

Sterling

 SPECIAL REPORT: **GIG**

Hiring Reimagined

The Future of Onboarding
and Background Screening

**Trends & Viewpoints in Gig,
Contingent, & Non-Traditional Work**



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SPECIAL REPORT

Gig and Contingent Work

This report is an in-depth look at the gig economy and the contingent workforce, sourced from our 2022 global report focusing on hiring and onboarding trends.

Together, their perspectives shed new light on the future of onboarding and background screening for gig platforms and companies seeking non-traditional talent to meet their goals.

In our report, you will find insights from:

352

— **Trust and Safety professionals** whose job includes onboarding gig workers and hiring contingent and freelance workers.

142

— **Gig and non-traditional job seekers** who recently went through the onboarding process.



Our Research Focus

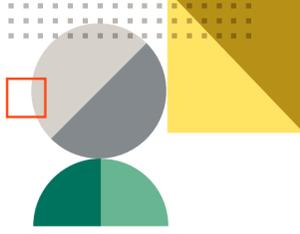
In 2022, we set out to understand the state of hiring, background screening, and the candidate experience at a global level. Our research captured the perspectives of thousands of Trust and Safety professionals and recent job seekers across many industries and regions. Together they paint a detailed portrait of what hiring professionals may be up against — both in terms of challenges to overcome and potential ways to elevate the hiring and background screening experience for the future.



To view our 2022 global report, please visit:

sterlingcheck.com/offers/background-check-trend-report

Ready to jump in? **Read on for the full story.** →



Onboarding Challenges for Gig Platforms

Trust and Safety teams are reminded daily that the way people want to work has taken a dramatic turn. Thanks to more remote work options, the rise of the gig economy and contingent work opportunities, and the after-effects of pandemic-driven disruption, workers across the world have been re-evaluating how, where, and when they want to work. In addition, because many workers have more employment choices than ever before, organizations in all industries and regions have been facing a variety of hiring challenges.

KEY INSIGHT REVEALED

About one in three hiring and onboarding professionals said that hiring contingent workers is more complicated than hiring traditional workers, and also that they're now competing with other/new types of work. Clearly, these responses show the growing complexity and competition for hiring gig and contingent talent.

TRUST & SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

What are your greatest challenges when it comes to hiring?

Select all that apply.

We can't find enough qualified candidates for the roles we need to fill

60%



Hiring contingent workers is more complicated than hiring traditional workers

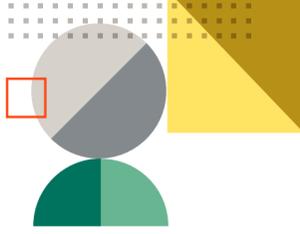
33%



We are now competing with other/new types of work, e.g., remote, gig, contingent, etc.

32%





Investing in the Candidate Experience

Many Trust and Safety teams are already recognizing that they need to make some key HR investments for the future. In order to overcome struggles and align for future success, they are investing in technology systems, process improvements, and automation solutions.

It's particularly interesting that many IT staff and Trust and Safety teams within organizations seeking gig and contingent workers are investing in ways to improve the candidate experience.

TRUST & SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

What investments are you making at your organization to address hiring challenges?

Select all that apply.

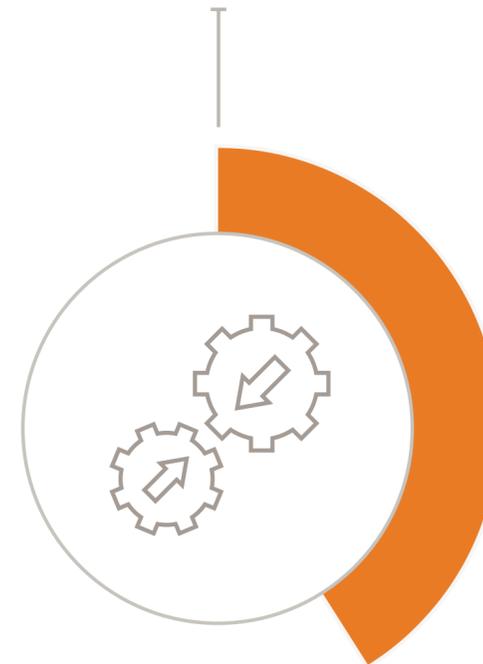
Using technology to enhance or simplify the candidate experience

