

Voice of the Candidate Study

Q1 2022

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

There are millions of job seeker conversations happening online every year. Social listening explores these conversations to make sense of what's happening in the world. Parsons Strategic Consulting, in conjunction with PandoLogic, distills these conversations to better understand the pulse of the candidate, what they need and want from us.

From blogs to Reddit to Twitter, to public Facebook posts - job seekers have a lot to say. Our research gets to the heart of the candidate conversation. This quarterly report shows sentiment, passion intensity, themes, and relevant quotes from candidates themselves to illustrate what's actually on their minds. The aim is to help close the gap between employers and candidates. We also overlay the candidate conversation with PandoLogic's programmatic advertising data, so we can see what is really happening and if conversations are actually driving action.

CONTACT

PandoLogic
(212) 419-4649
www.pandologic.com

PSC, Inc.
(614) 312-4032
www.parsonssc.com

S F I N D I N G S

01.

Introduction

02.

Top Findings: Candidates Are Optimistic

05.

Insight 1: Owning Their Power

08.

Insight 2: Remote is the New Black

11.

Insight 3: They're Still Leaving

13.

Insight 4: Rejection is WAY Up

15.

Insight 5: Benefits Have Entered the Chat

17.

Conclusion

NON O T C U D O R T N

This is our third quarterly report measuring job seeker conversations and how they feel about the candidate experience. PandoLogic and Parsons Strategic Consulting (PSC) partnered to deliver this research as a more authentic way to obtain candidate feedback. Our first Voice of the Candidate Study was produced in June of 2021 as a baseline of the candidate experience from the job seeker's point of view.

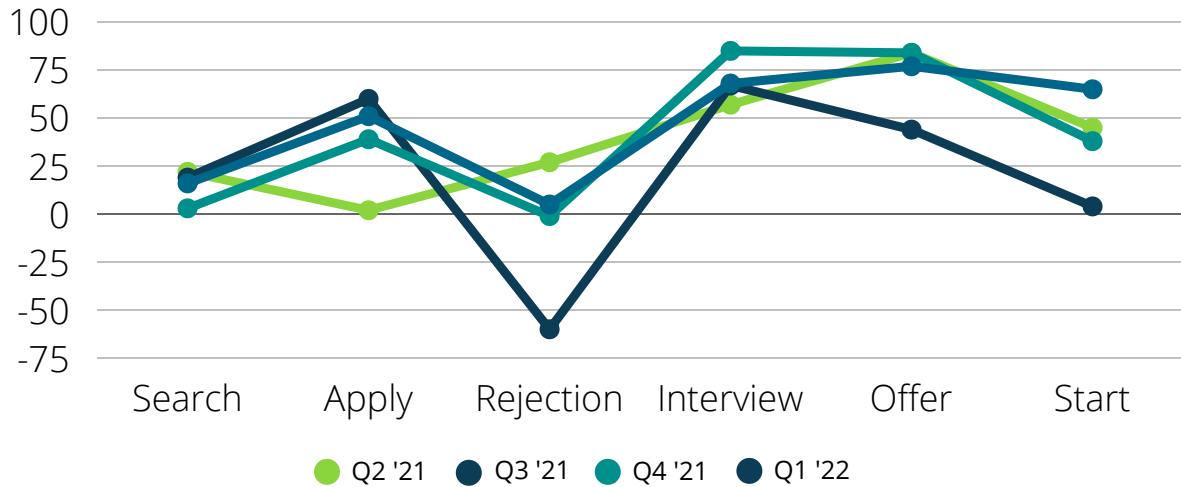
In this report, we revisit the data as new conversations emerged with increases in jobs posted, clicks and applications, and a continuing conversation about balance. This report also includes data and nuggets that look at the last year of the report for trends in the conversation.

The net: Job seekers feel the power shift

The social listening data on how candidates feel about looking for, applying to, interviewing for, and starting new jobs is paired with PandoLogic's world-class data to measure what happens when we listen to what candidates need. We aim to get better at delivering what candidates want through active listening.

TOPLINE FINDINGS

The conversation got smaller, more positive in spots, and less passionate.



14%

Increase in Overall Candidate Sentiment

Sentiment rose from 41% in Q4 to 47% in Q1. This is the highest we've seen sentiment since beginning the report. Candidates are more positive.

33%

Increase in Candidate Passion Intensity

Q1 passion rose to 32% (from 21% in Q4). Q3 was at 37% when conversations were more negative. Meaning they're happier.

2%

Decrease in all Conversations

The conversation is still enormous overall. More than 15 million conversations in Q1, equaling the Super Bowl conversation.

