ERC | 100

Making Workplaces Great for 100 Years.

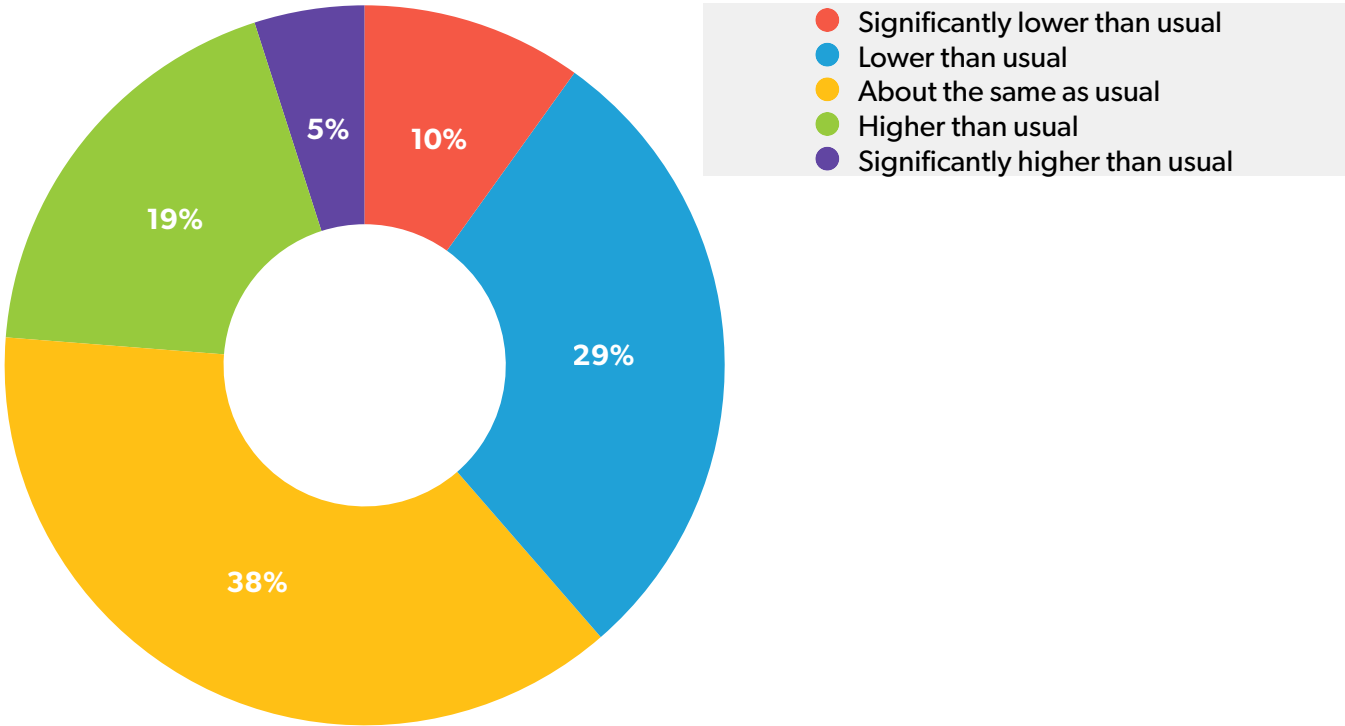## ERC Member Poll Results

Talent Attraction Strategies During COVID-19

August 2020

ERC Member Poll:

Talent Attraction Strategies during COVID-19

FIGURE 1 | How does the number of job openings your organization has posted since the COVID-19 pandemic began in mid-March compare to the number of job openings your organization has typically had in previous years, over the same time period (March-August)?

Legend:
- 🔴 Significantly lower than usual
- 🔵 Lower than usual
- 🟡 About the same as usual
- 🟢 Higher than usual
- 🟣 Significantly higher than usual

Chart values: 10%, 29%, 38%, 19%, 5%

*Based on the response provided to the question represented in **FIGURE 1**, participants were asked for additional information about why the number of job openings was higher or lower than usual. The responses provided are summarized in **FIGURE 1a-c** below.*

FIGURE 1a | Significantly lower, or lower than usual

- Shutdowns
- Decrease in business
- Hiring freeze
- Restructuring
- Lower turnover
- Economic uncertainty
- More selective in what roles to fill until "normal" resumes