48%



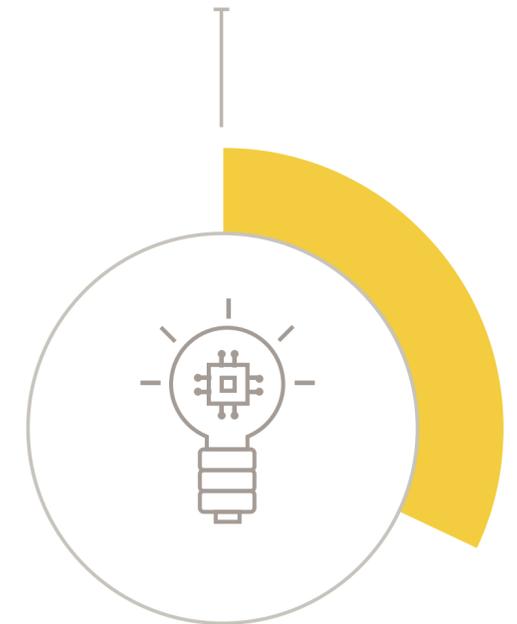
Integrating background screening and identity verification into our hiring workflow to create a more seamless experience

41%



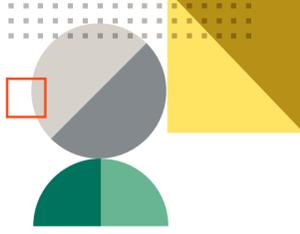
Using technology to further automate our process

40%



KEY INSIGHT REVEALED

Today's candidates have many other choices regarding what gig platform for which to work. These responses reveal the critical importance of the candidate experience to gig platforms whose main goals are hiring at volume and reducing time-to-hire. **A positive candidate experience may be the factor deciding whether candidates sign on – or drop off.**



Are Candidates Dropping Out Before They Can Be Brought On Board?

A common worry among Trust and Safety staff who onboard gig and contingent workers is their fear of losing quality candidates during the onboarding process, particularly if competing platforms can offer a faster time-to-hire.

In fact, job seekers told us that this worry may be warranted. There is a high likelihood that candidates seeking gig or contingent work will consider dropping out or will actually drop out of the process before you seal the deal.

■ JOB SEEKERS

Did you consider voluntarily dropping out of your most recent hiring experience?

CONSIDERED dropping out of their most recent hiring experience



Gig & Contingent Workers

56%

All Candidates Surveyed

45%

KEY INSIGHT REVEALED

When we compare the risk of losing candidates for gig and contingent work with the global findings, the results are worrisome: **85% of candidates seeking gig or contingent work either considered dropping out or did drop out** of their most recent hiring experience.

ACTUALLY dropped out of their most recent hiring experience



Gig & Contingent Workers

29%

All Candidates Surveyed

26%

Why Are Job Seekers Jumping Ship?

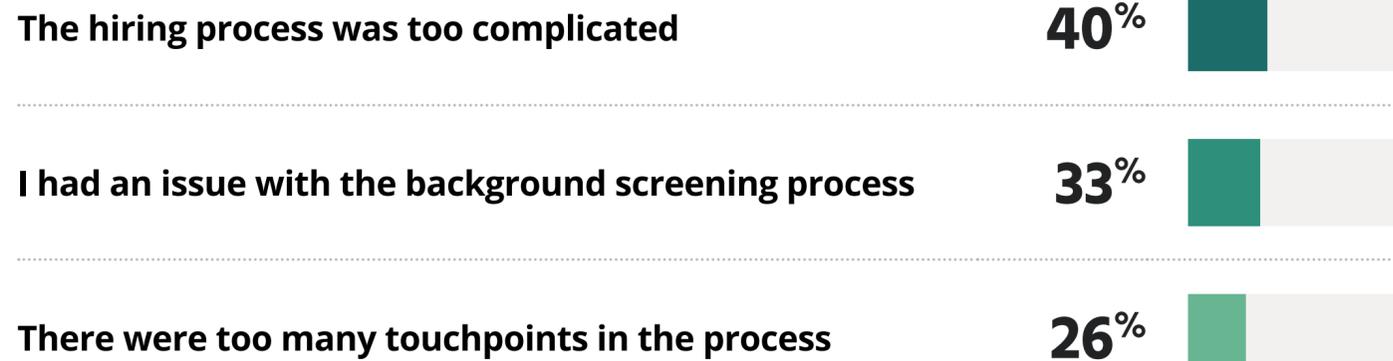
Candidates who consider dropping out of the onboarding process tend to see the experience as being too complicated. Therefore the background screening process needs to be a seamless part of the overall hiring experience. This is particularly relevant for gig platforms integrating screening into their overall recruitment/hiring process.

