

# The true impact of interview scheduling on hiring

Exclusive insight and data on what candidates expect and want from the hiring process



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# Introduction

At Cronofy, we've always believed **scheduling should be seamless, secure and efficient**. It's why we exist. And that's why we surveyed thousands of candidates to better understand the impact of interview scheduling on candidate experience and employer perception.

We've been working and speaking with recruiters and HR technology providers for many years, but this time we wanted to hear things directly from the candidates themselves. The results of this survey give recruiters and talent acquisition teams real insight into what candidates expect and want in the hiring process. And we've achieved what we set out to do, **delivering concrete data** on areas that could be easily improved by HR professionals and the businesses they work for.

Every HR professional we spoke to knows that **interview scheduling is a source of friction and a time consuming part of the process**. What this survey made us realise is

just how important interview scheduling is to ensure a business can acquire the talent they need to grow. Even we didn't fully comprehend how **interconnected interview scheduling is with the entire hiring experience and candidates' perception of a brand**.

## Interview scheduling matters more than you think

The survey data we present in this report clearly shows that businesses can and do lose out on top talent because of interview scheduling delays. And that has further

consequences on their ability to hire. With this information, recruiters can work to deliver a better overall experience and reduce their true cost to hire while sourcing diverse and qualified candidates.

What's clear is that although improving your interview scheduling isn't an answer to all the challenges in hiring, it is linked to many aspects of the hiring process. Addressing and improving the issue of scheduling in recruitment will deliver results far beyond just the improved efficiency and time saved by the hiring staff.

**First-class interview scheduling is worth more than the sum of its parts.**



**Adam Bird**  
CEO & Co-founder | Cronofy



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## The true cost of inefficiency



## A subterranean problem

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“ I have long believed **scheduling is a subterranean problem** in recruiting and a real part of **why people get annoyed** – it’s hard work, it’s unnecessary, and it’s basically **high effort, low value**. It doesn’t surprise me that it has a huge impact on **candidate experience**.”

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**Hung Lee**

Curator | Recruiting Brainfood

Hung is Curator of Recruiting Brainfood, one of the most powerful HR, talent and recruiting communities in the world.

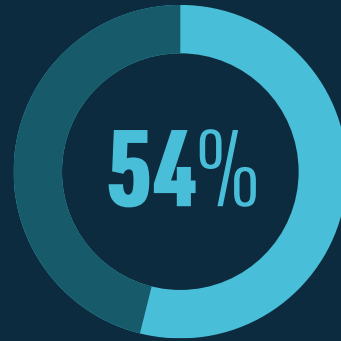
## Top findings



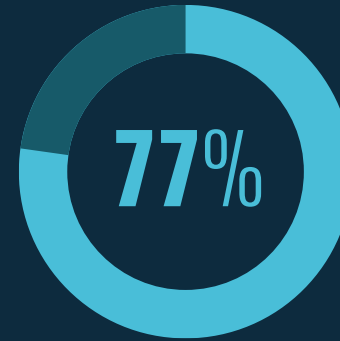
**6,500**

candidates surveyed

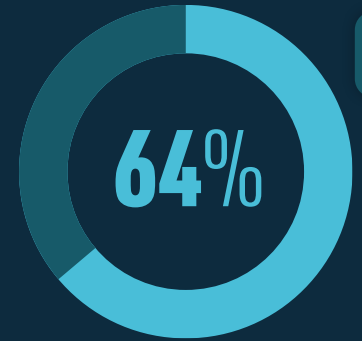
**62%** of senior candidates have left the process because of scheduling delays — 73% in the UK.