FIGURE 1b | Same as usual

- **Not impacted:** Business not impacted by pandemic
- **Remote work:** Able to continue to work as normal remotely
- **Essential**: business/workers
- **Found exceptional candidates:** hired despite pandemic

FIGURE 1c | Significantly higher, or higher than usual

- **Business increased during pandemic**: industry specific, adding additional roles, and/or overall volume of workers required to meet demand
- **Post layoff openings:** not everyone is returning wen recalled to work, so need to fill more openings than normal
- **Growth:** Seeing business growth
- **Business has rebounded:** Sales have increased so production needs have increased
- **Shortage of available labor:** more open positions even though we downsized some
- **Positions have been pulled off of hold:** anticipating a need for more employees to support business needs

FIGURE 2 | Which of the following recruiting sources has your organization used to attract candidates to your job openings since the COVID-19 pandemic began in mid-March?
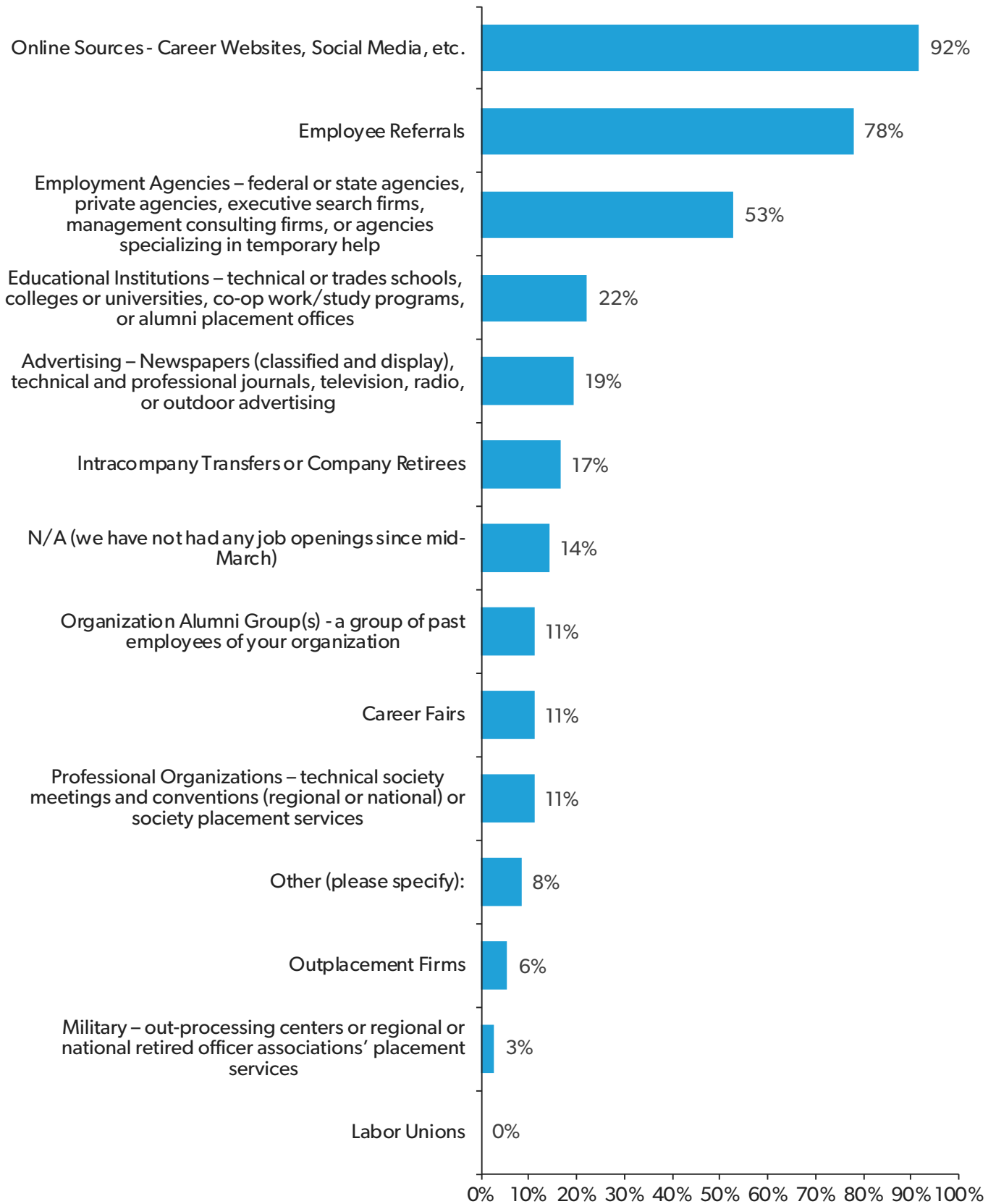
Recruiting Source	Percentage
Online Sources - Career Websites, Social Media, etc.	92%
Employee Referrals	78%
Employment Agencies – federal or state agencies, private agencies, executive search firms, management consulting firms, or agencies specializing in temporary help	53%
Educational Institutions – technical or trades schools, colleges or universities, co-op work/study programs, or alumni placement offices	22%
Advertising – Newspapers (classified and display), technical and professional journals, television, radio, or outdoor advertising	19%
Intracompany Transfers or Company Retirees	17%
N/A (we have not had any job openings since mid-March)	14%
Organization Alumni Group(s) - a group of past employees of your organization	11%
Career Fairs	11%
Professional Organizations – technical society meetings and conventions (regional or national) or society placement services	11%
Other (please specify):	8%
Outplacement Firms	6%
Military – out-processing centers or regional or national retired officer associations' placement services	3%
Labor Unions	0%