Knowing most job seekers are applying for gig positions using their mobile phones – where we're all used to things working at the speed of a tap – it is critical to ensure that the overall process and mobile experience are as smooth as possible.

JOB SEEKERS

What made you drop out or consider dropping out of the hiring process?

Select all that apply.



Due to rounding, the results represented in some of our findings may not add up to 100%.

JOB SEEKERS

Which statement more closely describes your most recent background screening experience?



OPPORTUNITY UNCOVERED

These perspectives from job seekers should compel gig platforms and companies seeking non-traditional workers to **streamline and accelerate the onboarding process**. In this way, they may be able to help avoid losing quality workers in the race for talent.

How Do Gig Platforms Expect Background Screening to Change?

To better understand what the future may hold, we asked Trust and Safety and onboarding professionals to consider a set of forward-looking concepts about how background screening may change.

KEY ELEMENTS:

- Thoroughness
- Change
- Streamlining

KEY INSIGHT REVEALED

Gig platforms are now evolving their onboarding process to promote greater levels of trust and safety. Ultimately their efforts will depend heavily on innovations made to their background screening process.

■ TRUST & SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

Which complete-the-sentence statements about your organization's background screening process align with your views?

Select all that apply.

"I believe that over the next two years, our background screening process will..."

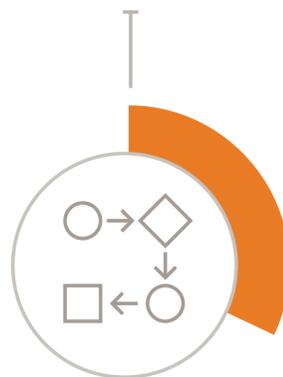
become more thorough

48%



change significantly

32%



become more streamlined

30%



“It’s my belief that gig is driving the future of what background screening might look like in five to ten years from now. The efficiencies that are driven inside of the gig market are actually helping to develop what the future of background screening will look like for all companies.”

Joy Henry

HEAD OF TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS SERVICES
STERLING

How Are Gig Platforms Changing Background Screening Processes?

With the vast majority of our survey respondents expecting background screening to change over the next two years, we wanted to look further into how this may look in practice.

More than half of respondents plan to add services (such as identity verification, workforce monitoring, and/or motor vehicle records) to make their background screening processes more thorough.



TRUST & SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

Which of the following changes do you anticipate your organization will make to its background screening program in the next two years?

Select all that apply.

Adding more services to make background screening more thorough

52%



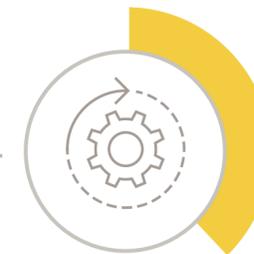
Screening more types of workers than we do today

41%



Increasing our use of technology to improve our efficiency and outcomes

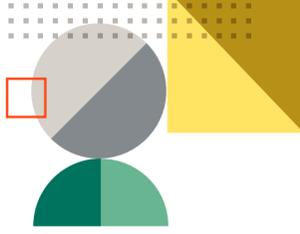
38%



OPPORTUNITY UNCOVERED

The time is now to invest in technologies and partners to help you optimize your onboarding and background screening processes for the future.

Technology teams at gig companies need to prepare their organizations for the future by strengthening each point in the screening process to improve efficiency, thoroughness, and the candidate experience.



Understanding the Job Seeker Mindset

In a battle for talent, just guessing at what job seekers want from the onboarding experience won't be enough. It may be tempting to think pay trumps all other factors when it comes to work, but we found that there are several factors that matter even more to candidates seeking gig or contingent work.