of senior UK candidates are frustrated by scheduling delays



of senior candidates say your recruitment process affects perception



of candidates were less likely to engage or recommend you in future



Regions that favor human touch



**48%**



**59%**



Regions that favor responsiveness



**47%**

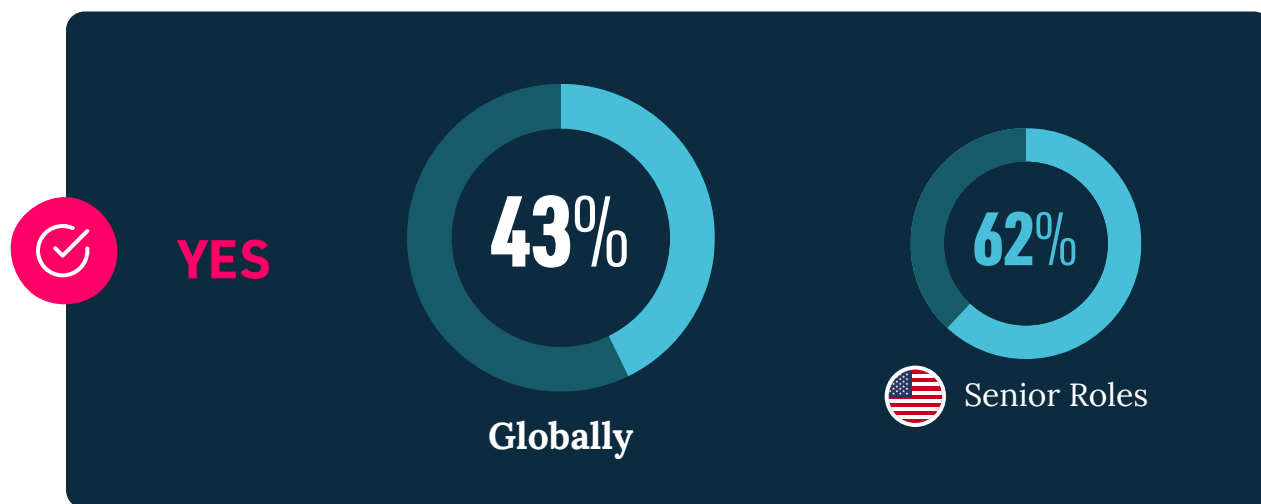


**43%**

## Don't risk losing talent

Have candidates ever left a recruitment process because they were frustrated with the time it took to schedule an interview?

7



### INSIGHTS

What's clear is that across the world **almost half of candidates** – rising significantly in some territories or for more senior roles – have left a recruitment process due to **frustrations** resulting directly from **interview scheduling delays** and inefficiency.

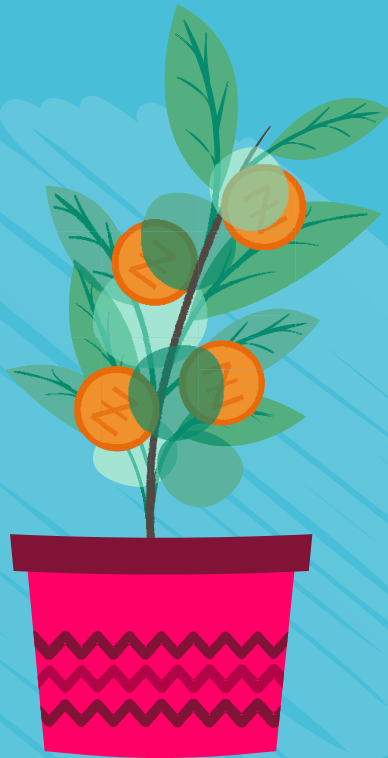
### How a damaged employer brand will affect you

- 1 Loss of talent
- 2 Stalled growth
- 3 Restricted hiring
- 4 Poor reputation

## The cost of inefficient interview scheduling

8

# Money doesn't grow on trees and neither do good candidates



### **T**he hiring process is costly.

Time is money, and when you lose talent partway through the hiring process, that's money down the drain. The **longer your hiring process, the higher the cost of hiring.**

The **true cost** of inefficient interview scheduling **cannot only be measured in dollars** but on how it impacts a business's ability to hire now and in the future.

### Cost to hire



Monetary costs \$4,000 avg. per hire + agency fees



Most companies underestimate the cost of recruitment by 90-95%

Source: Glassdoor | Quarsh



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**Protect your  
employer brand**

## Interviewing is marketing

10

“**Hiring is part of your brand.** I think people see brand in terms of marketing, they see it in terms of culture, but they don't always **align it to how they hire...** Getting **people to understand** that is key.”

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**David Smith**

Leading speaker on People Engagement & Business Performance

David is a consultant who previously led People Operations at Asda for 15 years. He is the UK's number one speaker on People Engagement and business performance.

# The importance of employer brand in hiring

## Take control of how your brand is perceived

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A **positive impression** of an employer is **essential when sourcing top talent**. Overall perceptions of a prospective employer are based on many things, but one that's **often overlooked** and our survey clearly identifies is **interview scheduling**.

In today's increasingly competitive job market, a **positive employer brand is critical**. Without one, hiring and retaining the best employees becomes **challenging** – and **costly**.



### INSIGHTS

Our research shows a direct link between candidates' interview scheduling experience and their perception of your brand.

### An employer brand is...



The market perception of what it's like to work for a company. It's the image that your potential, current and past employees have in their minds about the experience of being employed at your company.

# Protect your employer brand

Does the process of interview scheduling affect candidates' perception of an employer?



