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Looking for Top Talent? Move to Mobile Recruiting

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Attracting talented job candidates is one of the biggest challenges facing HR in the next 10 years.[1] Understandably, organizations want top talent and they are highly focused on recruiting strategies that enable them to hire the very best.

One increasingly popular strategy is mobile recruitment. As mobile devices become ever more ubiquitous, potential candidates are starting to look more favorably at organizations offering a mobile recruitment option.[2] But are all candidates created equal when it comes to mobile recruitment? We decided to take a look at the coveted members of the workforce and explore their use of and attitudes towards mobile recruitment.

Using the high-potential employees subset of our global WorkTrends™ survey data, we were able to compare top talent, who significantly outperform their peers and demonstrate a stronger capacity to succeed,[3,4] with other employees. The results provide new insight into mobile recruiting and guidance for organizations looking to attract top talent.

About the Analysis

Analyses presented in this white paper are based on a sample of over 16,000 workers from the WorkTrends™ survey, administered by the IBM Smarter Workforce Institute in 2015 to workers in 23 countries, in a cross-section of industries, thousands of different organizations and all major job families.

In the analyses, high-potential employees are those who answered "yes" to the survey question, "Have you been formally identified as a high potential employee, and are you currently enrolled in your organization's high potential development program?" Employees who answered "no" are categorized as "other employees".

Key findings

Among those who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches high-potential employees are more likely than other employees to:

- Use mobile devices in job searches (74 percent vs. 40 percent)
- View organizations with mobile recruiting as more attractive (69 percent vs. 51 percent)
- Use mobile devices for future job searches (75 percent vs. 56 percent)
- Have concerns about data security (36 percent vs. 26 percent) and availability of mobile career sites (47 percent vs. 40 percent)
- Take advantage of the breadth of functionality offered by mobile, such as receiving job related information via text messages (40 percent vs. 23 percent)

Nearly 70 percent of high potentials say organizations using mobile to hire are more attractive.

Mobile job search is more popular among high potentials

We asked all survey participants whether they have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches. Slightly over half (53 percent) report they have used them. A closer look at the data reveals that high potentials are much more likely to use mobile devices to search for jobs. Specifically, 74 percent of high-potential employees have used mobile in job searches, while only 40 percent of other employees have, a 34 percentage point difference (Figure 1). Due to the high popularity of mobile job search among high-potential employees, mobile recruiting could improve the odds of finding top talent.

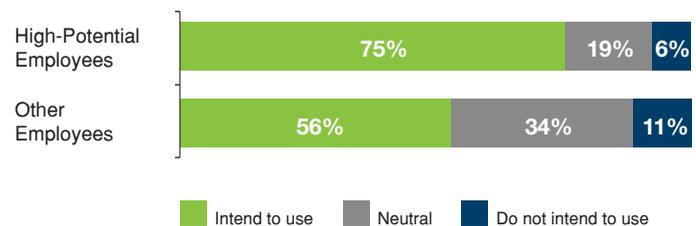*Figure 1*: More high potentials use mobile devices in job searches
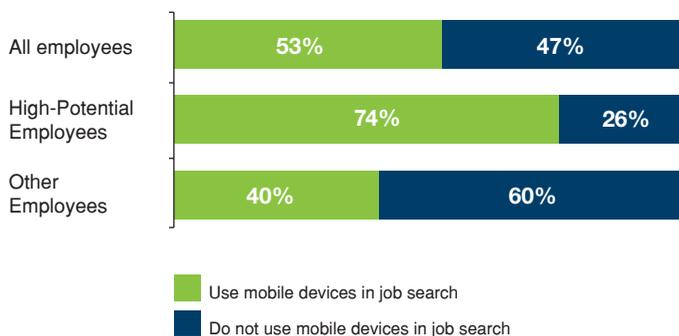
Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 Global (All emp loyees N= 16,212, High-potential employees N=5,345, other employees N=6,906).

Note: Differences among the groups (overall, high-potential employees, other employees) are statistically significant (p<0.01).

Not only are high-potential employees more likely to use mobile devices in their past and current job searches, but they are also more likely to do so in the future. Among those who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches, three in four high potentials (75 percent) say they want to use mobile devices in their future job searches, almost 20 percentage points higher than other employees (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Large percentage of high potentials intend to use mobile for future job searches

Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 global employees who have used mobile in job searches (High-potential employees N=3,946, other employees N=2,732).

