Criteria

Candidate
Communications
Toolkit

Contents

Introduction

In the quest for top talent, a good candidate experience is a major competitive advantage. The candidate experience provides a window into what it might be like to work for a company – is it a people-centric workplace, is it efficient, is it decisive, is it transparent? Job candidates are watching for these qualities, and they're making decisions based on what they perceive. The result is that a better candidate experience can lead to higher offer acceptance rates and better quality of hire. Simply put, a strong candidate experience is a crucial part of a successful hiring process.

The way that you communicate with candidates during this process can have a massive impact on the candidate experience. Yet getting the communications right is no easy feat, and candidates have taken notice. According to our 2022 Candidate Experience Report that surveyed nearly 2,000 job candidates, 53% of candidates say they've abandoned a recruitment process because of poor communication.

In this guide, we've compiled some of the best practices around how and when to communicate with candidates. We've also provided a collection of templates that you can use to communicate with your candidates during key touchpoints in the hiring process.

53% of candidates say they've abandoned a recruitment process because of poor communication.

The Benefits of Strong Communication

Candidate communications are the cornerstone of a strong candidate experience. Here are some of the key results you can achieve by prioritizing your candidate communications strategy.

Better Candidate Experience

It goes without saying that providing a strong candidate experience can help organizations attract top talent. Yet 75% of applicants report never hearing back from an employer after applying for a job.

Candidate experience refers to the way a job seeker feels about an employer after interacting with their hiring process. It's rooted in the candidate's perception of the hiring process. Does the candidate feel respected? Was their time valued? Did they know what steps were coming next? Many of these questions can be answered with strong communication.

There are a lot of benefits to creating a positive experience. For example:

- 88% of people would refer others to a job opening after a positive experience
- Candidates are 38% more likely to accept a job after a positive candidate experience
- 71% of candidates would be more likely to buy the company's products or services after a positive experience.

Stronger Employer Brand

It's often said that a great candidate experience treats the candidate like a customer. But for many companies, the candidate is, in fact, a real customer. A negative candidate experience can damage that customer relationship. Meanwhile, a positive candidate experience can strengthen that relationship, even if an offer isn't extended at the end of the hiring process.

A strong employer brand can also improve your sourcing efforts. If the company's name has positive associations, then applicants will be more likely to click on that "apply" button, leading to a fuller candidate pipeline.

Higher Offer Acceptance Rate

During the hiring process, your candidates are continually looking for validation that they want to work at your company. By providing a communicative, positive experience at every stage, candidates are more likely to say yes if they receive an offer.

On the other hand, a negative experience can increase the chance that a candidate may back out, or choose another offer over yours. This can be extremely costly in terms of the amount of time that the recruiting team and managers put into courting your top candidates. Treating your candidates well will improve your chances of winning in-demand talent.

Shorter Time-to-Hire

One of the benefits of having a robust, structured communications plan in place is that it enables hiring teams to move a little bit faster. Moving quickly can be a huge advantage when hiring top talent. According to our Candidate Experience Report, 32% of candidates admitted that they have abandoned a recruitment process in the past because it was taking too long. Moving too slowly can cost you your best candidates.

32% of candidates say they've abandoned a recruitment process because it was taking too long.

Best Practices for Communicating with Candidates

Candidates respond well to quick, effective, and transparent communications. Below are a number of best practices that organizations can take to develop a robust candidate communications strategy.

Define the Key Touchpoints

Every hiring process is different. Typically, organizations go through a number of stages to evaluate each candidate – from initial applications and assessments, to phone screens, video interviews, and often multiple rounds of manager interviews. Each of these stages represent moments where you need to communicate the next steps with candidates. These are your key touchpoints.

When considering how best to communicate with your candidates, the first step is to define what each of these touchpoints are for your hiring process. From there, you can build out your messages for each of those key stages. Some of the most common touchpoints include:

Application

At the point of application, a candidate has already typically taken the time to review the job description, submit their resume, and possibly submit an additional application form. They may have also been asked to complete a number of other steps to submit the application.

Because this stage is at the very top of the applicant funnel, it's also the stage with the most applicants – by far. Some organizations can receive tens, or hundreds, or even thousands of applications for a single role. Regardless of the number of applicants, these candidates deserve a response. At the point of application, this most often comes in the form of a message that confirms that the application has been received, and that it will be reviewed within a certain period of time.

For all candidate touchpoints, but especially for high volume touchpoints, recruiters and HR teams can lean on automation to ensure that all candidates receive a timely response. We'll dig deeper into automation later in this guide.

Assessments

After the initial application process, candidates may be invited to various stages of the hiring process. One of the most common steps is to ask candidates to take pre-employment assessments.

Scientifically validated assessments are one of the best ways to quickly and accurately predict which candidates will succeed in a role based on their job-relevant abilities. While assessments can help employers make better hiring decisions, they also help candidates. Assessments can help to highlight potential in candidates that may have been overlooked based on their job experience alone. Assessments can also help to reduce bias and give every candidate a fair shot. And some assessments come with opportunities to provide candidates with feedback about their results, providing a boost to the candidate experience.

At the assessment stage, your communications present an opportunity to make candidates feel comfortable with the assessment process, understand what to expect, and feel assured that the assessments provide a benefit to them as well. We'll provide some practical examples in the Examples and Templates section of this toolkit.

