendly'.

Refine your career site (but don't ignore other early touchpoints)

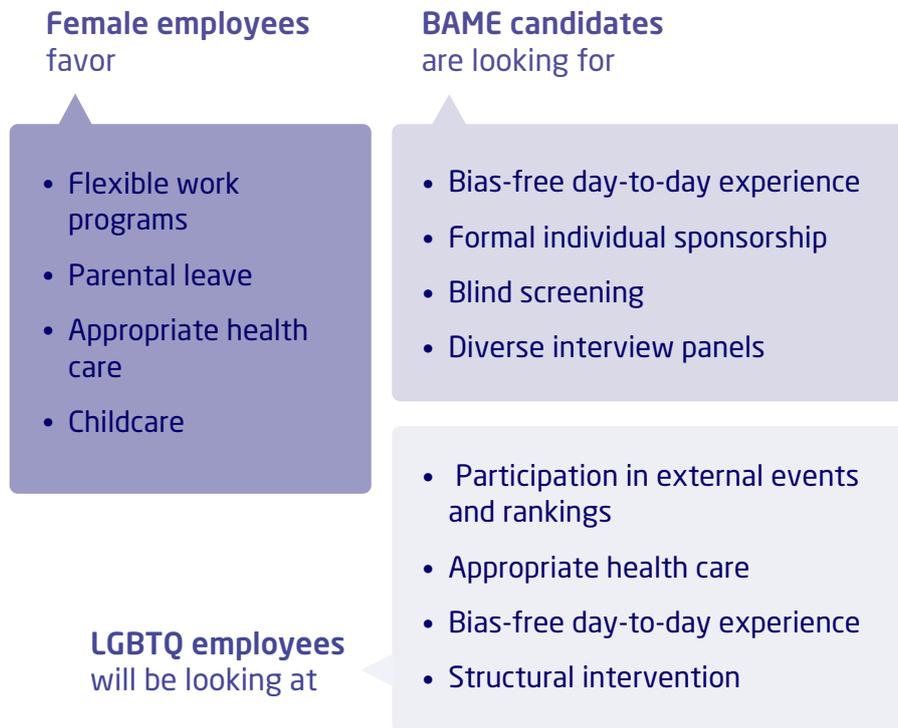
Concentrate your resources and efforts on early touchpoints where diversity policies can be laid out. Since our recent survey shows that 60% of candidates rely on the careers page, this will be your first point of focus. It is all also convenient: **your careers page is a place where you have complete control over the content - all in real time.**

However, it does not mean other touchpoints should be ignored. Your whole digital recruiting strategy, from review websites such as Glassdoor, social media (LinkedIn, Twitter...) and current company news are also important go-to points for candidate. They will use them to research your organisation, policies and culture, which need to be reflected across them all.

Create shared content that truly covers what's on candidates' minds



One survey by the Boston Consulting Group<sup>1</sup> of 16,500 candidates from diverse backgrounds found **what their priorities were in terms of organisation support**. Interestingly, these recommended policies align with the type of questions they asked on the PathMotion platforms.



## Leverage your employee stories

Probing employees about their ideal, diverse company, PathMotion came to the topic of communications content, or how companies should communicate their commitment to improving diversity.

**Which of these things would best help indicate that a company genuinely cares about diversity and inclusion? (Choose three)**

**54%**

Real life stories from employees and their experiences

**35%**

Perceived fairness of recruitment process (e.g. blind applications)

**33%**

Statistics about representation (e.g. demographic breakdown)

Source: PathMotion survey to 1,000 candidates globally (Q4 2018/Q1 2019)

The striking thing about these statistics is that, while diversity facts are important for 33% of the queried candidates, they are not enough. Companies need a three-pronged approach, **combining the power of hard data, transparency, and relatable, personal storytelling to frame the context of fair policies - as 54% of candidates believe the latter is a primordial tool to assess your efforts.**

This is further corroborated by the pattern of enquiries we found on the PathMotion platform, where candidates seek out real employee experiences to settle any doubts and answer key questions they may have before/as part of the application process.

## Candidates want REAL life stories to be persuaded

I would just like to know from a female police officer, how the work-life balance is achieved?

Are there many senior openly out LGBT people at Citi ?

What networks are there to support women in Citi? Are you a part of any groups?

How did you find the transition into working in banking as you are a female and I am assuming a Muslim?

It is not too surprising; the evidence as to why candidates relate to personal stories is overwhelming. As we highlighted in our previous research from last year (Authentic Employer Branding with Storytelling) real **employee stories are one of the most powerful ways of communicating your organisation's values, goals, and mission.**

This is, in part, **because candidates believe employees are the most trusted people to speak about a company** (2019 Edelman Trust Barometer<sup>7</sup>). And real stories from real people go much further in demonstrating a company's commitment than templated testimonials and stock photography.