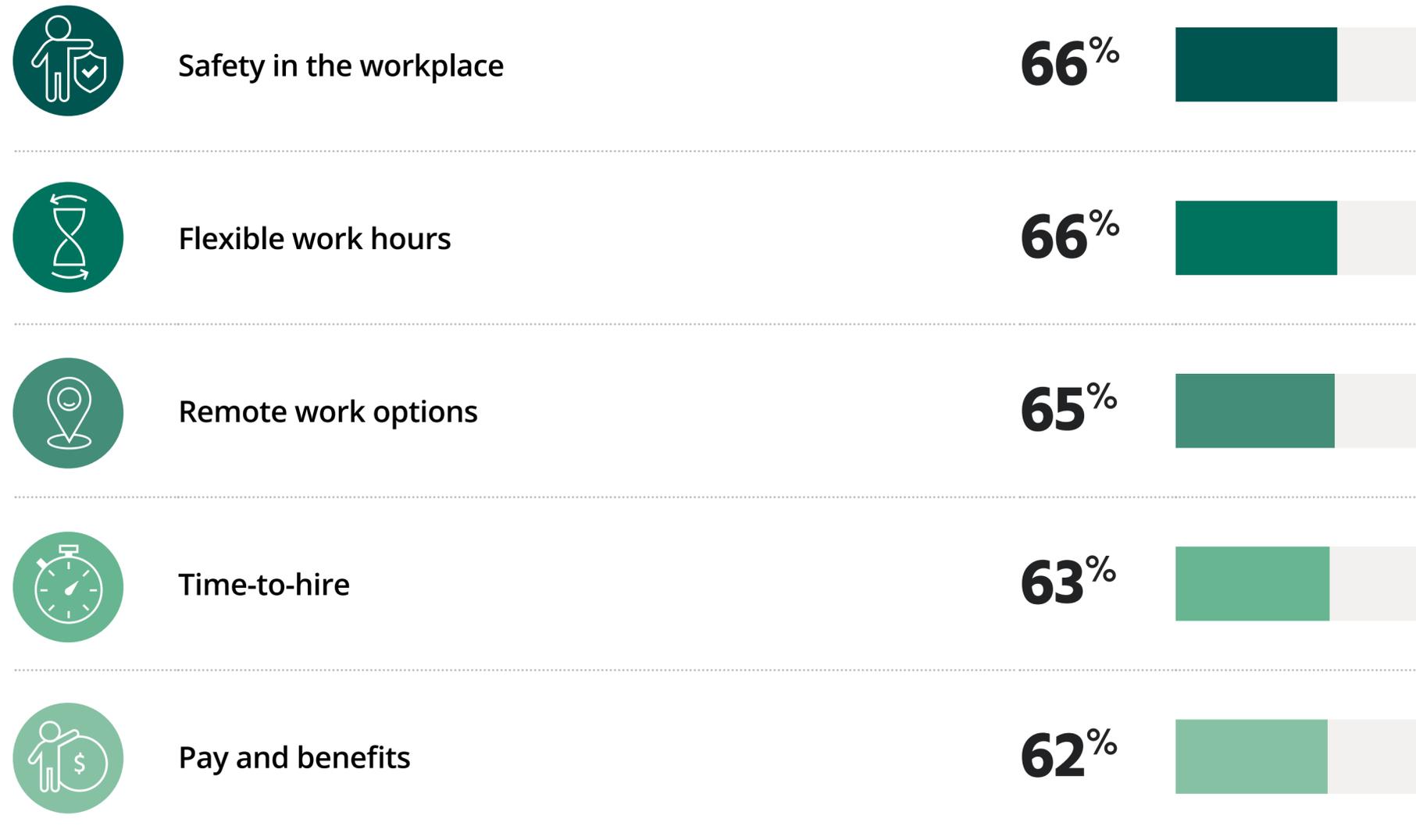
Trust and Safety teams looking to overcome onboarding challenges should make sure to align their processes to best meet the expectations of today's — and tomorrow's — job seekers.

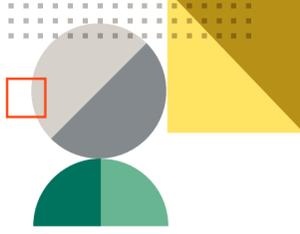
KEY INSIGHT REVEALED

For candidates seeking gig and contingent work, what matters even more than a paycheck? **Safety, flexibility, and time-to-hire.**

JOB SEEKERS

Gig, contingent, and freelance job seekers rated the following elements as important in deciding where to work:





Focusing on Trust and Safety

As the employer, you need to know that you have trustworthy people representing your brand; your workers need to know they are safe as they work on behalf of your brand; and the end customer needs to know that they can trust the workers delivering your services.