Phone Screen or Asynchronous Video Interview

At some point, you may invite the candidate to a phone screen, often with a recruiter or member of HR. You may also invite the candidate to complete an asynchronous, or pre-recorded video interview instead of a phone screen. Both of these types of stages provide an opportunity to learn more about the candidate and ensure that there is good alignment between the candidate's abilities and the role.

Communications at this stage typically include an invitation to complete a video interview or a request to schedule a phone screen.

Interview(s)

As the candidate moves further into consideration, they will likely be invited to complete some form of interview. This can vary widely across companies and even departments. Whether the candidate needs just one interview, multiple interviews, video interviews for remote work, or even panel interviews, the goal is to communicate exactly what to expect.

One of the hardest challenges of the interview stage is scheduling. For maximum efficiency, you can lean on a scheduling tool that enables candidates to select times that work for them, and to even reschedule if needed.

Offers

Once you've selected your top candidate, you can extend an offer. In some cases, an offer can come in the form of an email, or even a more personal phone call. The goal of the offer is to convey enthusiasm and give the candidate affirmation that accepting the offer is the right decision for them.

Rejections

The vast majority of your candidates will unfortunately receive a rejection message at some point in the application process. A thoughtful and kind rejection letter can go a long in making a candidate feel appreciated and valued for their time.

Because rejections can happen at any of the touchpoints already listed, they may vary depending on how far the candidate has gotten through the hiring process. A rejection at the initial application phase may be short and sweet, while a rejection at the final interview stage may be more personalized.

Asking for Feedback

One final stage that can make a world of difference for the candidate experience is to provide an opportunity for feedback. After a candidate has left the process, you can reach out to ask them what they liked or didn't like about the hiring process. Even if they found the process to be negative, the opportunity to explain can be cathartic, and it also helps your hiring teams make improvements for next time. Plus, it shows your candidates that you are interested in how they feel, which goes a long way in rounding out the experience in the best possible way.

Set Expectations

Uncertainty can breed unease for your candidates. No matter what your process may be, letting candidates know what to expect can dramatically soothe their worries.

For example, let's say a candidate submits their application, receives an automated message saying that their application will be reviewed, and then doesn't hear back. Two weeks pass and the candidate moves on, believing that they have been ghosted.

If instead, the message says that their application will be reviewed within 2-4 weeks, the candidate has a frame of reference and a level of understanding about when to expect a response. Of course, 2-4 weeks may still be too long for many candidates, but at least they aren't fuming with impatience while waiting for a response.

As with this example, one of the most important expectations to set is regarding the timeline. Not only can this help you take the time you need to make a decision, but it can also help you speed up the process if needed. If you'd like to find a candidate very quickly, you can explain that desire up front, so that highly motivated candidates will react faster at each stage. This level of transparency can benefit both the employer and the candidate.

Setting expectations also means clearly explaining what your candidates can expect at each stage. Giving interviews, taking assessments, and completing work samples can sometimes be stressful. By laying out what candidates can expect at each stage, candidates will be less stressed and more likely to complete the steps.

Lean on Automation

Gone are the days when employers can make excuses for their lack of communication based on "how much time" it takes. Yes, setting up a strong candidate communications plan requires an upfront investment in time and energy. But once you've set up the necessary templates, automation can do 90% of the work.

Most recruiting platforms and Applicant Tracking Systems offer ways to customize email templates and set them to automatically send after a certain trigger occurs. For example, if a candidate is moved to a new stage in the hiring pipeline, an email can automatically trigger to send the candidate the information for that next stage.

Personalize

While automation can provide speed and ease, it's important not to lose that human touch. Personalizing your messages can humanize each step in the process. Fortunately, some of this personalization can be built into your automation. Simply incorporating fields to include the candidate's name, the date, the name of the role, and other details can assure the candidate that their application was indeed reviewed with consideration.

Consider the Medium – Email vs. SMS

Technology is rapidly shifting, and this means that job seekers have different ways of accessing the internet and applying for roles. While much of the application process may have been conducted on laptop and desktop computers over the last few decades, there has gradually been a shift to mobile.

The adoption of various technologies is exacerbated by the digital divide, which refers to the access that different socioeconomic groups have to various technologies. For example, according to Pew Research, 27% of adults with lower household incomes rely solely on a smartphone to access the internet.

For this reason, it's worthwhile to consider the best medium for communicating with your candidates. This ultimately comes down to the job type and the applicant pool that you expect. For certain roles, SMS communications can make a lot of sense. For example, the average open rate for an SMS message is as high as 98%, compared to the average open rate for an email at 20%.

If you opt for SMS-based communications, it's also important to make sure that your entire application process can be completed on a mobile device. This includes the ease of submitting an application or resume file, as well as the use of mobile-friendly assessments and video interviewing technology.

Provide Feedback, and Ask for Feedback

Feedback, in both directions, is one of the best ways to improve the candidate experience. First, candidates like to receive feedback from the employer. A candidate's ultimate goal is to find a job, and transparent feedback can get them closer to that goal, even if it isn't with your organization.

Candidates especially like to receive feedback on their assessment results. According to our Candidate Experience Report, 91% of candidates agreed that they like to receive this type of feedback (77% strongly agreed, and 14% somewhat agreed).

In the other direction, organizations should seek to solicit feedback from their candidates about the entire recruiting process. There are two main benefits to this. Requesting feedback shows that your organization takes candidate experience seriously, and values your candidates' opinions. It also provides your team with valuable information about how to improve the experience in the future.