YES

Globally

65%



Senior Roles

77%

Would candidates be less likely to recommend or engage with an employer in the future, based on frustrating interview scheduling?



YES

Globally

48%



Senior Roles

64%



## INSIGHTS

If there's a **delay**, this can cause **disengagement**, and ultimately a negative takeaway of the brand. Future applications or recommendations can be impacted. The vast majority of **candidates linked the process of interview scheduling to the perception** they formed of a potential employer.



# Interview scheduling efficiency and employer brand

At what point would candidates disengage from an interview scheduling process or form a negative impression because it took too long?

13

**Time candidates** would take before forming a negative impression or disengaging from a **long interview scheduling process**:

Globally  
Less than 1 week



Globally  
Up to 2 weeks



Less than  
1 week

51%

Up to  
2 weeks

77%

**Time** those specifically in **Senior Roles** would take:

62%

Global  
Less than  
1 week



80%

Global  
Up to  
2 weeks

66%

Less than  
1 week



82%

Up to  
2 weeks



## INSIGHTS

**Candidate impatience** is identified globally, particularly in **senior roles**. It's notably **higher in US**. If it takes longer than a week, a large proportion of candidates will take a negative impression.



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**Interview scheduling  
delays are costly**

## Delays can be costly



### INSIGHTS

There are factors in addition to scheduling which impact the wait but what's clear is that **interview scheduling is one area that offers an opportunity**, where improvements are fairly inexpensive and easy to implement. Ultimately, this **simple, and very fixable thing could be costing recruiters and brands**. Losing talent. Hindering growth.

Even when updating a candidate regularly – it's usually clear what's going on behind the scenes. Our report shows, **this can negatively impact their perception of your brand** and ultimately, what it might be like to work for you.

“

I'm seeing a lot of **recruiters complaining** about not getting the **quality applications** they need. So when you get them in your funnel, **you want to keep them**, especially if they're qualified. **Scheduling is part two of that.**”



**Jessica Miller-Merrell**  
Founder | Workology

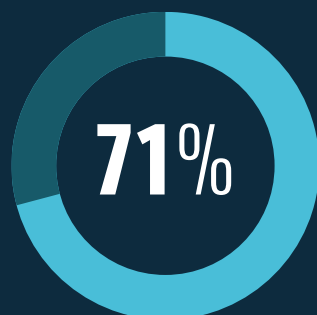
Jessica is founder of Workology (an HR consultancy) and a workplace change agent focused on human resources and talent acquisition.

# Candidates can pull the plug

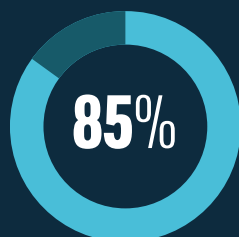
How long would candidates expect to wait between applying for a job and having an interview booked, before giving up on the process?

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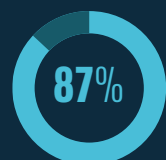
The **vast majority** of candidates **expect to wait a week or less** before giving up on the process:



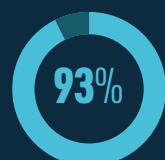
Globally



Senior Roles



USA



Senior Roles



## INSIGHTS

The research reveals the expectations from the date of first application to an interview is shorter than talent acquisition leaders may think.

**26% of applicants to senior positions expect an interview to be scheduled in a day or less.**



# Pay attention to candidate frustrations

Which part of the hiring process frustrates candidates the most?

17



29%

Interview  
scheduling delays



28%

Too much  
bureaucracy



18%

Responsiveness

Those in **Senior Roles** that found interview scheduling frustrating:

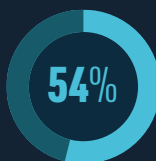


Senior Roles



34%

Global  
Senior Roles



Senior Roles



## INSIGHTS

Frustrations can be **dependent on demographic factors**. But candidates want a **faster**, more efficient recruitment process, with **better communication** and without losing the **human touch**.

Certain aspects of the hiring process, like **interview scheduling**, are a **major source of friction and delays**. This presents an **opportunity for automation**. Scheduling should be invisible and seamless, for example recruiters shouldn't engage in email back and forth to find an interview time.



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**An opportunity with  
automation**

## Opportunity for automation

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“

If you just think about the process of how you book interviews and **how many emails are in that chain**, how many people need to look at diaries – there might be **another 20 emails** before the candidate actually ends up **having an answer.**”

.....