Job seekers are feeling optimistic

DIGGING A BIT DEEPER

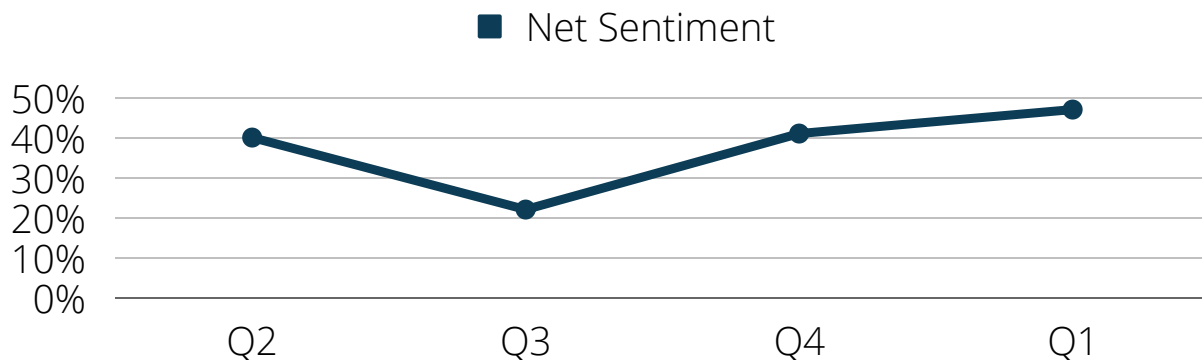
A look at some of the drivers

The conversation turned hopeful

Since we began working on this research, we have never seen a higher Net Sentiment from job seekers. They are more positive and passionate than ever before. Looking back at its most negative, Q3, the change is startling. The Net Sentiment doubled from Q3.

The main drivers were big increases in Sentiment in the Job Search conversation. This is the largest conversation we look at and it makes up 92% of the overall discussion. The Sentiment in this conversation grew from 2% in Q4 to 16% in Q1. And while 16% is not the highest we have seen, that would be 22% from Q2 of 2021, it indicates a rise in feelings and opinions about the job market from candidates.

We also saw significant increases in Net Sentiment around the "Start" conversation. For the last two quarters, we have reported that job seekers were not excited about starting a new job. That changed this quarter. Net Sentiment rose 71% on start conversations. This is wonderful news and also an indicator that candidates are more excited to start their new jobs and the overall increase in sentiment indicates a more optimistic view of the job market and their position in it.