With this in mind, we found that only 45% of gig and non-traditional job seekers felt more confident about the job based on their background screening experience. Could hiring teams and processes do more to make sure candidates feel confident and safe in their employment decisions?

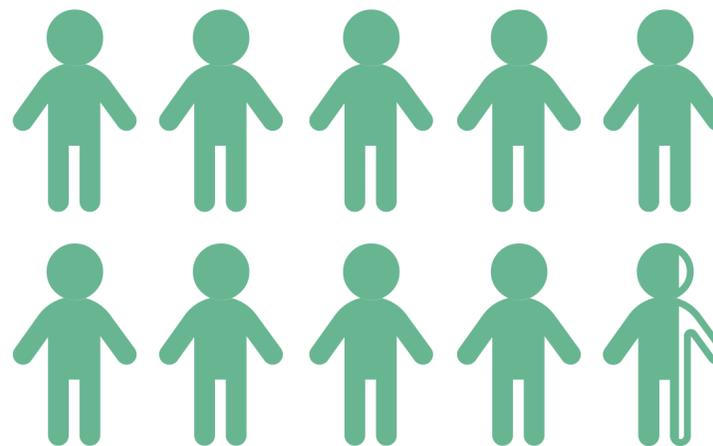
KEY INSIGHT REVEALED

Half the candidates looking to work for gig platforms want to feel more safe in their environments. Adding a thorough background screening process to a platform may make it more desirable to work for, as opposed to competing gig platforms which don't screen job seekers as thoroughly.

JOB SEEKERS

How many gig and non-traditional job seeker survey respondents said **safety in the workplace (physical environment and people) is very important?**

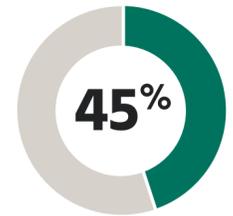
137
of 142



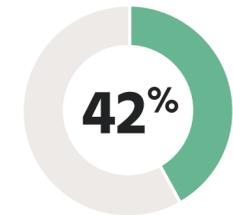
JOB SEEKERS

Did the background screening experience make you feel more or less confident about working with the organization or pursuing the job?

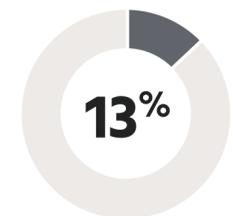
More confident
about the
organization/job



Less confident
about the
organization/job



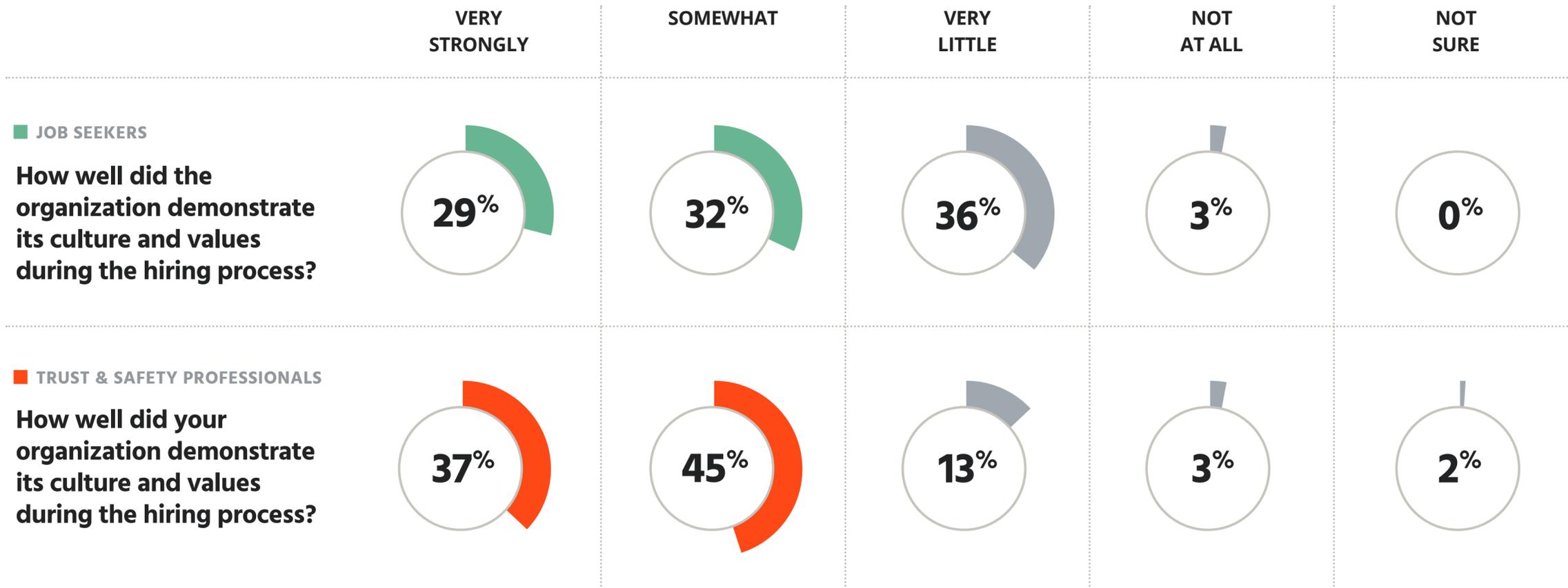
No effect
on confidence in
the organization/job