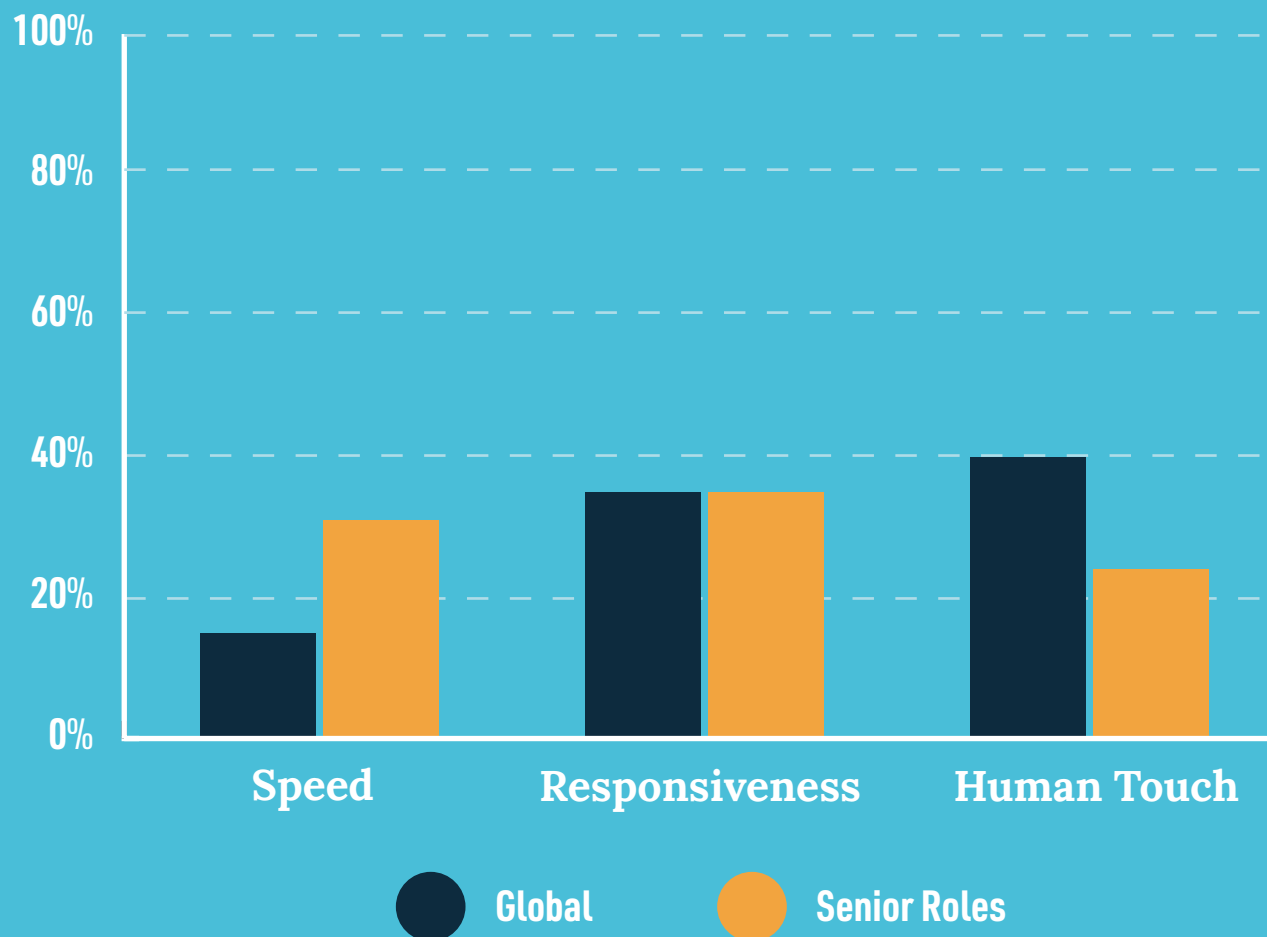
**Bill Boorman**  
HR Adviser

Bill is an HR Adviser, specialising in the integration of social recruiting for corporate companies for companies including ProvenBase and CandidateID.

# Deliver on what matters to candidates

What is the most important thing to candidates in the hiring process?

20



## INSIGHTS

Responsiveness came out on top as the **most important thing** with **almost half of women** selecting it. Interestingly, **39%** of women were most **frustrated** by poor **responsiveness** and **27%** poor **communication**.

On the other hand, **men put speed first** and cite **scheduling delays** as their **greatest frustration**.



## A timely human touch

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“ The **human touch** is what happens **when the appointment has been booked**. I don't think people expect you to have a phone call with them to book an appointment. **That's a waste of time**. I think streamlining a process and then **being really human and friendly at the end** when they get to the **real interaction** is what it **should look like**.”