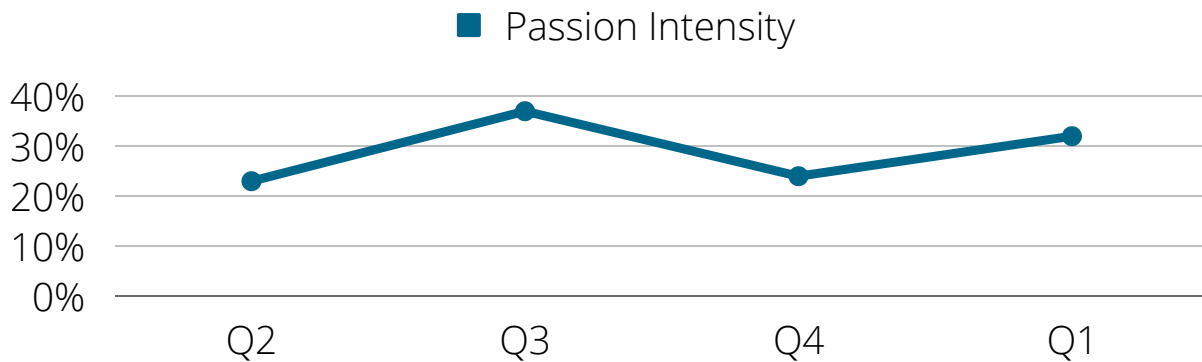


DIGGING A BIT DEEPER

A look at some of the drivers

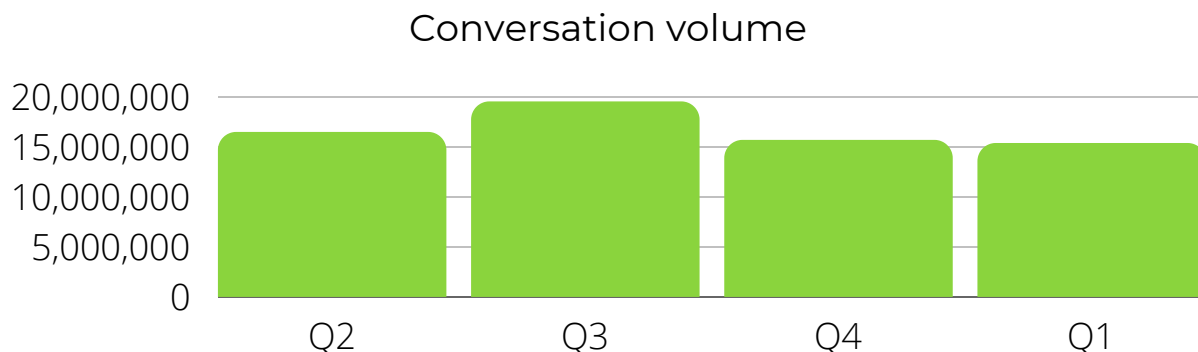
Candidate Passion Intensity rises again

In Q1, we bounced back to a more passionate 32%. You can see in the chart below the fluctuation in Passion Intensity in our conversation. Passion Intensity measures the volume and percentage of love/hate conversations. Q1 conversations' Passion Intensity grew in some key areas this quarter, namely "Start" and "Interview". Passion doubled in "Start" conversations from 14% to 33%. "Interview" passion rose from 44% to 60%. In this quarter, there were more passionate conversations.



While slightly smaller, the conversation is still huge!

Despite a slightly smaller conversation this quarter in the entire candidate experience, this conversation was still larger (by about 3 million conversations) than the online conversation about the Oscars, which was quite the social event this year.



1 OWNING THEIR POWER



"My idea of budgeting is just finding a better paying job"
- @betelreloaded

They're happily in the drivers seat

There was an increase in Sentiment in the "Start" and "Interview" conversations. The word clouds show they want a "better job." And we saw a drop in Sentiment in the Offer conversation. Coupled with the continuing strength of the "Quit" conversation and the increases in clicks, applications, and cost per application, it indicates they are seeing their power in the labor market.



80%

Increase in Applications

6%

Increase in Clicks

5%

Increase in Cost per Applicant

Source: PandoLogic

1 OWNING THEIR POWER



*"I also found a better job with higher pay."
- GizmoDuck2021*

Pay continues to be a major driver

Jobs that have salary information perform better

The pay conversation remains very popular and a key concern among talent. It's generated nearly 2 million conversations each quarter.

When we look at jobs from Q1 '22 that had pay information in the title, the jobs performed much better than jobs without that information. In fact, jobs with pay information had a \$26.97 cost per application. Jobs without it had a \$42.52 cost per application.

The same did not hold true for jobs that included the word bonus. Jobs that included the word bonus had a much higher cost per application (\$105.61) vs. those that did not mention bonus (\$37.58). The conversion rate was also worse. Jobs that included bonus: 3.6% conversion rate. Jobs without bonus: 5.79%. The net: bonus information is not what they're looking for.

1.6X

**Cost per application
without salary information**

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

They are more hopeful right now and there is a unique opportunity to help them get all they need from their work life. They do know that there are more jobs than people, and they are talking about how they want a better job, they want to know what things pay, and it shows in how they are actually interacting with job postings. We have an opportunity to move the needle.

01

Encourage them to share

With candidate sentiment so high in the "Start" conversation, we should help them celebrate their new jobs. Encourage them to share their excitement on social. This could be a great moment to build your brand and hiring momentum through your new hires.

02

Pay information, not bonuses

The data is clear. Pay information converts better and, maybe more importantly right now, is cheaper. Tell them what it pays, and you pay less! Conversely, drop the bonus information. That language is not performing and costing your company a lot more. Pay, not bonus!

03

Differentiate on "better"

Use your job description space to tell them how your job is a better job than the one they have now. Sell them on the things that make your organization unique. What does working with you deliver that is "better" than the competition. Tell them explicitly why you, why now.

REMOTE IS THE NEW BLACK



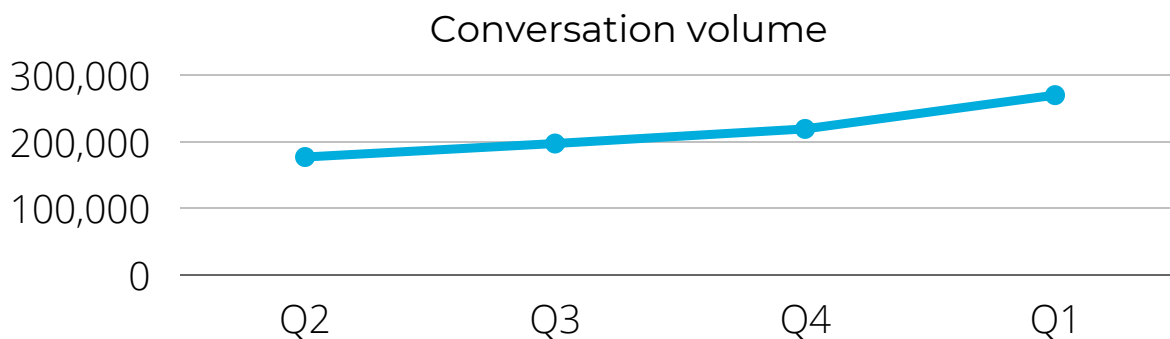
*"Feels good that I quit that job to work from home."
- AdventurousCare6680*

