

DODGED SEARCH

THE BLIND SPOT REPORT

*What Job Seekers Cannot Find About Their Potential Employers — And
What It Costs Them*

A synthesis of existing workforce research | 2025 | dodged-search.com

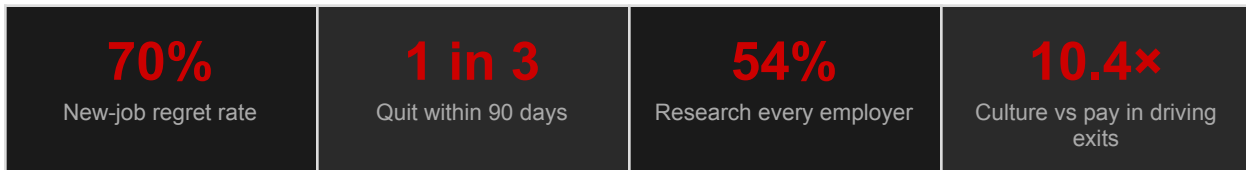
SECTION A | ABOUT THIS REPORT

About This Report

The Blind Spot Report is a synthesis of findings from publicly available workforce studies, recruitment industry research, and employee experience surveys published between 2022 and 2025. It draws on data from sources including Glassdoor, Gartner, Harvard Business Review, MIT Sloan Management Review, DDI, CareerBuilder, Jobvite, O.C. Tanner, and NetSuite, among others.

No primary research was conducted by Dodged Search in the preparation of this report. The purpose of this document is to bring together, in one place, the most compelling existing evidence for a problem that affects millions of job seekers every year: the systemic inability to find honest, reliable information about a potential employer before it is too late to act on it.

All sources are cited throughout. A full reference table appears in the Appendix.



SECTION 1 | THE PROBLEM

1. The Information Asymmetry Problem

1.1 An Unequal Exchange

Every year, employers conduct background checks, skills assessments, reference calls, and multi-round interviews before making a hire. The candidate, by contrast, is expected to form a life-changing career decision based on a polished job description, a curated company website, and a handful of conversations with people chosen by the employer.

This is a profound and well-documented information asymmetry — and the data shows it is failing job seekers at scale. The consequences manifest as lost months of career momentum, mental health impacts, financial instability from unexpected job moves, and the erosion of professional confidence that comes from accepting a role that turns out to be fundamentally misrepresented.

70%

of job seekers experience new-job regret after joining — with 1 in 5 saying they would quit within a month if the job is not what they expected

Source: Multiple workforce surveys, 2024

1.2 The Scale of the Problem

The data consistently shows that a large proportion of employees only discover critical employer red flags after accepting and starting a role — by which point the personal and professional cost of acting on that information is already high.

1 IN 3

new employees quit within their first 90 days, with 41% of those citing the role not matching what they were told in the interview

Source: Jobvite Job Seeker Nation Report; Built In

20%

of new employees leave within their first 45 days — before completing a full onboarding cycle

Source: O.C. Tanner Workforce Research

50%

of candidates who accepted a job offer in 2023 backed out before their start date — up sharply from prior years

Source: Gartner Candidate Survey, 2023

The 50% offer withdrawal figure is particularly telling. It suggests that many job seekers are successfully finding critical intelligence — but only after receiving an offer, when they have the

company name and can begin deeper research. The interview process itself is not surfacing the information they need. By the time they find it, the hiring process has already run its full course.

2. Intent vs. Reality: Why Job Seekers Still Get It Wrong

2.1 The Intention-Behaviour Gap

One of the most striking patterns in existing research is the gap between how much job seekers say employer research matters to them and how poorly their actual research behaviour serves them in practice.

93%

of job seekers say thorough employer research before accepting an offer is important — yet half still accept jobs they go on to regret

Source: Harvard Business Review

54%

of job seekers say they research every company before applying — meaning nearly half apply with no research at all

Source: Workforce survey data

72%

say they need to understand workplace culture before accepting an offer — but report being unable to reliably access this information through available channels

Source: CareerBuilder Research

The gap between stated intent and actual outcome is not primarily explained by indifference or lack of effort. Research consistently shows that job seekers try to research employers — they simply cannot find the information they need through the tools currently available to them. Glassdoor, LinkedIn, and company websites each cover part of the picture, but none comes close to providing what job seekers are actually looking for.