Note: Differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<0.01). Intend to use=Agree or strongly agree with the statement "I plan to use mobile devices in my job search more often in the future". Do not intend to use=Disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.
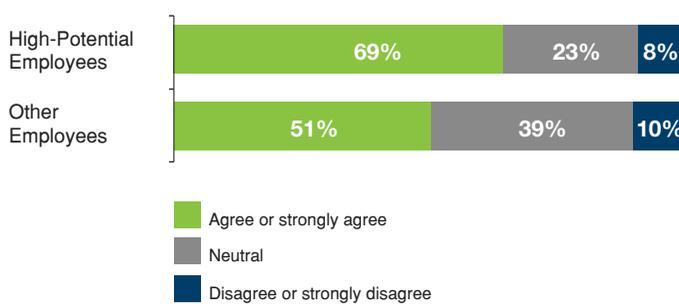
Almost three quarters (74 percent) of high potentials have used mobile in job searches compared to just 40 percent of other employees.

Organizations offering mobile recruiting are more appealing to high potentials

Mobile recruiting not only helps reach top talent, but also increases hiring companies' attractiveness to those sought-after candidates. Our analyses reveal that high-potential employees report greater attraction to organizations that use mobile to hire. Among those who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches, nearly 70 percent of high potentials say organizations that use mobile to hire are more attractive, while just over half of other employees (51 percent) agree (Figure 3).

Previous studies indicate that the more attractive the organization the more likely job candidates will accept their job offers.[5] It would therefore be fair to assume that organizations offering mobile recruitment are more likely to be successful in obtaining top talent.

Figure 3: Organizations that use mobile to hire are more attractive to high-potential employees

	Agree or strongly agree	Neutral	Disagree or strongly disagree
High-Potential Employees	69%	23%	8%
Other Employees	51%	39%	10%

Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 global employees who have used mobile in job searches (High-potential employees N=3,946, other employees N=2,732)
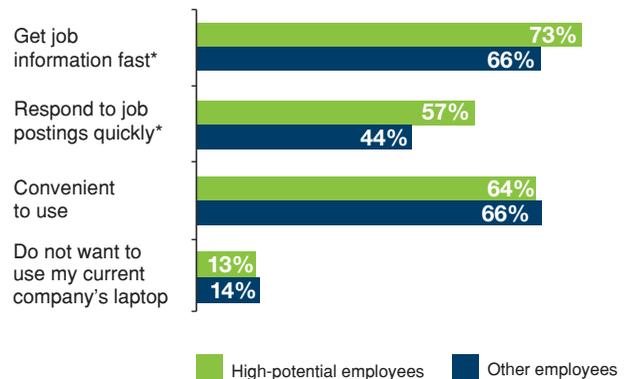
Note: Differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<0.01).

Speed of mobile valued by high potentials

As you may expect, convenience is one of the top reasons high-potential employees use mobile devices to look for and apply for jobs. Similar to others, about two thirds of high potentials who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches (64 percent) say they use mobile devices because of their convenience.

In addition to convenience, high-potential employees, relative to their coworkers, are more likely to use mobile devices to get job information fast (73 percent vs. 66 percent) and respond quickly to job postings (57 percent vs. 44 percent). The results suggest top talent value the speed that mobile technologies bring to the recruiting process. See Figure 4.

Figure 4: Top talent values speed of mobile

	High-potential employees	Other employees
Get job information fast*	73%	66%
Respond to job postings quickly*	57%	44%
Convenient to use	64%	66%
Do not want to use my current company's laptop	13%	14%

Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 global employees who have used mobile in job searches (High-potential employees N=3,946, other employees N=2,732).

Note: Bars with asterisk denote differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<0.01).