This conversation is growing and happier
Sentiment increases by nearly 3x when "work from home" is included

Over the last four quarters, we've seen the "work from home" and remote conversation explode. It's largely due to the pandemic that restructured work to be remote for knowledge workers and exposed that, in many cases, work could be done from anywhere. This has not only created a significant increase in the conversation, but also in Sentiment.

Remote work conversations have grown 52% in terms of overall conversation volume. And when we include "work from home" into the conversation Sentiment goes from 16% to 47%, nearly 3x more positive.

The net: Job seekers like and want remote work.



REMOTE IS THE NEW BLACK

Y

"I dread commute to work tomorrow. I like to look for a hybrid job"
- Unknown

Remote jobs also convert better

Hybrid is not quite in their lexicon yet

Remote jobs that were posted last quarter proved to perform better according to PandoLogic data.

Jobs with remote in the title converted 57% better than those without remote in the title. In addition, the cost per application was 5.5 times lower than those without remote in the title.

Remote is popular among candidates and something they are more likely to convert on than jobs that do not offer or promote remote.

Hybrid represents less than .1% of the conversation, but it is emerging.

57%

Higher conversion rate on jobs that include "remote"

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

Just like pay, candidates want to know and are choosing remote work opportunities. If you offer remote work, tell them, they will convert on those jobs. The conversation is growing and shows no signs of stopping. Plus, this is a very positive conversation. One that we could leverage to make your recruitment (and potentially retention) efforts stronger.

01

If you've got it, flaunt it

If you offer remote opportunities, get that information in the title, the job description, your social posts, and your website. People are hungry for remote work and will convert more readily to your job postings.

02

If you don't have it, can you?

Look, the world works differently now. Where your workers work is more individualistic than it once was. Share this data with your leaders. Let them know it impacts the bottom line. That usually gets some attention!

03

If you have no option, tell them

Some roles must be in person, or at a location. It's a fact of life. If this is the case, sell them on what that looks like and offers them. Also, think of different ways you can bring flexibility to your workplace where remote isn't an option.

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

The impact of the "Quit" conversation can be seen throughout the report. More applications, better conversions, the hopeful conversation around starting a new job, tells us the Great Resignation will continue to roll on. They're talking about the things that make them leave, which tells us that we have more listening to do within this conversation.

01

Remind them why they joined

We do a lot of marketing to attract external talent, and once people are hired, we stop marketing to them. Why? Provide your employees with reminders of why they chose to work with you and why they should stay. Never stop selling and marketing your company and brand to talent.

02

Continue to recruit them

Your people are looking. Help them look internally, too. If you're sourcing on LinkedIn, and people who already work with you fit, reach out to them. There is nothing wrong with helping people stay at your company. Research shows they actually would prefer to stay.

03

Talk to and listen to your people

Most mobility programs rely on managers to elevate people, but not everyone wants to move up. If you're engaging with your talent, you can learn what they want and need to stay before it's too late.

4 REJECTION IS WAY UP

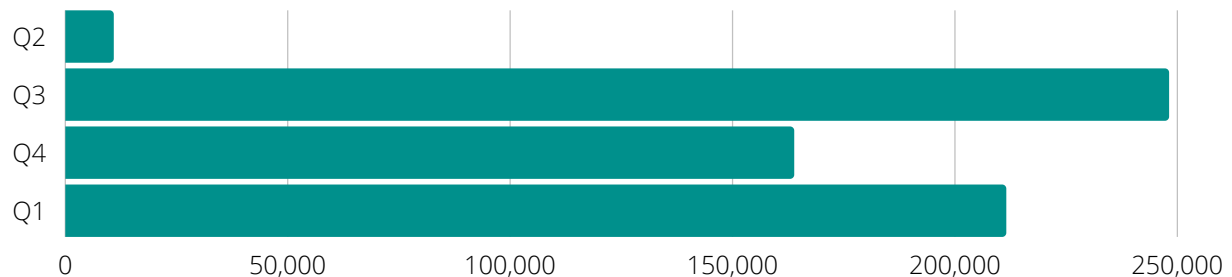


*"dear HR... please respond to all job applications you get. even an application rejection is still better than keeping quiet."
-@Jxjot*