I like to receive feedback on my assessment results after I'm done

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
77%	14%	8%	0%	1%
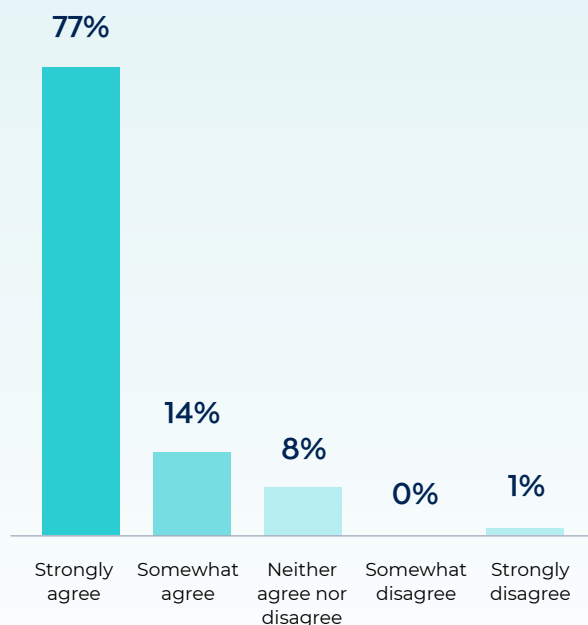
Craft Messages that Achieve Results

Every message you send has a goal. You want candidates to open the message, and often you'd like them to take some sort of action – to complete an assessment, schedule an interview, or send additional materials. The way you craft these messages can impact the rate at which your candidates complete these actions.

Your messages, whether over email or SMS, should be crafted to achieve those goals. Here are some tips for encouraging candidates to complete the next steps in their application:

- Keep your messages short and to the point
- Underline, bold, or highlight the specific action you'd like them to take, as well as the due date
- Give an indication of how long the action will take
- Give reasonable time frames to complete the action
- Explain why they're being asked to complete the action
- Provide an opportunity for the candidate to reach out if they have questions or extenuating circumstances

Avoiding the Spam Filter

With automated email, you may occasionally find that your emails to candidates are ending up in the dreaded spam folder. Fortunately there are some best practices you can follow to increase the chances that your emails land in the right place.

Tips for keeping messages out of spam:

- Keep subject lines short – 7 words or less.
- Include applicable personalization (first name, last name) that isn't intrusive.
- Use sentence case in your subject line and email copy (rather than title case).
- Avoid all caps, unnecessary descriptive language, and excessive punctuation (!!!??).
- Limit the use of images within the email – they may come through as attachments which can immediately be blocked.
- Avoid including attachments in initial outreach (PDFs, documents) – these can be an immediate spam trigger. Consider using hyperlinks if you're trying to provide access to content in the form of a PDF or a website link.
- Be honest and clear in the subject line and copy about who you are and what you're asking of the recipient.
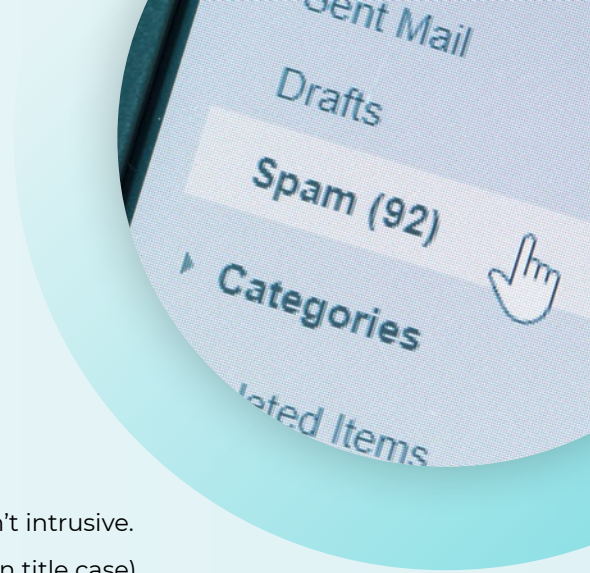
Track and Optimize

Like any other business process, the candidate experience is always a work in progress. There are a number of key metrics you can track to measure your progress over time, and to guide improvements. Here are just a few metrics you may want to track:

1. **Open rates:** This refers to the rate at which someone will open your messages to view them. The tips in the previous section can help you improve your open rates.

2. **Completed action rates:** Examples of actions completed could include the rate at which candidates complete assessments, schedule interviews, supply references, and more. If you find that candidates are not completing any of the actions at a sufficient rate, you can test out new messaging to see if it can bring that number up.

3. **Offer acceptance rates:** Your offer acceptance rates can be a direct reflection of your candidate experience. If the candidate is satisfied with the experience, they are more likely to accept the offer. The speed at which you extend an offer can also play a role here. In-demand candidates may accept another offer if there is too much of a delay.

4. **Candidate Experience NPS:** You can also track some measure of the candidate experience, through a candidate Net Promoter Score or other metric of satisfaction. When you reach the stage of asking for candidate feedback, you can request that the candidate rate the process on a defined scale. This makes it easy to quantify your progress on candidate experience, and evaluate whether or not your optimizations are tracking in the right direction.

Examples and Templates

In this section, we'll provide you with a series of templates and example messages for some of the most common candidate touchpoints. Use these as a starting point for crafting messages that align to your process, your brand, and your culture.

Application Received

Messages at this stage should be short and to the point, confirming that the application was received and will be reviewed. Automated replies can be key at this stage due to the high volume of applicants.