High potentials engaged in more mobile job search activities

To better understand how high-potential employees typically use mobile devices in job searches, we compared the mobile job search activities of high-potential employees with those of others. Not surprisingly, a majority of job seekers, whether they are high potentials or not, use mobile to search for job postings. However, high potentials go further than that. Among those who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches, high potentials are more likely than others to:

• Use mobile devices to look for information related to potential jobs such as company details (58 percent vs. 52 percent)
• Receive job alerts (58 percent vs. 50 percent)
• Express job interest via mobile (41 percent vs. 29 percent)
• Complete a job application (29 percent vs. 20 percent)
• Take a job related assessment via mobile (23 percent vs. 12 percent)

The fact that high-potential employees use mobile devices more broadly in the entire job search process highlights the importance for organizations to offer a breadth of functionality in the mobile recruiting process, including integrated mobile-enabled career sites, job applications and skill assessments. See Figure 5.

Figure 5: Mobile devices used more broadly by high potentials

Search for job postings — 73% / 75%
Look for information about potential jobs* — 58% / 52%
Get job alerts* — 58% / 50%
Express my interest in job openings* — 41% / 29%
Complete entire job applications* — 29% / 20%
Take job related assessments* — 23% / 12%

High-potential employees ▪ Other employees

Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 global employees who have used mobile in job searches (High-potential employees N=3,946, other employees N=2,732).
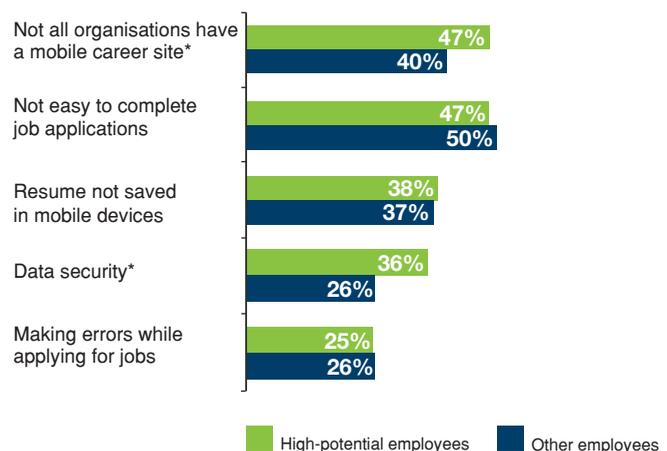
Note: * Differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<0.01).

Data security is a bigger concern for high potentials

When using mobile devices in job searches, high-potential employees share many of the same concerns as other employees, namely: the job application is not easy to complete (47 percent), the resume is not saved in mobile devices (38 percent), and there may be errors when applying for jobs via mobile devices (25 percent).

However, there are two areas of notable difference between high potentials and other employees. Among those who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches, high potentials are more likely than others to express concerns about data security (36 percent vs. 26 percent) and the availability of mobile career sites (47 percent vs. 40 percent). See Figure 6.

Figure 6: Major concerns about mobile job search

Not all organisations have a mobile career site* — 47% / 40%
Not easy to complete job applications — 47% / 50%
Resume not saved in mobile devices — 38% / 37%
Data security* — 36% / 26%
Making errors while applying for jobs — 25% / 26%

High-potential employees ▪ Other employees

Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 global employees who have used mobile in job searches (High-potential employees N=3,946, other employees N=2,732).
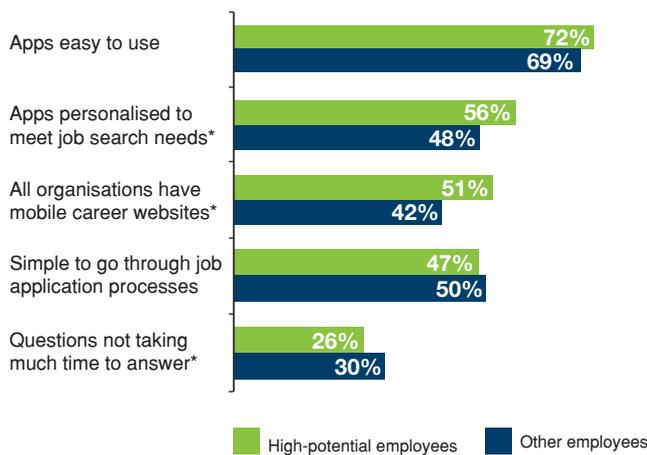
Note: *Differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<0.01).

Ease of use and personalization top wants for the future

In terms of future expectations of mobile job apps, just like their coworkers, a majority of high-potential employees who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches (70 percent) expect job search apps to be easy to use and almost half (48 percent) expect job application processes to be simple to navigate.