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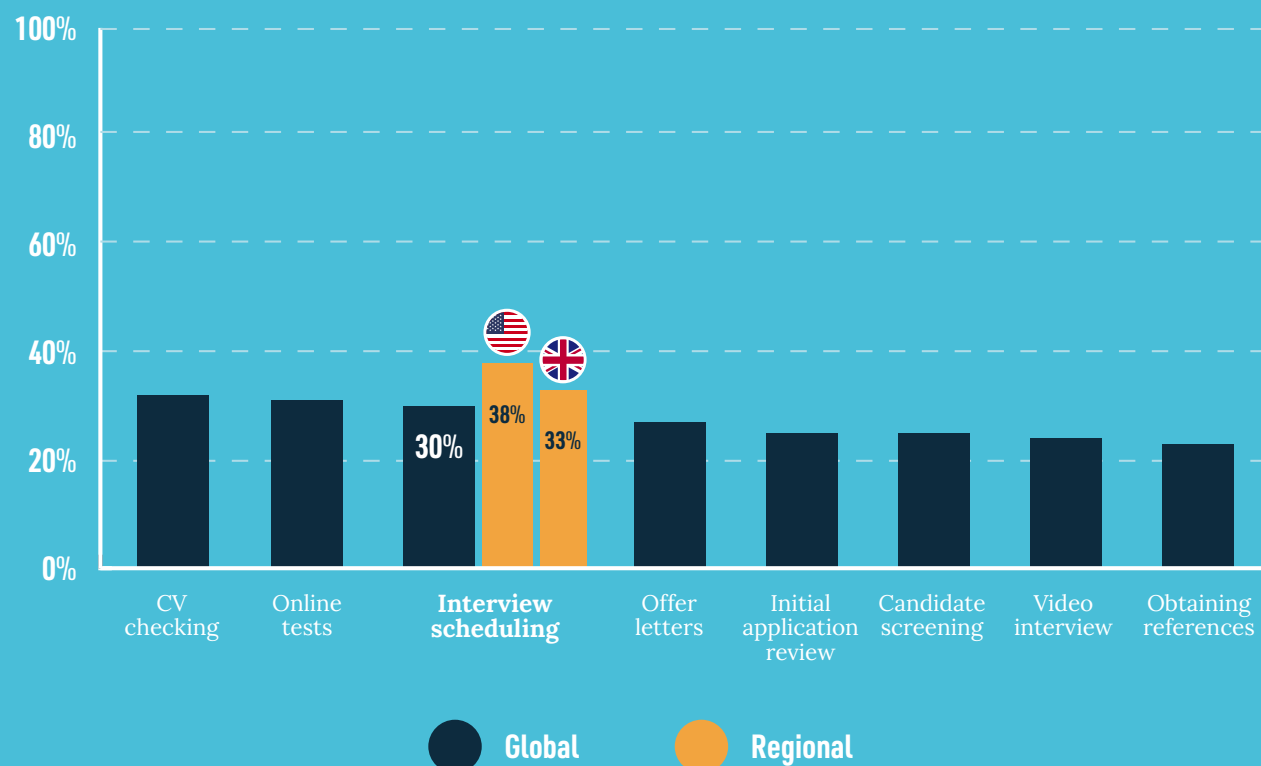


**David Smith**

Leading speaker on People Engagement & Business Performance

# Improve using automation

In which areas of the hiring process do candidates want to see more automation?



## INSIGHTS

Interview scheduling ranks highly in popularity. Candidate **appetite for automation is there** and should be capitalized on. **Automating interview scheduling and video interviewing** became even more **desirable** to candidates applying for senior roles.

Crucially, talent acquisition professionals **shouldn't feel overwhelmed** by a pressure to automate everything.

The benefit of automation comes through prioritization and **identifying areas where the most value can be obtained** and then finding appropriate automated solutions, which can deliver measurable results. Importantly automation **must not detract from the human touch**, which adds a lot of positive experience. Usually this can be maximized later in the recruitment process.

“**Candidates like automation, but they also want a human touch – which seems like a paradox. But I think candidates don’t really care about what’s actually happening in the background, they just want to avoid a stressful ambiguous period of not knowing what’s going on.**”

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**Hung Lee**

Curator | Recruiting Brainfood



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## Key takeaways

# Impact and recommendations

25

- ☆ A good candidate experience is about **building a great relationship**, the hiring process is a **key opportunity to sell** what **your business** is like to work for.
- ☆ Ultimately **friction** or inefficiency **impacts** this experience **negatively**.
- ☆ **Technology** can **improve the experience** and eliminate the possibility of a negative impression, even if the hire doesn't work out.
- ☆ Impressing the candidate and ensuring a **positive takeaway whatever the outcome** is about consideration.
- ☆ It's about **automating what can be automated** and **empowering recruiters and employers** to implement a first-class hiring experience.