Example 1 **Formal tone**

Subject line: Thank you for your application

Dear [Applicant Name],

This message is to inform you that we received your application for [position]. We appreciate you taking the time to apply.

We are currently reviewing applications and expect to start interviewing by [time frame]. If you are selected for an interview, a member of our HR department will reach out to you by [time frame].

Kind regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

Example 2 **Warm, casual tone**

Subject line: Your application for [position]

Hi [Applicant Name],

Thank you so much for applying for [position] with [company]! We look forward to reviewing your application.

If you're selected to move forward, we will reach out to you with next steps by [time frame].
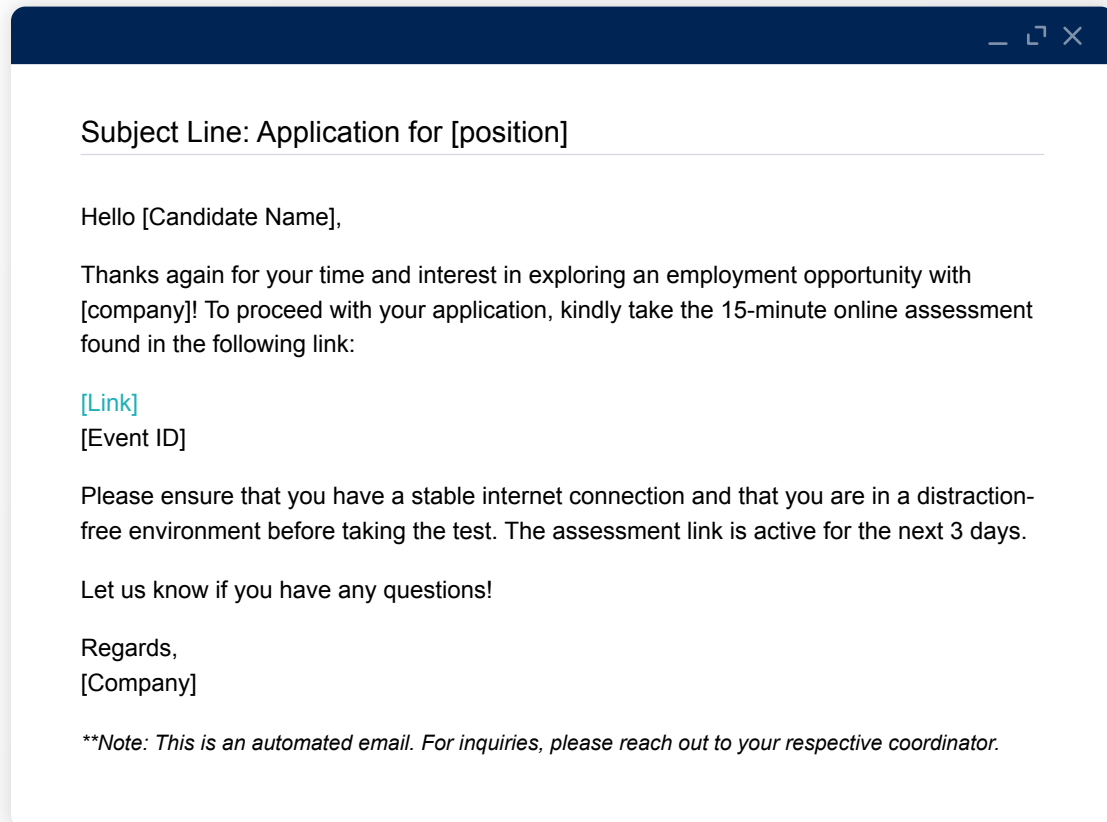
Many thanks,
[Company]

Invitation to Take Assessments

Candidates can sometimes feel nervous about taking assessments. The invitation email is your opportunity to make candidates feel comfortable with this step, and to increase the likelihood that they'll complete the assessments.

Since Criteria is an assessment company, we've provided a handful of examples on how to invite candidates to take assessments. Many of these mention specific Criteria features and tools that you may or may not be using. Use these examples as a starting point when crafting your outreach.

Example 1 **Short and simple**

Subject Line: Application for [position]

Hello [Candidate Name],

Thanks again for your time and interest in exploring an employment opportunity with [company]! To proceed with your application, kindly take the 15-minute online assessment found in the following link:

[Link]
[Event ID]

Please ensure that you have a stable internet connection and that you are in a distraction-free environment before taking the test. The assessment link is active for the next 3 days.

Let us know if you have any questions!

Regards,
[Company]

**Note: This is an automated email. For inquiries, please reach out to your respective coordinator.

Example 2 **Detailed assessment information**

Subject line: Application for [position]

Hello [First Name],

Thank you for your interest in [company]! The next step in our process is to complete a few brief pre-employment assessments.

Once completed, we will review the results and reach out if we'd like to move forward in the interview process.

What to Expect:

The assessment will take a total of 20-30 minutes. Please be sure you are able to dedicate your uninterrupted attention to the assessment, as it is timed.

Once you begin the assessment, it cannot be restarted or stopped.

Aptitude Test Information:

The first test is a timed aptitude test.

The goal is to get as many correct as you can; there is no deduction in scoring for educated guesses. (Hint* If you get stuck, make an educated guess and move on.)

Although you may not answer them all, try to answer as many as possible.

Don't spend too much time on any one question.

You are NOT permitted to use calculators or any other problem-solving device.

Behavioral Test Information:

The second test is a behavioral assessment that helps us understand how well your personality matches the requirements of the role. The results can also help us match you with other open role opportunities at [company].