FIGURE 2a | Which of the recruiting sources displayed in **FIGURE 2** above have been most successful, and which have been least successful, in finding qualified candidates during the COVID-19 pandemic?

An analysis of the open-ended responses provided are summarized below:

Most Successful Sources

- None, been very challenging
- Employment agencies (one participant noted this was particularly true in terms of *quality* of applicants)
- Online sources – (one participant noted this was particularly true in terms of the *quantity* of applicants)
- Referrals – from employees and from outside networks
- Passive candidates online – mining LinkedIn
- Internal candidates

Least Successful Sources

- Online sources (one participant noted the candidate pool through online job boards seems smaller than usual)
- Educational institutions (one participant noted they did have some success here with recruiting for interns)
- Traditional advertising
- Outplacement firms
- Career fairs

Data note: *It should be noted that the sources described as "most successful" for one organization, were often just the opposite of what another organization noted as "least successful." This tends to be tired largely to industry, with definite differences between participants in manufacturing and those in more of an office-based environment. In general, organizations seemed to agree that online recruiting sources for hourly, lower-wage jobs were not terribly successful, but that they were good for salaried or office-based jobs.*

FIGURE 3 | In terms of your organization's overall talent attraction strategy, what is the biggest challenge your organization has faced during the COVID-19 pandemic?

An analysis of the open-ended responses provided are summarized below:

- **Finding individuals who want to work:** extra unemployment dollars made it difficult (this was most common among manufacturers and those with entry-level positions to fill)
- **Finding qualified candidates**
- **Smaller pool of applicants than expected**
- **Remote onboarding:** time for new hires to connect with teammates during remote work
- **Finding candidates with the right combination:** skills and attitude
- **Variability/uncertainty in workload:** staffing with a variable/temporary work force
- **Adjusting to 'new normal':** new hires having difficulties adjusting to health and safety social distancing procedures and limitations
- **Remote interviewing:** lost the personal touch of face to face interactions
- **Finding passive candidates:** not looking for change
- **Budget cuts:** impacted ability to spend on recruitment efforts
- **Extended time-to-fill:** interview process takes longer due to health and safety restrictions
- **Hiring freeze:** no recruitment occurring
- **Candidates cancelling:** last minute, not rescheduling

Demographics

In total, **42** Northeast Ohio employers participated in the poll, which was conducted on August 24, 2020. The breakdown of the industries and organizational sizes (by employee count) they represent is displayed in **FIGURE 4** below.

FIGURE 4 | Industry & Organizational Size

	Percent
Industry	
Health and Human Services	5%
Hospitality/Entertainment/Media	0%
Manufacturing	36%
Nonprofit - Other	12%
Professional or Technical Services	26%
Wholesale/Distribution Trade	10%
Construction	5%
Other	7%
Organizational Size	
1-25	10%
26-149	61%
150-499	17%
500 or more	12%