“ I would also **implement technology** which allows a candidate to access **where they are in process through self-serve**. There's no reason why that's an email, they should just be able to **log in and check** where they're at.”



**Hung Lee**  
Curator  
Recruiting Brainfood

# Address candidate frustrations to drive change

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## INSIGHTS

Should a positive candidate experience still be at the center of successful recruitment? Yes. Is the relationship and expertise, **the human touch a really important part of this?** Definitely. Should automation be implemented in the right places, where it can be most effective and **create a smoother experience.** Absolutely.

The report has identified that candidate frustrations stem from a range of things across the hiring process. What's clear is that **interview scheduling or rather delays in scheduling interviews are costing businesses talent.** With at least a third of all candidates having left a hiring process due to frustrations with the time it took to schedule an interview.

“

Businesses need to **look at their data first.** It can be something **simple like a survey** where we just send out a little Google form to recent hires and say: **what did you like** about the process, **what did you not like,** give me some feedback. And it's better to make it **anonymous to get honest answers.”**






**Jessica Miller-Merrell**

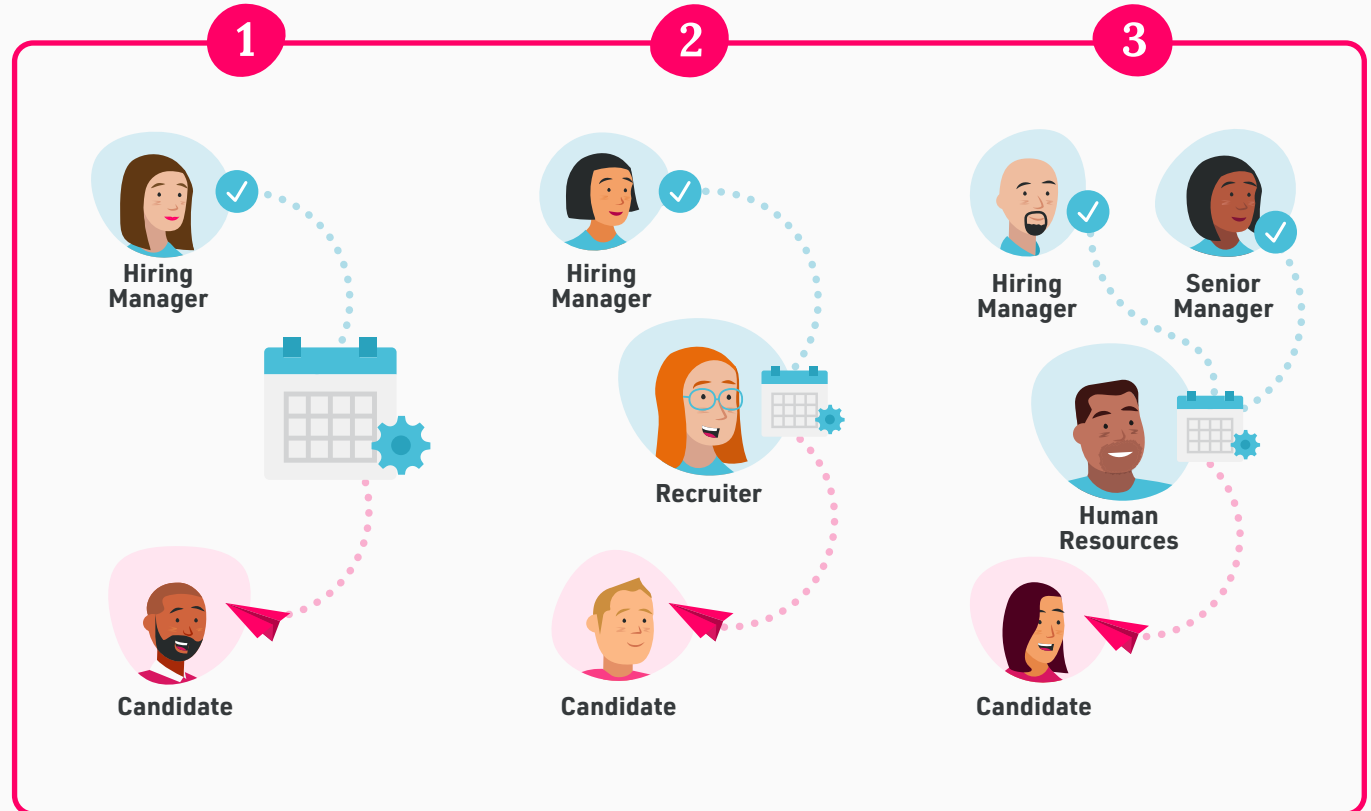
Founder  
Workology

# Solving interviewing scheduling challenges with Cronofy

Saving time **where it matters** with automated interview scheduling

-  **Reduce waiting times**, meeting requests are sent as soon as candidates progress through interview stages.
-  **One-time set up** for recruiters and hiring managers. They share their availability with each other.
-  **Peace of mind.** Cronofy is the scheduling platform for business. Data privacy and security is paramount to our clients so it's paramount to us.