The test is untimed but takes about 10 minutes.

Start the assessments: [Link to the Assessments]

Please reach out to [contact] if you have any questions!

Best,
[Company Name]

Example 3 DEI focus

Subject: [Company] invites you to take an assessment

Hello [Candidate Name],

Thank you for considering [company] for your next career move! For the next step, we invite you to complete the assessment portion of the application process. CLICK HERE to begin.

[Company] uses assessments by Criteria, an assessment platform, to help find great candidates like you. Criteria's assessments are objective, and all candidates take them to help [company] evaluate your potential above and beyond what may appear on your resume.

If you have any questions or need support with the assessments, please use the chat feature at the bottom right corner of the assessment page for help. You can also navigate to the Candidate FAQs where common questions can be answered.

Please complete the assessments by [deadline]. We will review the results and be in touch soon! Thank you again for your interest in [company].

Regards,
[Company Name]

Example 4 **DEI focus #2**

Subject: Next steps with your application

Dear [First Name],

At [company], we value our culture and care about diversity and inclusion more than what college you attended or what company you worked for before. Because of this, we include objective assessments in our process to give you the opportunity to shine beyond your resume, reduce bias, and help our hiring team make better decisions. All our candidates for [position] are asked to go through this process so we can evaluate everyone equally. Together, the assessments take about 30 minutes to complete.

We ask that you please complete the required assessments included in the link by [date].

[Link to tests]

Best regards,
[Recruiter's name and title]

Example 5 **Detailed and helpful, aligned with company mission**

Subject line: Action Required: Criteria Assessment

[Candidate Name],

Thank you for your interest in joining [company]! We are excited to invite you to the next step in the application process, which includes an assessment.

At [company], we hire the most innovative minds to build products that our customers love. Our ambitious mission drives us to seek people with diverse perspectives who can be resourceful and navigate through ambiguity at a high-growth company.

Ready for the next steps? Please review the following assessment details carefully.

Please allow up to 40 minutes to complete the assessment.

Don't have time now? That's okay. Save this email and come back to complete the assessment within five days.

Ready to get started?

- Make sure you have a quiet space free from distraction
- Once you begin the assessment, it cannot be restarted or stopped
- You cannot skip questions.
- You will not be able to navigate to any other screens or use a calculator during the assessment
- After successful completion of the assessment you will be contacted by our recruiting team to discuss next steps

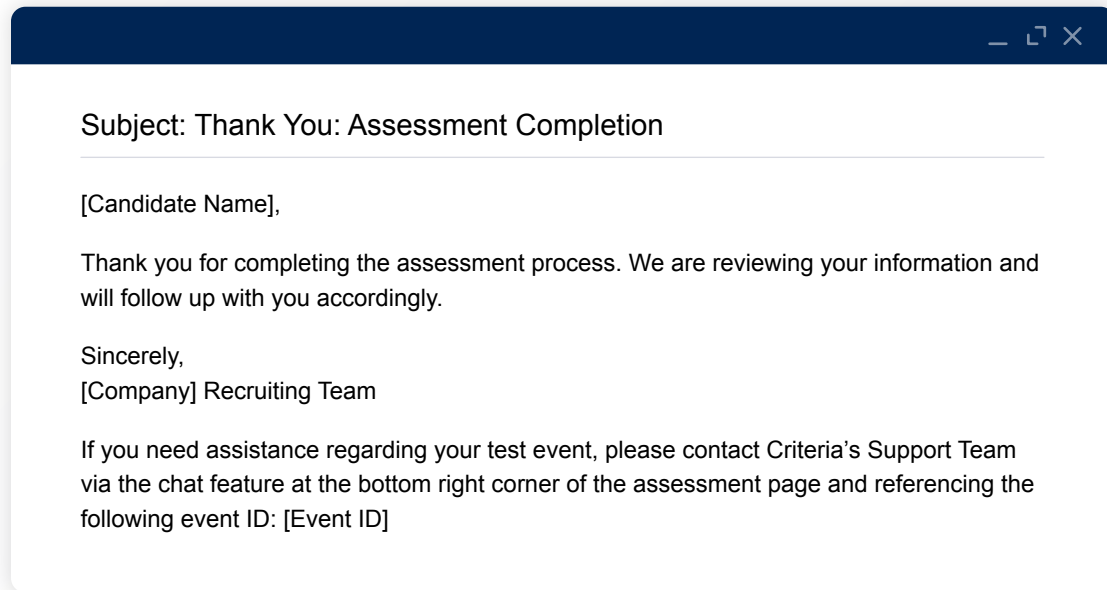Click the link to begin your assessment: [link]