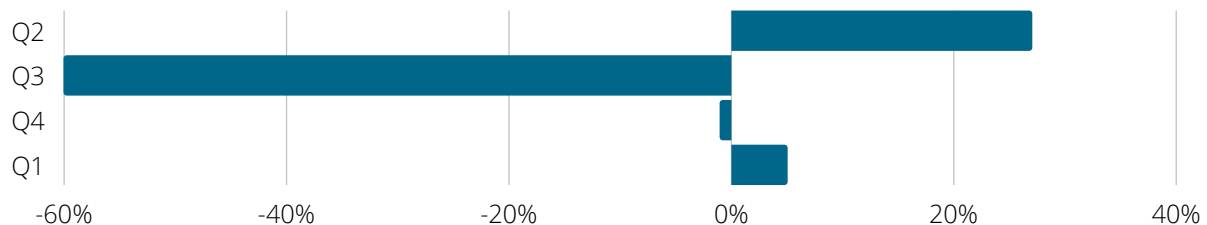
Rejection grew by 29% this quarter

Adding fuel to the quit fire

With more applications being generated, it's no surprise to see the increase in the "Rejection" conversation. The job seekers are more active. There were more than 200,000 "Rejection" conversations in Q1. They've become more comfortable about sharing rejection online in the last year.



In addition to the growth in the conversation volume, the Net Sentiment changed dramatically since Q3. In Q3 of 2021, sentiment was -60. In Q1, the sentiment was 5. A 65 point swing in sentiment.



CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

The conversations surrounding "Rejection" included specific pleas from candidates. This conversation consistently has low sentiment, and the fact that it got more positive this quarter speaks to the hope that candidates have. In addition, job seekers are providing direct feedback to our companies on how they want rejections to be handled.

01

Tell them something

The black hole is real to candidates and they know it, they know we know it, but they can't figure out why we aren't doing anything about it. The opportunity here is to simply disposition them. Don't leave them hanging.

02

Be timely

As we think about dispositions, let's also be respectful of the candidate's time and do so in a timely fashion. If they are not qualified on the first review, they are not going to be magically qualified later. Just send the email.

03

They want feedback

There were a number of candidate quotes asking for feedback. We have so much AI now, why can't we tell them where their skills ranked against the job and the people who moved forward. They want it, we need to find a way to deliver.

BENEFITS HAVE ENTERED THE CHAT



"We don't talk enough about how many chronically ill and disabled people are trapped in jobs they hate simply because they need "good health insurance."
-@Olas_Truth

This is an emerging conversation

People are beginning to talk about "benefits"

For the first time in looking at these conversations, healthcare and health insurance have emerged. While this is a small conversation right now, making up only 1.3% of the overall discussion, it's the first time it's showed up and will be monitored.

It's important to note that when we add "Health Insurance" to the "Job Search" conversation Net Sentiment goes from 16 to -58. It is a very negative conversation.



Job search word cloud

It's important to note that a common theme in this conversation is about losing health insurance after quitting and being denied benefits for part-time work.

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

The emerging benefits and health insurance conversation is interesting because it's one of the common things we promote in recruitment marketing efforts. It's common to see benefits information on career websites, but there are additional opportunities to answer the audiences' needs when it comes to insurance and benefits.

01

Put benefits information everywhere

People want to know what your benefits are, who gets them, and when. Share this information on your career site, your job descriptions, and anywhere you are advertising your company.

02

Tie benefits to employee stories

People who are involved in your unique (or standard) benefits should be the ones telling the stories on your career site, job descriptions, and social posts. Use video to tell stories about how people use the benefits you provide.

03

Revisit your offerings

If you offer benefits for part-time employees, share that! If you don't, you may want to consider some options. The workforce is looking for flexibility, and we should be adapting.

NOISE SURT CONC CONC

We've been listening to the candidate conversation for a year now, four full quarters. What we learned is the power of listening.

In our first report, we talked about how candidates don't speak our language, the same is still true today. However, we've also shown that when we listen to understand and deliver what talent wants, they are here for it.

This is evident in the higher conversions and lower cost per application on remote work and job postings that share salary information.

But, potentially most intriguing is the appearance that candidates are more hopeful for their future right now. They appear to feel like they are in the driver's seat. They are asking for specific things that we can and should deliver.

We should find ways to invest in the top of the funnel with strong advertising and marketing content that tells your story of why they should come and stay. In addition, it's past time to think through how we are going to stem the "Quit" tide.