2.2 What Current Platforms Fail to Surface

A consistent finding across workforce research is that conventional employer research platforms are structurally limited in the categories of information they can reliably provide. The following limitations are well-documented:

- Glassdoor reviews skew toward extreme experiences (very positive or very negative), underrepresenting the median employee reality. They are also subject to company-side management, with some employers flagged for incentivising positive reviews.
- LinkedIn employer pages are curated marketing assets, not objective information sources. They present the employer brand rather than the employee experience.
- Company careers pages systematically overrepresent culture, values, and benefits while providing no access to turnover data, management quality, or financial health.

- Reddit communities offer more unfiltered intelligence but are inconsistent in coverage — concentrated in tech, finance, and large corporates, with limited information on mid-size or regional employers.

The result is that job seekers piecing together information from these platforms are assembling an incomplete and often misleading picture of their potential employer — and the categories most systematically absent are precisely those most predictive of early departure.

3. The 8 Categories of Employer Intelligence Job Seekers Cannot Find

Drawing on patterns across multiple workforce studies, eight primary categories of employer information consistently emerge as both critically important to job seekers and systematically difficult to research through conventional channels. These are the blind spots — the areas where the information gap between employer and candidate is widest, and where missed red flags are most likely to result in early departure.

01 REAL WORKPLACE CULTURE

The gap between employer-branded culture statements and the day-to-day reality reported by employees is the single most documented source of post-joining regret. Culture washing — the practice of presenting aspirational values as operational reality — is widespread. According to Glassdoor research, 77% of job seekers say culture is a key factor in their decision to apply, yet only 37% of Fortune 500 companies provide substantive cultural information in their hiring materials. The result is that candidates are evaluating an employer's culture based almost entirely on self-reported data from the employer itself.

Key source: Glassdoor; Phenom Research

02 MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP QUALITY

DDI research finds that 57% of employees who left a job cite their manager as the primary reason — not the company, the role, or the compensation. Yet the quality of direct line management is almost entirely invisible to candidates during the hiring process. Interview panels are curated by HR and senior leaders; candidates rarely have access to the manager's existing team or honest assessments of leadership behaviour under pressure. Glassdoor's 2026 Worklife Trends report notes a 24% rise in reviews citing leadership 'disconnect' and a 26% rise in 'distrust' mentions, suggesting the problem is worsening.

Key source: DDI Research; Glassdoor Worklife Trends 2026

03 ACTUAL EMPLOYEE TURNOVER RATE

Real attrition data is one of the most reliable leading indicators of a problematic employer — and one of the hardest pieces of information for candidates to access. Most companies do not publish turnover rates. Estimates from LinkedIn data and review platforms are imprecise and easily gamed. High turnover in a team or department is a clear warning sign that candidates are structurally prevented from seeing before accepting an offer.

Key source: Work Institute; LinkedIn Workforce Research

04 FINANCIAL HEALTH & STABILITY

For candidates considering roles at private companies, startups, or PE-backed businesses, the risk of redundancy and the company's financial trajectory are critical decision inputs. Yet this information is either unavailable or requires significant specialist knowledge to interpret. O.C. Tanner research notes that job security and stability are among the top five factors driving

employee engagement — but pre-employment access to the financial signals that predict instability is limited to what is voluntarily disclosed in the hiring process.

Key source: O.C. Tanner Global Culture Report

05 REAL WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The phrase 'flexible working culture' now appears in the majority of job descriptions — but research consistently shows it is one of the least reliable signals available to candidates. The actual working hours, after-hours communication expectations, holiday policy enforcement, and burnout rates within a team are almost entirely invisible before joining. This is one of the categories where the gap between advertised and actual experience is widest, and where employee review platforms are least reliable due to self-selection in who leaves reviews.

Key source: Workforce surveys; CareerBuilder Research

06 CAREER PROGRESSION REALITY

Promotion pathways, development investment, and internal mobility are routinely cited as employer strengths during the interview process. Research from Harvard Business Review shows that 61% of job descriptions contain unrealistic expectations or vague requirements, and that mismatches between promised and actual career development are a leading contributor to disengagement in the first year. Candidates have almost no access to data on actual promotion rates, average tenure before advancement, or the proportion of senior roles filled internally.