We recognize this is a large time investment and we appreciate your interest in [company]!
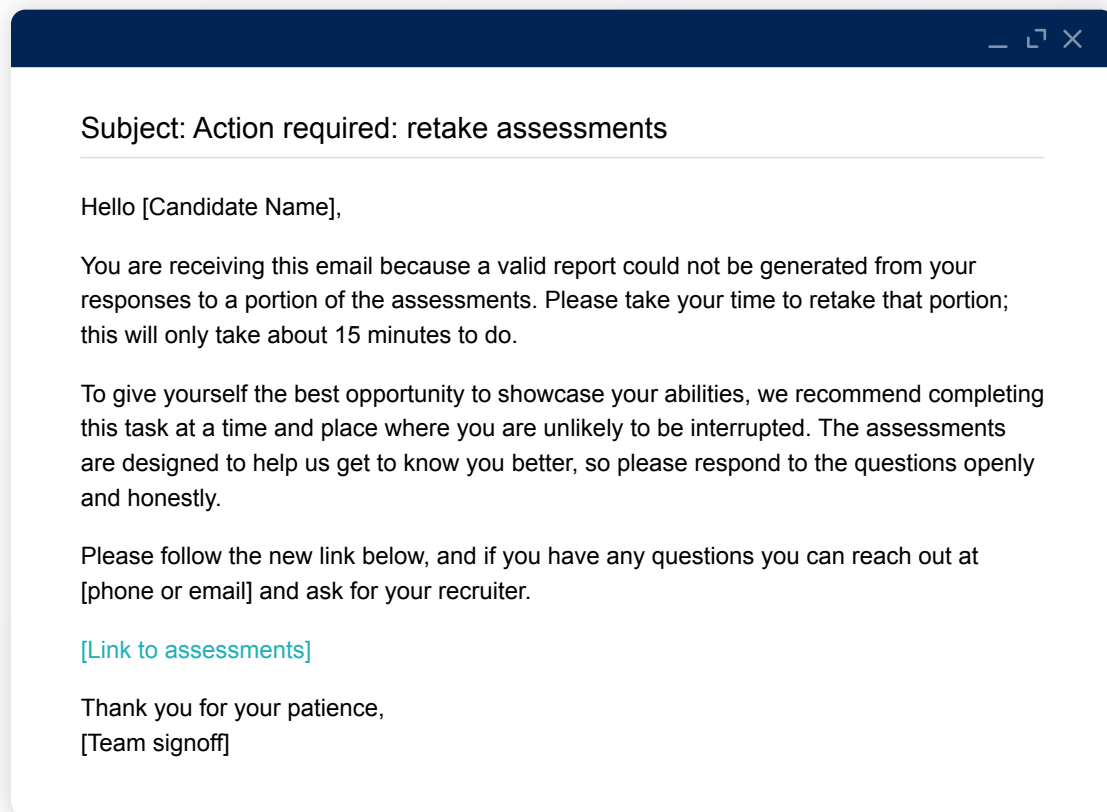
Sincerely,
[Company] Recruiting Team

We pride ourselves on maintaining an inclusive culture that empowers us to deliver results for our customers. If you have a disability and need an accommodation, let us know. Contact us at [phone number] or reach out at [email].

Example 6 **Assessment Completion**

Subject: Thank You: Assessment Completion

[Candidate Name],

Thank you for completing the assessment process. We are reviewing your information and will follow up with you accordingly.

Sincerely,
[Company] Recruiting Team

If you need assistance regarding your test event, please contact Criteria's Support Team via the chat feature at the bottom right corner of the assessment page and referencing the following event ID: [Event ID]

Example 7 **Invalid Results**

Subject: Action required: retake assessments

Hello [Candidate Name],

You are receiving this email because a valid report could not be generated from your responses to a portion of the assessments. Please take your time to retake that portion; this will only take about 15 minutes to do.

To give yourself the best opportunity to showcase your abilities, we recommend completing this task at a time and place where you are unlikely to be interrupted. The assessments are designed to help us get to know you better, so please respond to the questions openly and honestly.

Please follow the new link below, and if you have any questions you can reach out at [phone or email] and ask for your recruiter.

[Link to assessments]

Thank you for your patience,
[Team signoff]

Note for customers: *When inviting the candidate to retake an assessment, please ensure that any testing restrictions enabled for your account will not prevent them from completing the assessment again.*

Example 8 **SMS Invitation and Reminder**

Within the Criteria platform, you can now opt to invite candidates to take an assessment via SMS. Enabling this option will send a standard invitation and reminder to each candidate:

+(485)775-2619

Invitation

Hi [Candidate First Name], you've been invited by [Company Name] to take a test event here: [URL] or check your email.

Reminder

Hi [Candidate First Name], don't forget your next steps for [Company Name] here: [URL] or check your email.

Type a message
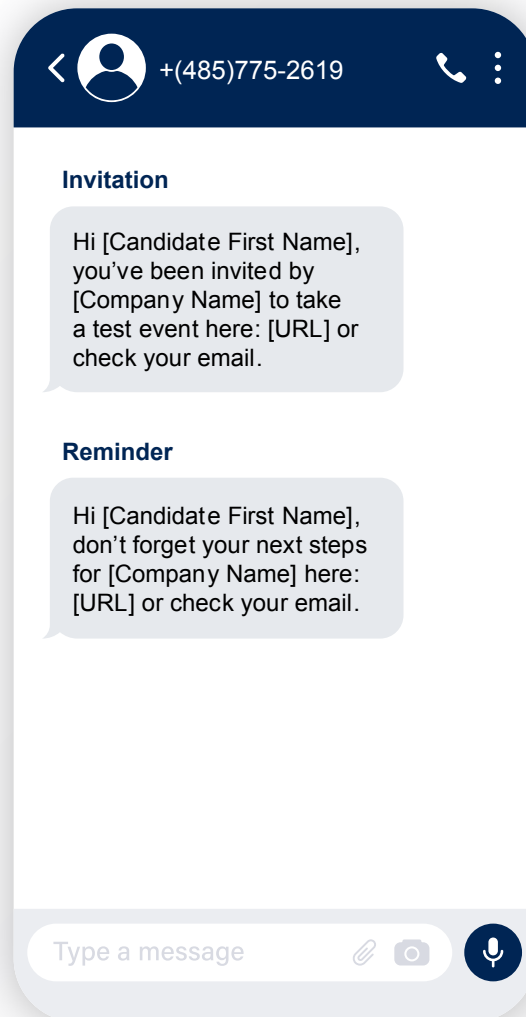
Invitation to Phone Screen

Example 1 **Basic invitation**

Subject line: Phone interview with [Company]

Dear [Candidate Name],

Thank you for your interest in a [position] with [Company]. I'd like to arrange a quick phone call in the next week to discuss the position and get to know you better. Please use the calendar below to select the time that works best for you.