## Interview scheduling scenarios



A scheduling solution  
that works effectively

# 06

## Analysis & interviews



# Expert interviews

**Any manager will identify hiring as one of their key priorities. And it is made characteristically more challenging by the under-capacity that comes with it.**

These experiences are matched by candidates' near universal stories of similar disappointment and frustration. But the story doesn't end there – the very candidates that you hope to attract for their talent and relationships can leave the process with a newly negative perception of your brand, less likely to recommend or engage with you in future.

So when the stakes are so high, what's going wrong here? We spoke with the experts to get their take on our research, and their advice and examples of how to give the best possible candidate experience. Equitable respect for time

## Equitable respect for time

Recruitment is a relationship. Like any relationship, both sides can become keenly aware of how much effort is being put in and



**Hung Lee**, Curator of the HR community **Recruiting Brainfood** explains how this balance changes over time:

“ If I've just spammed in an application and I get an automated response, fair enough. But if I put energy into a call with somebody, I'd probably expect some sort of reciprocal response, even if I've been rejected.”

whether they feel their needs are being met. Many people talk about the need for a balance of power in the recruitment process. However, the idea of reciprocation feels even more important.

At the same time, while candidates might not expect huge depth of effort this early in the process, it's clear that speed is a make or

break factor. **62%** of all senior candidates we polled identified this as a reason for leaving the process.



**David Smith** is a consultant who previously led People Operations at **Asda** for 15 years. He says recruitment is as much about attracting and 'woo'-ing candidates as assessing them. And scheduling can be one of the key pressure points. In this case, hiring is marketing:

“ Part of the attraction is the speed at which you respond. The good people quickly get frustrated and think, 'Oh, this is just such a pain it's taking too long' and off they go.”

It's easy to see why this matters on the surface. However, our research suggests

the consequences are much broader than most realise.

**77%** of senior professionals said the scheduling process directly affects their perception of that employer. Most importantly, **64%** said they would be less likely to engage or recommend the employer in future.



**Jessica Miller-Merrell** of HR consultancy **Workology**, gives a noteworthy consideration:

“ You have no idea if the person that you didn’t give a response to has 2 million followers on TikTok and **one video could totally disrupt your whole business.**”

Even in normal circumstances, you can assume that the candidates you want in your process are well-connected authorities in your industry. And they don’t have to reach

millions to leave lasting brand damage among their peers.



**Ben Gateley**, of online people platform **Charlie**, says your employer brand should be part of your external-facing culture:

“ People are experiencing that through the interview process **and you have no idea where they’re going to be in five, ten years’ time.** We have people on our team who I interviewed once, and we said, this is probably **isn’t the right time.** And then two, three years later, **we’ve hired them back.**”

So where is this frustration coming from? What is causing employers and the best candidates to fall out of sync and leaving this terrible impression? And what can be done about it?

## Simple areas that count

Gateley thinks many underestimate the importance of respecting candidates’ time.

“ **If I’m deciding to work somewhere, really what I’m thinking about is how do I want to spend my time in the future? How do I want to spend a resource that it’s impossible for me to ever get back?**”

Lee brings this back to scheduling – the “**subterranean problem**” in recruiting, which he describes as hard, unnecessary work that’s high effort and low value.

All our experts highlighted how women seem to be affected disproportionately in the research.

Smith describes how we need to hear approaches unlike what most employers would naturally come out with.

“ **Your recruitment process needs to say: if you need to work around the habits and routines of children, then we’ll work around that.**”

Miller-Merrell adds that this must go beyond even these good intentions,

**“ If you truly want to be an inclusive organization, you need to make your hiring experience inclusive and part of that is the scheduling tool.”**

It's clear that technology is not just a solution for efficiency and convenience, it has consequences at all levels of inclusion. Miller-Merrel continues:

**“ The group most likely to use smartphones as their sole form of technology in the US is Hispanics. If you make your application process difficult in that format, you're discriminating against this minority.”**



**Bill Boorman**, an HR advisor, says the challenge is similar to the effort brands put into their consumer experience:

**“ Make everything as simple and logical as possible — you want to be able to do everything in that one transaction.”**

How far is your current scheduling process from this standard?