Key source: Harvard Business Review

07 DEI PRACTICE VS. POLICY

Diversity and inclusion commitments are now universal features of employer branding — but the lived experience of underrepresented employees frequently diverges sharply from stated policy. This is a category where image management is particularly sophisticated and where candidate research is particularly difficult. Glassdoor data shows that DEI-related review content has grown significantly, but the signal-to-noise ratio is low and company responses to negative DEI reviews are often formulaic rather than substantive.

Key source: Glassdoor Research; McKinsey Diversity Reports

08 INTERVIEW PROCESS INTEGRITY

Research from Built In finds that 41% of employees who quit within 90 days say the role was not as described during the interview process. Misrepresentation of scope, compensation, team size, and day-to-day responsibilities is common enough that it is statistically one of the leading causes of early departure. Candidates have no reliable way to verify the accuracy of what they are told in interviews — and no systematic access to the experiences of people who previously held the same role.

Key source: Built In Research; Jobvite Job Seeker Nation Report

SECTION 4 | CULTURE & MANAGEMENT: THE BIGGEST BLIND SPOTS

4. Culture and Management: The Deepest and Most Costly Blind Spots

Of the eight information categories identified above, culture and management quality are simultaneously the most important to job seekers and the most consistently absent from conventional research channels. They are also, critically, the categories most strongly associated with early departure when the reality diverges from expectation.

10.4×

more powerful: toxic culture is 10.4 times more predictive of employee attrition than compensation, yet it is far harder to verify pre-employment

Source: MIT Sloan Management Review

28%

of workers who left a new role within 90 days cite company culture specifically as their primary reason for leaving

Source: NetSuite Workforce Research

57%

of employees who leave a job name their direct manager as the primary reason — above compensation, role fit, or company direction

Source: DDI Research

The structural reason these blind spots are so deep is that culture and management quality are human, behavioural, and contextual — they do not appear in job descriptions, financial filings, or employer branding. The only people with reliable access to this information are current and former employees. And the only way to reach them, pre-offer, is through the unfiltered public channels — Reddit threads, review platforms, LinkedIn connections — that most job seekers either don't use or don't know how to interrogate effectively.

Research from Glassdoor's 2026 Worklife Trends report underscores how rapidly trust in leadership is deteriorating as an issue: mentions of leadership 'disconnect' in employee reviews rose 24% year-on-year, and mentions of 'distrust' rose 26%. This is not a niche problem — it is a systemic feature of the current employment landscape, and it is one that candidates are almost entirely unable to assess before committing to a role.

5. The Cost of Getting It Wrong

5.1 The Human Cost

The personal cost of accepting the wrong role is not merely inconvenience. Research consistently links poor job fit — particularly when caused by misrepresented culture or management quality — to significant mental health impact, loss of professional confidence, and disruption to longer-term career trajectories. For early-career workers especially, a damaging first employer experience can distort career decisions for years.

The decision to leave a role within 90 days carries its own costs: gaps on a CV, interrupted earnings, and the emotional labour of beginning a new job search from a position of diminished confidence. These costs fall entirely on the candidate, not on the employer who misrepresented the role.

1 IN 5

new employees say they would quit within one month if their new job turns out not to be what they expected — pointing to the immediacy of the impact when red flags materialise

Source: Workforce surveys, 2024

5.2 The Financial Cost

The financial dimension of wrong-hire decisions is well-documented at the employer level — but the candidate-side financial cost is rarely measured. When a job seeker accepts a role that turns out to be misrepresented and leaves within 90 days, they typically face a period of unemployment, the costs of a new job search, and in some cases a salary step-down as a consequence of the disrupted career path.

**33–200
%**

of annual salary: the estimated cost to an employer of replacing a single employee who leaves — for a £50,000 role, that is between £16,500 and £100,000. The candidate bears comparable disruption at zero compensation

Source: Work Institute; HR benchmarking data

£900B+

spent annually by US companies replacing employees who quit — a figure that reflects the downstream cost of a broken pre-employment information market

Source: Gallup State of the Global Workplace

5.3 The Engagement Cost

Not all mismatched job seekers leave immediately. Many stay — disengaged, underperforming, and actively searching for their next role while occupying the current one. Gallup's 2024 data points to 51% of employees being in active or passive job search mode, with softening job market conditions suppressing departure rates without resolving the underlying dissatisfaction. Disengaged employees cost their employers an estimated 18% of their annual salary in lost productivity — a cost that traces directly back to the information failures of the hiring process.