[Insert calendar link]

The hiring manager at the location you've applied to will call you at the time you've selected.

If none of these times work for you, please contact me at the email address listed below to schedule alternative arrangements.

Best,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

Example 2 **Warm, time-specific**

Subject: Invitation to Phone Interview

Hello [Candidate Name],

Thank you for taking the time to apply to our open position.

We are impressed with your qualifications and would like the opportunity to learn more about your experience and career goals. As a next step in our hiring process, I would like to conduct a phone screening with you. This conversation typically takes about 20-30 minutes. Let me know what availability you have for the coming week.

I look forward to speaking with you soon!

Best Regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

Invitation to One-Way, Asynchronous Video Interview

Below is a real example of a template email sent out from Criteria's asynchronous video interviewing tool:

Example 1 **Real example from Criteria platform**

Subject: Interview Invitation for [position]

Hi [First Name],

As the next stage in your application for [position] at [company], we are pleased to invite you to a one-way digital video interview.

Position: [position]
Deadline: [date and time]

Learn more about the video interview process, including how to take a Practice Question.

Whenever you're ready, use this personalized link to access the interview:
[link]

You can take the interview on:

- a desktop or laptop computer with a microphone and webcam, using any modern web browser
- an iPhone or iPad (running at least iOS 12), using Safari
- an Android phone or tablet, using Google Chrome

Technical requirements
You will need a reliable internet connection which is stable enough to make a video call. If you have connectivity issues using Wi-Fi, it might be worth trying to use your mobile phone's 4G internet.

Some public or workplace networks (especially universities, libraries, and Government departments, as well as corporate or government VPNs) have firewall restrictions which prevent video connections, and so these networks may not be suitable.
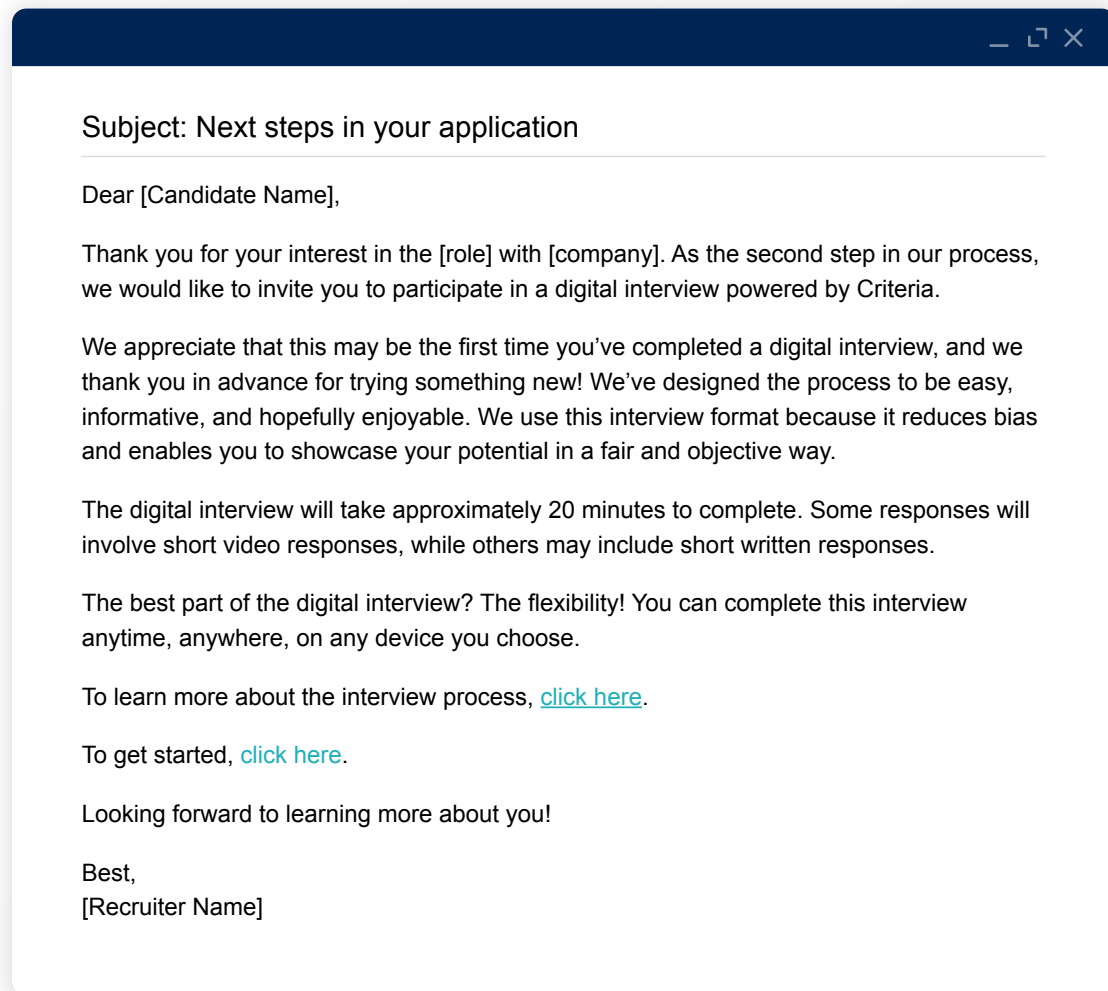
The interview includes a Video Check, so you can verify that your setup works and practice a video interview question before proceeding.