## Not just tech, not just people

In every region, the demand for better scheduling solutions vied with the human touch as the most desired area for improvement. But how do you reconcile this seeming contradiction?

Again, Lee comes back to the differing expectations as candidates process through the process. He sees evidence that candidates actually prefer automation to human interaction for accessing simple FAQs and ask more candid questions without fear of being judged.

**“ If talking to a chatbot, they'd say things like 'what's the salary', 'do I need a visa?' They basically do the extraction of information in a much more straightforward way, with no requirements, small talk, no expenditure of energy.”**

In a chatbot project at Airbus, Boorman observed that **95%** of people opted to talk to the machine to get a black and white answer in the quickest time possible. The idea that you

need hands on humans slowing things down in the early stages seems a far cry from what our experts suggest.

The Airbus example also revealed an appetite for automation in scheduling.

**“ If you just think about the process of appointments, how many emails in the chain, how many diaries — there might be another 20 emails before we actually end up having an answer. Whereas if we can have a simple set of rules where I can commit to this next scheduling step and you can come back to me straight away, that's job done.”**

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You need to be **human-led but software-enhanced**

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## Human touch

So, where does the human touch fit in this and how do you get the balance right?

Gateley says it goes without saying you should

be using technology to support the high value touchpoints that only humans can do.

**“ You need to be human-led but software-enhanced.”**

Smith's responsibilities at Asda spanned both IT and People – putting him in a good position to emphasize the power of both in concert. For him, the human touch is what happens after scheduling tools and chatbots have helped answer questions and book a time.

**“ People have actually read your CV, they know who's coming and they know what time you're turning up. And there they are, ready to receive you and welcome you. That's the human touch. When people insist on speaking to you about everything, you think: we could have dealt with this much quicker, and we could have had the proper conversation down the line.”**

Lee repeats the role of reciprocity and how the stakes for reputation shift as the process continues. He says candidates are more likely to have hostility towards a non-human response when it's used in the wrong places. Technology should replace menial work, not the areas where sensitivity, engagement and demonstrating investment of time pay off.

## Taking time

Throughout the conversations, a core realisation lingered in our minds. Candidates want faster, more automated processes in exactly the areas where recruiters will see the greatest ROI and efficiencies. Everyone wants the same thing.

We hope through these interviews and the accompanying data, it will help more teams justify what might seem like a dereliction of duty – but in fact is a liberation for all involved.

When we return to this topic in future, we hope to find a scene of less frustration, better automation and ultimately, more people reaching the roles they belong in.



## Discover more

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Talking to David Smith about **the perfect hiring process**

[READ MORE](#)



Our discussion on **HR tech and candidate experience** with Bill Boorman

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Talking **data and gender in recruitment** with Workology

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Why **employer brand matters** and why it's essential to your hiring process with James Ellis

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Talking to Hung Lee about **candidate expectations**

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06

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## About Cronofy

## Scheduling experts for business

# Scheduling everything for everyone

At Cronofy we focus on delivering tools and services that allow businesses, groups and people to **effectively organize their time**. We believe that **managing time should take minimal effort** and consider a person's whole life with complete **respect for privacy**.

We're the scheduling experts for business and this is why tens of thousands of companies worldwide

rely on **our enterprise-ready technology** to power their scheduling. We work with global brands in many industries including HR, Healthcare and Finance.

Cronofy clients can choose to either integrate their software with **our APIs** or to **partner with us** to deliver secure and **scalable scheduling** to their teams through our **end-users tools**.



[www.cronofy.com](http://www.cronofy.com)  
[marketing@cronofy.com](mailto:marketing@cronofy.com)

# Why Cronofy?

The results of this survey have shown that **scheduling interviews without delays is key to acquiring top talent**. Lengthy scheduling processes get in the way and have a negative impact on perception of the employer.

That's why Cronofy works with thousands of businesses to deliver real-time, automated and secure interview scheduling. **Saving almost 300 hours a year per recruiter!**

Industry leading brands worldwide already trust Cronofy

36

ApplicantPRO

PageUp

TALENTSOFT

JobAdder

HIRED

Personio

Wade&Wendy

infor

EASYRECRUE

Teamtaylor

DUUOO

harver

phenom  
people

SYMPHONY  
TALENT



# What we do

At Cronofy we focus on delivering tools and services that allow businesses, groups and people to **effectively organize their time**. We believe that **managing time should take minimal effort** and consider a person's whole life with complete **respect for privacy**.

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