

2009 staffing company survey: How often do candidates decline an assignment?

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You are reading findings from our 2009 staffing company survey. This report offers insights about the percent of time that temporary staffing candidates decline an offered position. The full analysis follows this summary.

Key findings

- The median candidate decline rate is 11-15%.
- Of staffing firms that derive more than half of their revenue from one industry, those primarily serving the healthcare industry report the highest rate of candidate decline, with a median in the 21%-25% range. At the other end of the spectrum, staffing firms primarily serving the business services, energy/chemical and government sectors report the lowest rate of candidate decline.
- Of staffing firms deriving more than half their revenue from one skill segment, those primarily selling creative/marketing and healthcare skills experience the highest median rate of candidate decline, each in the 21-25% range.
- At the very high end of candidate decline rates, roughly a tenth of staffing firms reported rates the 41%-45% range or more. Most of these firms operated in the healthcare or IT skill segments.

Terminology

Throughout our series of reports based upon this survey, we refer to "industry concentration" and "segment concentration." These represent firms that generate more than 50% of total revenue in particular areas. For example, a firm deriving more than half of its revenue from the manufacturing industry would be categorized under the industry concentration "manufacturing;" likewise, a firm deriving more than half of its revenue from sales in office/clerical skills would be categorized under the segment concentration "office/clerical."

We use "--" to denote when the data was insufficient.

About the data

The initial findings included in this report are based on the results of an online survey of staffing companies conducted in March 2009. A total of 902 individuals representing unique companies shared their opinions in the survey.

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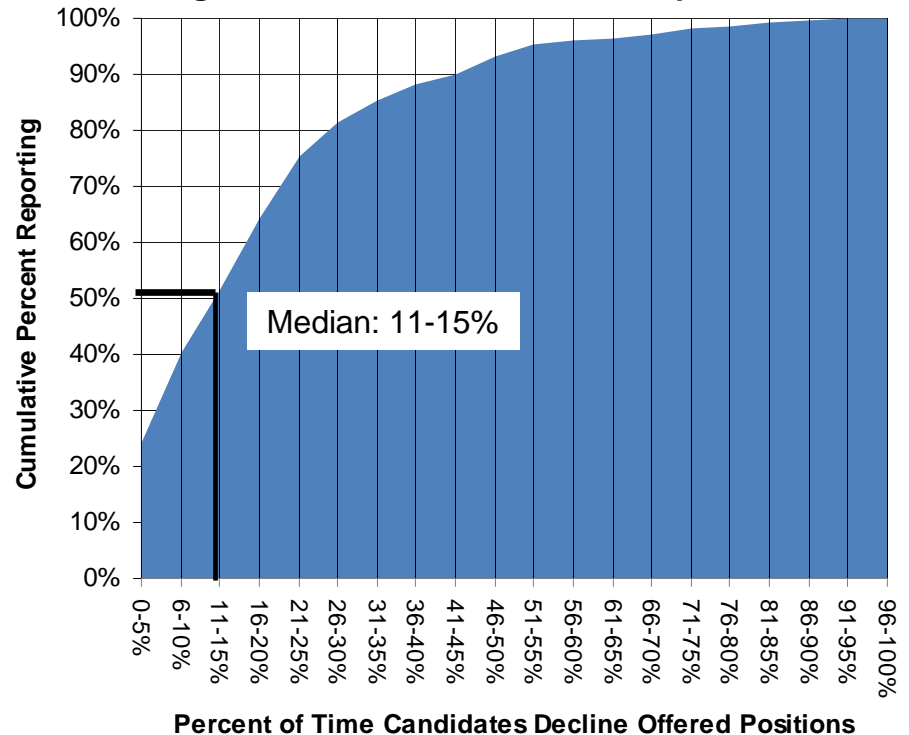
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How Often Do Candidates Decline an Offer?

- The median reported rate at which candidates decline offered positions is 11%-15%.
- At the low end, about a quarter of firms said their candidate decline rate was very minimal-- in the 0%-5% range; at the high end, about a quarter of firms said their candidates decline offered positions 21%-25% of the time or more.
- This in response to the question, “About what percent of time do you estimate a temporary staffing candidate declines an offered position?”

Cumulative percent: Approximately, about what percent of time do you estimate a temporary staffing candidate declines an offered position?



Candidate Decline Rates by Industry, Skill Segment

- Of staffing firms that derive more than half of their revenue from one industry, those primarily serving the healthcare industry report the highest rate of candidate decline, with a median in the 21%-25% range. At the other end of the spectrum, staffing firms primarily serving the business services, energy/chemical and government sectors report the lowest rate of candidate decline.
- Of staffing firms deriving more than half their revenue from one skill segment, those primarily selling creative/marketing and healthcare skills experience the highest median rate of candidate decline, each in the 21-25% range.
- Candidate decline rate did not appear to vary with any consistency as a function of firm size.
- At the very high end of candidate decline rates, roughly a tenth of staffing firms reported rates the 41%-45% range or more. Most of these firms operated in the healthcare or IT skill segments.

Median Candidate Decline Rate, by Industry and Segment*

Industry Concentration*	Median Candidate Decline Rate
Healthcare	21-25%
Restaurant/hospitality	16-20%
Finance/insurance	11-15%
Consumer products	11-15%
Manufacturing	11-15%
Packaging/transp/warehousing	11-15%
Pharma/biotech/medical equip	11-15%
Technology/telecom	11-15%
Business services	6-10%
Energy/chemical	6-10%
Government	6-10%
Segment Concentration*	Median Candidate Decline Rate
Creative/marketing	21-25%
Healthcare	21-25%
Engineering/design	16-20%
Direct hire	11-15%
Finance/accounting	11-15%
Industrial	11-15%
Information technology	11-15%
Office/clerical	11-15%
Median across all segments	11-15%

*Results reported for staffing companies deriving a majority of their revenue derived from indicated segments and industries.