Technical support
You can contact the technical support team using the online chat widget at the bottom-right of the page within the platform.

Good luck with your interview!

Kind regards,
Criteria Corp

Example 2 **Focused on candidate experience**

Subject: Next steps in your application

Dear [Candidate Name],

Thank you for your interest in the [role] with [company]. As the second step in our process, we would like to invite you to participate in a digital interview powered by Criteria.

We appreciate that this may be the first time you've completed a digital interview, and we thank you in advance for trying something new! We've designed the process to be easy, informative, and hopefully enjoyable. We use this interview format because it reduces bias and enables you to showcase your potential in a fair and objective way.

The digital interview will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Some responses will involve short video responses, while others may include short written responses.

The best part of the digital interview? The flexibility! You can complete this interview anytime, anywhere, on any device you choose.

To learn more about the interview process, click here.

To get started, click here.

Looking forward to learning more about you!

Best,
[Recruiter Name]

Invitation to In-person Interview

Example 1 **Short and simple**

Subject: Invitation to Interview at [Company]

Hello [Candidate Name],

Thank you for submitting your resume and completing the phone screen with [company]. We would like to invite you to a 45 minute on-site interview for us to get to know each other better.

Please select a time from our interview calendar here: [link]

Looking forward to meeting you in person!

Best,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

Example 2 **More detailed information**

Subject: Congratulations! We want to meet you

[Candidate Name],

We are happy to announce that you have been selected for the next round in your application for [position].

This final round will include a series of group and personal interviews at our offices in [location].

In the next few days, you will receive more details on the schedule and how to prepare.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us at [contact] and we'll make sure to respond promptly.

Looking forward to seeing you!
[Recruiter Name]

Offer

Example 1 **Simple and congratulatory**

Subject: Congrats!

Hi [Candidate Name],

Congrats, we would like to hire you for the [position] at [company]!

If you accept, please sign the offer letter at [link].

Our team will be following up with more information about your start date and time. Welcome to the team!

Many thanks,
[Recruiter Name]

Example 2 **Detailed offer with next steps**

Subject: [Company] - Employment Offer

Hello [First Name],

We are thrilled to extend an offer of employment at [company] as a [position] at our [location]!

To accept this position please click [here] to enroll yourself into one of our upcoming Training Courses. Your acceptance of this offer with [company] is not finalized until you select a training date.

We'll follow up with more details about where to attend the training sessions, what to expect, and what to bring with you.

If you have any questions regarding your offer, please feel free to reach out to me directly at [email address], or the Recruitment Department at [email address].

We look forward to getting you started with us at [company]!

Warmly,
[Name]
[Title]

Rejections

Example 1 Early stage rejection

Subject: Your application

Hi [Candidate Name],

Thank you for applying with [company]. We really appreciate your interest in joining our company and we want to thank you for the time invested in your application.

Regretfully, we have decided to pursue other candidates for this position. I want to wish you the best of luck in your job search and encourage you to check back with us often as we continue to grow.

Best of luck,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

Example 2 Later stage rejection

Subject: Status of your application

Dear [Candidate Name],

We thank you for your interest in applying for the [position] with [company]. Although your qualifications were impressive, you were not selected as a final candidate.

We encourage you to apply for other opportunities on our website at [link] for positions that fit your interests and experience. We wish you luck on your job search.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

Asking for Feedback

You can ask for feedback after just about any stage of your hiring process. In many cases, the request for feedback may be incorporated into a rejection message. Here are a few examples.

Example 1 **Feedback after Interview**

Subject: We'd love your feedback

[First Name],

Thank you for applying to the [position] at [company]! We value your feedback and hope that you've had a great experience interviewing with us. Please follow the link below and you will be able to take a brief survey about your interview experience.

[Link]

We encourage you to continue to explore opportunities at [company]. You can find our current list of open positions on the [company] careers page.

Best Regards,
[Company]

Example 2 **Feedback from a hired candidate**

Subject: Request for feedback

Hi [First Name],

Congratulations on completing your first week with [company]! We are all very happy to have you here. We take the hiring process very seriously, and would kindly request your feedback on how the hiring process went for you. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete, and it helps us improve the experience we offer to future job candidates.

Your honest feedback is greatly appreciated and will be kept confidential. Please use the link below to get started:

[Link]

As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions!

Best,
[HR manager/coordinator]

Conclusion

Candidate communications are always a work in progress. As you build out a strong communications plan, there will be plenty of opportunities to tweak, improve, and revise your messaging to better align with your brand image and company goals. We hope this toolkit inspires you to kickstart your own journey to creating a winning candidate communications strategy.

Criteria®

Criteria is a talent success company that helps organizations make more objective, evidence-based talent decisions that both reduce bias and drive outcomes. Our world-leading tools include a comprehensive suite of rigorously validated assessments and decision-making tools that highlight the potential in every job candidate while providing an experience that candidates love.