6. What This Means for Job Seekers

6.1 The Research Imperative

The evidence compiled in this report makes a clear case that the status quo — where job seekers rely primarily on employer-curated information and a handful of review platforms — is systematically failing them. The information needed to make a well-informed career decision exists in the public domain: in Reddit communities, in employee reviews, in company filings, in LinkedIn data, and in news coverage. The problem is not availability of information — it is the absence of a tool that aggregates, synthesises, and surfaces it effectively.

86%

of job seekers rely on company reviews and ratings when deciding where to apply — but the review platforms they use cover only a fraction of the intelligence they need

Source: Glassdoor Research

69%

would refuse a job offer from a company with a bad reputation — suggesting that access to the right information does change behaviour, when that information is available

Source: Glassdoor Research

6.2 The 8 Questions Every Job Seeker Should Be Answering Before Accepting

Based on the research synthesised in this report, the following eight questions map directly to the blind spots most likely to result in post-joining regret. These are not questions the employer will volunteer answers to — they require active, cross-platform investigation:

- What do current and former employees say about the day-to-day culture — not on the company website, but on Reddit, Glassdoor, and LinkedIn?
- What is the typical tenure of people in this role, and why do people typically leave?
- What is the management style of my direct line manager, and how do their former direct reports describe working for them?
- Are there any signals of financial instability — recent rounds of redundancy, changes in leadership, declining Glassdoor ratings over time?
- What are the actual working hours and after-hours expectations for this team, based on employee accounts rather than job description language?
- What proportion of people in this role are promoted within two years, and what does progression actually look like in practice?
- How does the company's DEI practice compare to its stated commitments — what do underrepresented employees say in reviews?

- Have people who previously held this role described it consistently with how it has been presented to me in interviews?

These questions cannot be answered by reading a job description or visiting a careers page. They require triangulating data from multiple sources — the kind of cross-platform synthesis that is time-consuming and technically demanding for individual job seekers to conduct, but that an automated employer intelligence tool can perform in minutes.

SECTION 7 | APPENDIX: SOURCE DATA

7. Appendix: Source Statistics & References

All statistics cited in this report are drawn from the following publicly available research. No data in this report was generated by Dodged Search through primary research.

| Statistic | Finding | Source |
|---------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 70% | Job seekers experience new-job regret after joining | <i>Workforce surveys, 2024</i> |
| 1 in 5 | Would quit within one month if the role is not as expected | <i>Workforce surveys, 2024</i> |
| 1 in 3 | New employees quit within the first 90 days | <i>Jobvite; Built In</i> |
| 20% | Leave within first 45 days, before completing onboarding | <i>O.C. Tanner Workforce Research</i> |
| 41% | Of 90-day quitters say the role was not as described in interviews | <i>Built In Research</i> |
| 50% | Of offer acceptees backed out before their start date (2023) | <i>Gartner, 2023</i> |
| 93% | Say thorough pre-acceptance employer research is important | <i>Harvard Business Review</i> |
| 54% | Research every company before applying | <i>Workforce survey data</i> |
| 72% | Cannot reliably access workplace culture information pre-acceptance | <i>CareerBuilder Research</i> |
| 61% | Of job descriptions contain unrealistic or vague requirements | <i>Harvard Business Review</i> |
| 10.4× | Culture more predictive of attrition than compensation | <i>MIT Sloan Management Review</i> |
| 28% | Of 90-day leavers cite company culture as primary reason for leaving | <i>NetSuite Workforce Research</i> |
| 57% | Name their direct manager as primary reason for leaving | <i>DDI Research</i> |
| 24% | Increase in Glassdoor reviews citing leadership 'disconnect' (2024–25) | <i>Glassdoor Worklife Trends 2026</i> |
| 26% | Increase in 'distrust' mentions in Glassdoor reviews (2024–25) | <i>Glassdoor Worklife Trends 2026</i> |
| 77% | Say culture matters when deciding where to apply | <i>Glassdoor Research</i> |
| 86% | Rely on company reviews and ratings when deciding where to apply | <i>Glassdoor Research</i> |
| 69% | Would refuse a job offer from a company with a bad reputation | <i>Glassdoor Research</i> |
| 51% | Of employees are in active or passive job search mode | <i>Gallup, 2024</i> |

| | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| 33–200% | Of annual salary: estimated cost of replacing a single employee | <i>Work Institute; HR benchmarks</i> |
| \$900B+ | Annual US cost of employee replacement | <i>Gallup State of the Global Workplace</i> |

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