Differences do emerge in expectations of the personalization of apps. More high-potential employees expect apps to be personalized (56 percent vs. 48 percent) and they are also more likely to expect organizations to have mobile websites available (51 percent vs. 42 percent) compared to other employees. See Figure 7.

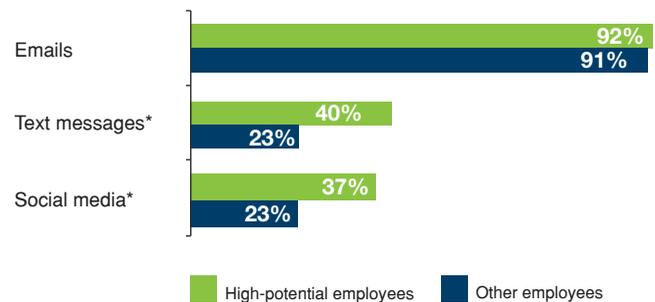*Figure* 7: Future expectations of mobile job search apps

Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 global employees who have used mobile in job searches (High-potential employees N=3,946, other employees N=2,732).

Note: *Differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<0.01).

High potentials have a higher preference for texts and social media information

All employees who have used mobile devices in their past or current job searches have a strong preference for email for receiving job related information, but high potentials are almost twice as likely (40 percent vs. 23 percent) to prefer text messages and significantly more likely to prefer communications via social media, such as LinkedIn (37 percent vs. 23 percent). See Figure 8.

Figure 8: Preference for receiving job-related information

Source: WorkTrends™ 2015 global employees who have used mobile in job searches (High-potential employees N=3,946, other employees N=2,732).

Note: * Differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<0.01).

Conclusion and practical implications

This paper reveals that mobile job search is much more popular among high-potential employees. Organizations offering mobile recruiting are seen as more attractive particularly among high potentials, and high potentials are more likely to use mobile devices for job search in the future. Furthermore, high potentials are more likely to prefer multiple channels of communication, including text and social media. In view of this, organizations looking for top talent would be well advised to advance their mobile recruiting capabilities.

In building out a mobile recruitment strategy, organizations may benefit from considering the following:

- **Proactively nurture talent pools.** Before a high-performing candidate ever applies, build a relationship via a Candidate Relationship Management tool that is optimized for mobile devices. Source the web for top talent and build robust talent pipelines. Then, nurture potential talent via branded email marketing campaigns, keeping them engaged until job openings become available.
- **Mobile responsive application process.** Just as a mobile experience is expected for a consumer purchase, high-potential employees feel organizations offering mobile recruitment are more attractive, and they expect all hiring companies to be mobile. Therefore, it is critical for all companies seeking top-talent candidates to enable mobile recruiting. Without such options, they could find top talent looking elsewhere.
- **Personalized experience.** Personalization is a continuing feature in our lives and high-potential job seekers have similar expectations. Organizations can use available search data to target job seekers with new opportunities that are likely to meet their interests.
- **Fast responses.** It is critical for hiring companies to get back in touch with talented candidates promptly. At the very least, upon receipt of job applications, an automated email could be sent out to inform job applicants that their application is being processed.
- **Streamlined job application process.** To create a streamlined hiring process it is important to understand how high-potential employees flow through an application process, whether on a mobile device or not. Measure and monitor talent acquisition web traffic to gain insight to improve candidate engagement and experience; and, ultimately, your recruitment effectiveness.
- **Strengthened data security.** High-potential employees are more concerned about data security than other employees. They may drop out of the job application when they perceive personal information is not kept or delivered securely. To avoid losing potential highly valued top talent, organizations should consider strengthening data security in mobile recruiting and highligting their security to put candidates at ease.

This research clearly demonstrates the importance of mobile recruitment to high potential candidates. The most desirable job seekers are not only more active users of mobile devices for job search and application, they also think more favorably about organizations offering such technologies. Organizations cannot afford to ignore mobile recruitment if they are to attract top talent.

IBM Smarter Workforce Institute

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If you'd like to learn more about IBM's Mobile Recruitment capabilities on IBM Kenexa Talent Acquisition Suite, **click here.**

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Contributors

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