Gig platforms can seize this opportunity to boost job-seekers' confidence by improving the background screening experience.

The Importance of Expressing Your Culture and Values

In our surveys, we wanted to understand whether or not Trust and Safety professionals and job seekers are aligned on the way organizations demonstrate their culture and values within the hiring process.



What did we find?

Hiring teams may be a bit overconfident in how they demonstrate their culture to candidates.

Why does this matter?

In many cases, gig or contingent workers are the real-world extensions of your brand, the representatives of your culture and values to the end customer. Instilling your culture and values in job seekers early and often makes a difference in the long run.



OPPORTUNITY UNCOVERED

What does this mean for hiring professionals onboarding gig workers? Speed matters, but it will grow increasingly **important to authentically express culture and values early and often throughout the full onboarding process.**



Create a Flexible, Attractive Company Culture



“

As people look for more flexible earning opportunities, we've seen a number of people attracted to self-employment where they have the autonomy and freedom that comes with being their own boss. This shift of mindset within the workforce, and our high-volume recruiting efforts, allow Liveops to meet this demand, providing flexible solutions to our clients and agents. When we source independent contractor agents, we know the safety and security of our client partners' information is of paramount concern. Partnering with Sterling for a customized background screening solution provides protection for everyone in our model. This is something we take very seriously.

”

liveops

How Can You Prepare for the Future of Hiring and Background Screening?

It may be a challenging hiring environment today, but opportunities abound for the Trust and Safety professionals and hiring managers who want to uncover them.



Not sure where to start?
Begin here.



Embrace change. Hiring has changed radically in just a few years, but that doesn't mean you can't rise to the challenge by leaning into change.



Identify any weaknesses in your hiring and background screening processes as soon as possible. Assemble experts. Ask tough questions. Trust and Safety professionals around the globe agree that hiring will likely become more challenging in the future, so now is the time to strengthen your processes.



Prioritize the candidate experience across the entire hiring process, including background screening. Candidates place high importance on proactive communication, mutual respect, and an authentic expression of organizational culture and values as part of the hiring experience.



Look for ways to better understand candidate perspectives. Especially if you are seeing that candidates are opting out or you are struggling to get the right people hired, you should seek opportunities to hear directly from candidates about their real-life expectations and viewpoints.



You don't have to figure everything out on your own. Seek out partners to help you elevate the candidate experience, maximize your culture in the hiring process, and optimize background screening processes to meet the moment.



OPPORTUNITY UNCOVERED

To position for onboarding success today and in the future, **technology teams and onboarding teams should make it a priority to listen to what job seekers have to say.** First seek to hear about their honest experiences with hiring and background screening, and then put that feedback into action in your hiring process.



About Us

Sterling (NASDAQ: STER) — a leading provider of background and identity services — offers background and identity verification to help over 50,000 clients create people-first cultures built on a foundation of trust and safety. Sterling’s tech-enabled services help organizations across all industries establish great environments for their workers, partners, and customers. With operations around the world, Sterling conducted more than 95 million searches in the 12 months ended December 31, 2021.

Want More?

Sterling regularly publishes cutting-edge research and insight on the latest trends in human resources, talent acquisition and management, and hire processing.

For more information, visit us at: sterlingcheck.com



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