

# 'Error 404' Give up the 'ghosting'

In our last issue (CN August 7) we discussed the white elephant in the room – compensation, the pros and cons of disclosing this crucial bit of information to the job seeker and that the omission of it may sometimes actually benefit the employer's brand reputation.

In this piece, we'll touch on a spiralling issue, generated by both the employer and potential candidates in the process of talent acquisition, 'ghosting'.

The concept is commonly used when referring to a relationship that ended abruptly with no forewarning and withdrawal of all forms of communication by the other partner, void of closure.

Alex Christian (2022), author for BBC's article title, 'Work life - Why workers and employers are ghosting each other' reiterated that, "Ghosting is considered bad practice for both companies and workers; no one likes being on the receiving end of it. Yet its rise seems inexorable: digital hiring processes deluge companies with candidates, making replying to everyone hard, even as labour shortages give job-hunters more options as employers scramble for talent."

How stressful would it be to engage in a recruitment process after submitting your application and being



shortlisted for an interview, only to be dropped from all forms of communication?

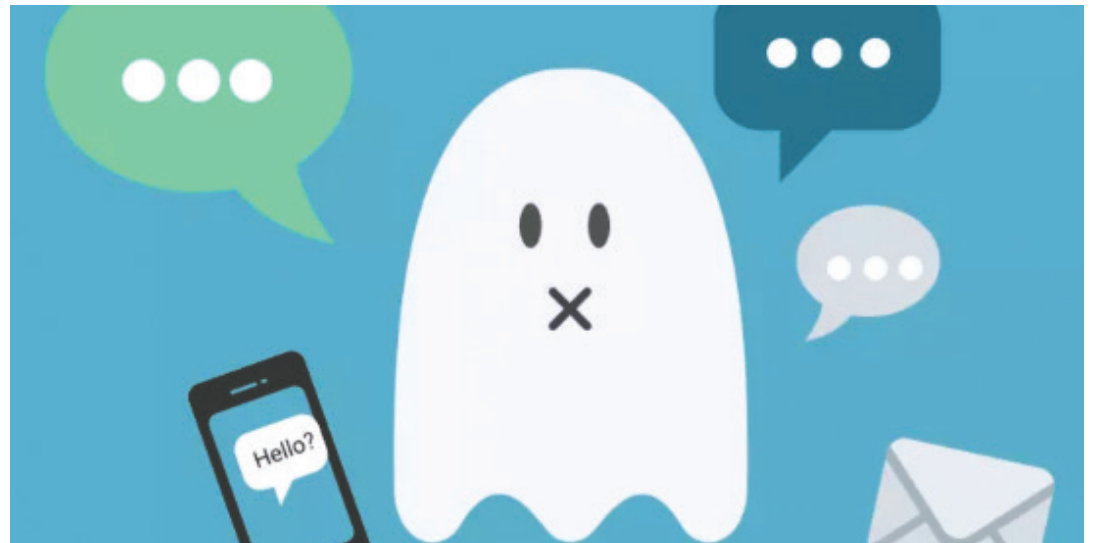
You've done the first round of the interview process and now successfully moved on to the second interview. As a candidate, you have been asked to conduct a skill assessment, on short notice over two days.

After review by the hiring officer or the recruiter, you are confident that you will be a successful candidate and thus, have progressed to the final leg of the recruitment process.

After three weeks of preparation, you have been called to determine salary negotiation and expectations. Up to this point, e-mails, texts, and calls have been open and frequent by the recruiter and you have a good sense of the next steps.

Post your final interview, you have been informed that the final decision will be made within a week.

Six weeks have elapsed during which you have made numerous, but futile attempts, to make contact for feedback, but all



existing channels of communication have been closed. Ghosted.

Similarly, as a hiring manager, you've narrowed down the recruitment steps and at the cusp of making an offer to the preferred candidate, the candidate has blacklisted your calls.

No response from emails and there's only one tick on your last message sent via WhatsApp in your final attempt to elicit a response from your potential hire. Up until this time, the potential candidate and the HR manager have maintained open communication, and the next steps, and contractual benefits have been negotiated and agreed to, along with a tentative start date. Ghosted.

Though many channels of communication are accessible and available across numerous platforms, the inability to provide feedback by either party (employer or job candidate) seems unprofessional.

Andrew Deichler (2021) in his online article, 'Why Employers Ghost Job Seekers, and How to Respond' supports the fact that there is a dissonance between communication and empathy. "The crux of the ghosting problem is failure to communicate, whether it's the employer or the candidate who is the guilty party."

People don't want to have tough conversations and explain why the job, or the candidate is not the right fit, noted Kimberly Reeves, a consultant who specialises in payroll, HR, and finance with A Better Way Consulting. "It's a total breakdown; people don't know how to talk to each other anymore."

## How to navigate if you have been ghosted by your candidate

- **Set clear expectations** - When presenting your job offer, include as many

details as possible. For example, you can share detailed information on salary, paid leave, organisational structure, and goal expectations. Also, make sure to describe your hiring process: stages and duration

- **Keep your recruitment process short** - A hiring process that lasts weeks can turn your candidates off, or they can find another prospective employer in the meantime. Focus with your team on the essential steps of the recruiting process
- **Take care of your candidate experience** - Treat others like you'd like to be treated. Don't ghost if you don't want to be ghosted by candidates. Answer calls and always respond to emails as fast as you can. Be transparent and give valuable interview feedback – ideally, with the help of your hiring manager.

**Bonus tip:** Show candidates that you are open to communication and feedback on time. It is always the right thing to manage everyone's expectation, so we would always urge hiring managers and our recruiters to provide clear and honest feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

Our employer platform via [www.jobstt.com](http://www.jobstt.com) allows our client to automate responses to applicants in the first step of the recruitment process where they did not meet the entry requirements.

We do not subscribe to the adage of 'no news is good news' but rather, feedback is critical to growth.

**Our team continues to support employers in the best way possible during the recruitment process. Feel free to reach out to us for any additional support on compensation and job description development at [carolyn@progressivett.com](mailto:carolyn@progressivett.com) or [duval@progressivett.com](mailto:duval@progressivett.com)**

## Why have you been ghosted by...

### The recruiter

- Telling someone 'No' can be hard
- Someone else is a better fit for the position
- A recruiter doesn't have time. For entry level role, where the number of applicants far outstrip the recruiter's available resource, it simply may be too difficult to engage in feedback
- A recruiter doesn't have the right tools to automate mass or bulk rejection emails or messages
- Hiring managers didn't share the real cause of rejection, thus the recruiter can offer little to

no real feedback

- The company is no longer hiring for the role
- Your salary expectations are out of budget

### The potential candidate

- The candidate got another job
- The current employer convinced the candidate to stay
- The candidate doesn't really want the new position
- The candidate didn't get a satisfying offer
- The recruitment process was too complex and lengthy

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