## Use scalable employee advocacy platforms to spread your stories

One recurring concern we hear from recruiters is about their limited resources, both in terms of time and budget. There is no need to reinvent the wheel, as it is entirely possible to **maximise the impact of current diversity programs.**

For instance, if you already send diverse employees to campus events, **creating an advocacy group** comprised of employees close to your values and culture can be a great way to optimise your reach at this specific touchpoint.

However, do ask yourself whether **the existing programs work at scale.** While it is impossible to send your advocacy group to every recruitment fair across the globe, online employee advocacy tools can significantly increase reach, engagement, and give comprehensive answers to diverse candidates' specific questions - ideally in real time, and at all times.

# Key Takeaways

Circling back to our initial statistic, it's easy to see that, if only 25% of diverse employees believe diversity recruiting programs are beneficial to them, 75% will think twice about trusting their next company's initiatives. Diverse candidates are growing more cynical, and recruiters need to jump over higher hurdles to bring talent into their pipeline.

Instead of relying on templated copy that states the company's commitment, **recruiters and talent acquisition leaders need to create human, transparent, and relatable proof that organisations have their best interests at heart:**



1

**Diverse candidates still lack crucial information:** they want testimonials, facts, and communication material that address specific questions, not just text and stock photos that tick the diversity check-boxes.



2

**Your careers page needs refining:** this first candidate touchstone is still full of "internal speak", static information, and painting a picture of diversity policies in broad strokes that fails to convince potential candidates to click the "apply now" button.



3

**Diverse employee stories work:** when they address specific answers, accurately evoke the company culture, and ease doubts in potential candidates' minds, they are a powerful, versatile tool that shows tremendous results across all communication channels and touchpoints.



4

**...So do employee advocacy programs - when you can scale them:** it's not enough to send your diversity representatives to the odd job fair. They must be available to answer questions - from candidates, and their stories must be published to all other candidates through scalable, online platforms that ensure no diverse candidate will slip through the net.

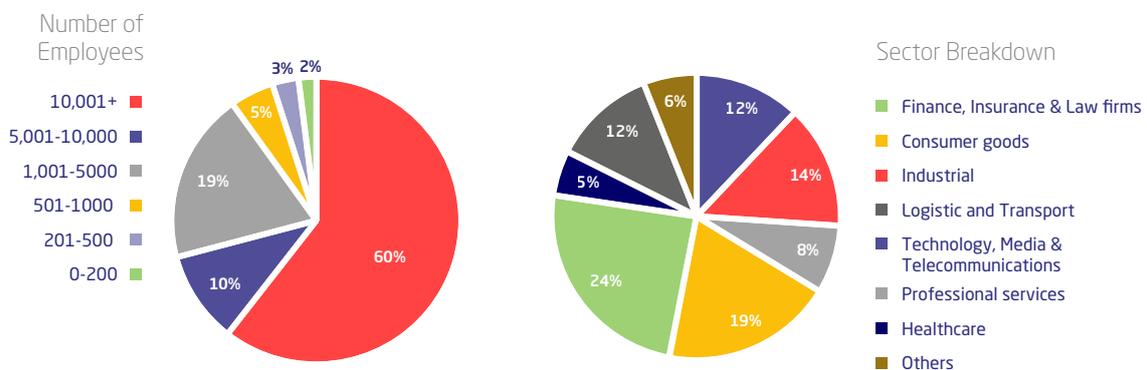
Just as the war for talent is never won, neither is the fight for creating a more diverse workplace. It requires a continuous multi-pronged action plan across the whole organisation, with input from leaders, executives, policy makers and, of course, the HR team, who can now, hopefully, benefit from the following insights highlighted in this eBook.

## About PathMotion

PathMotion is a discussion platform where employees engage and share stories with candidates. It generates trusted authentic content, which is used to enhance your employer brand and attract top talent, while reducing the workload for your talent attraction teams. Organisations worldwide, and across 15+ sectors, use the platform, including universities, whose students engage with applicants in order to attract them.

## About the PathMotion Surveys

Between October 2018 and March 2019, PathMotion surveyed 200 HR leaders through an online questionnaire and telephone interviews. 1000 candidates also answered an online questionnaire between October 2018 and February 2019.



Our previous research on Authentic Employer Branding with Storytelling queried 70 undergraduate students from the Claremont Colleges and was conducted by Immersion Neuroscience. Finally, we aggregated and analysed 25,000 questions candidates asked employees through our platform.

## About Talent Board

Talent Board is a non-profit organisation focused on the elevation and promotion of a quality candidate experience. The organisation, Candidate Experience (CandE) Awards program and its sponsors are dedicated to recognising the candidate experience offered by companies throughout the entire recruitment cycle and to forever changing the manner in which job candidates are treated. The CandE Awards also serve as a benchmarking program to raise awareness of the benefits of a positive candidate experience and highlight the processes, methodologies and technology that can enhance the recruiting experience as demonstrated by the winning organisations.



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