

Career Development Survey

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Comments from the Career Development Survey

If you would like to comment on any of the findings please contact Andrew Daley on 0161 776 4603 or via andrew@edburydaley.com

Here are the results of our latest survey on Career Development which provides some interesting insight into how some of the leading professionals in Procurement plan their Careers. There is some interesting data on how people seek their next position and some useful reminders to help you next time you are looking to move. Each chart shows the four or five most popular responses and we hope our analysis proves useful to you.

Our own thoughts on the subject are largely supported by the data, but the advice we give people when asked about career planning can be summarised as follows:

Do have short, medium and long term goals in your career. How formal and rigid these are depends on the sort of person you are but you will achieve more in your career if you at least have some goals to achieve and understand how they impact upon future career choices.

Make an effort to learn about the recruitment market, where to find the roles that will appeal to you and how best to ensure that head hunters can find you.

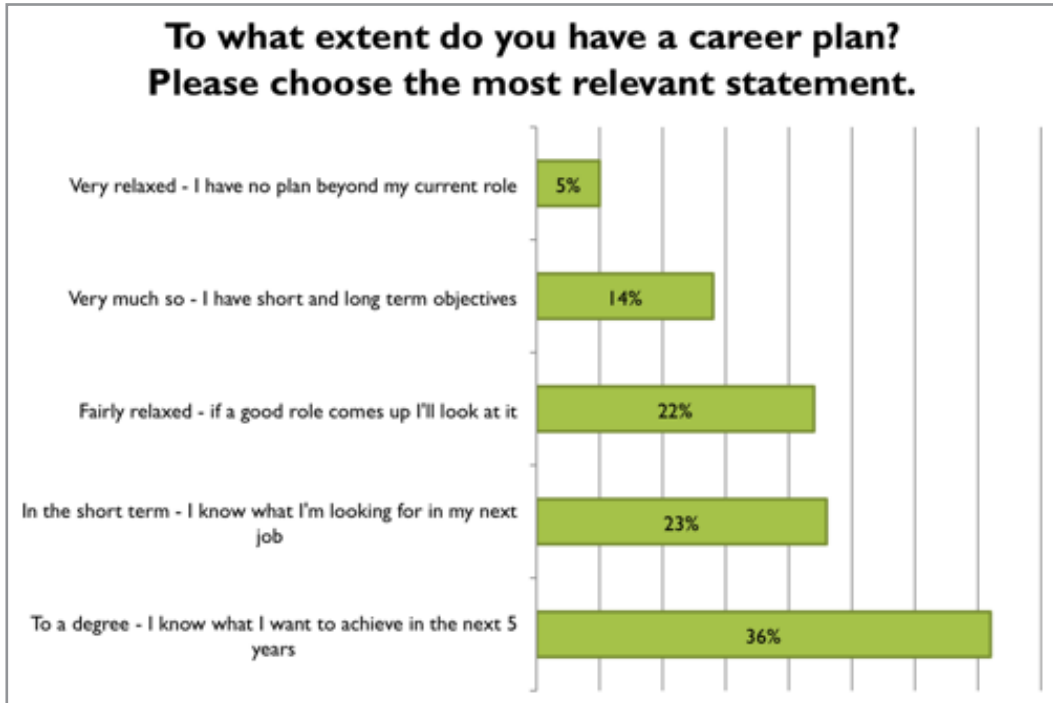
Your profile is crucial if you are looking for senior roles and this means a degree of self promotion whether it be through membership of professional bodies, attendance of conferences, active networking or PR through appropriate media.

Be realistic about what roles you go for – think about the transferability of your skills, the career development a role will offer and the impact on your life outside work.

It is partly your responsibility to put your career development on the company's agenda - it should be regarded as a positive sign by your employer - if it isn't why not?

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This data confirms what we experience on a day to day basis i.e. most people have some form of career plan, however informal but few set out detailed long term plans.

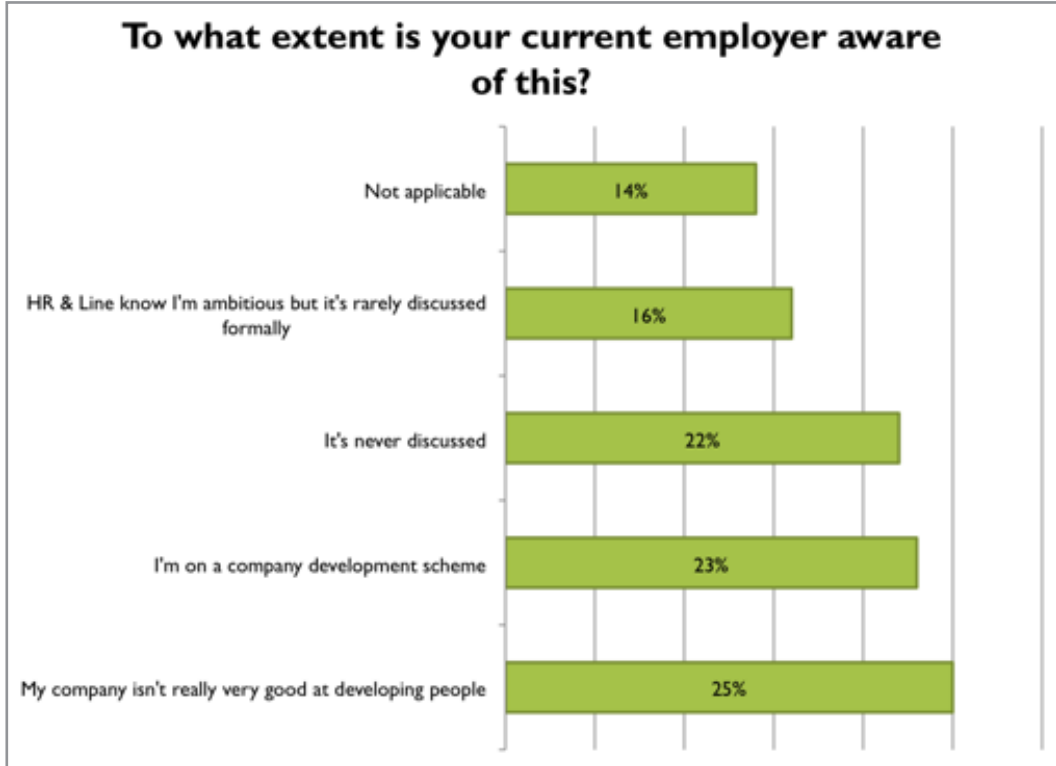
We believe that some form of medium term plan is a good thing and this often manifests itself in improved performance at interview, and better decision making on which role to pursue.

There is also a strong argument that new employers view such plans very positively.

One of our regular contributors made the following point; "Everyone should have an eye on career and/or personal development at all times - even if the extent of that is, for example, learning a new language, acquiring a new software skill, learning and practicing a new skill such as PPCA or managing stakeholders, building an appreciation of emerging markets and economies, etc"

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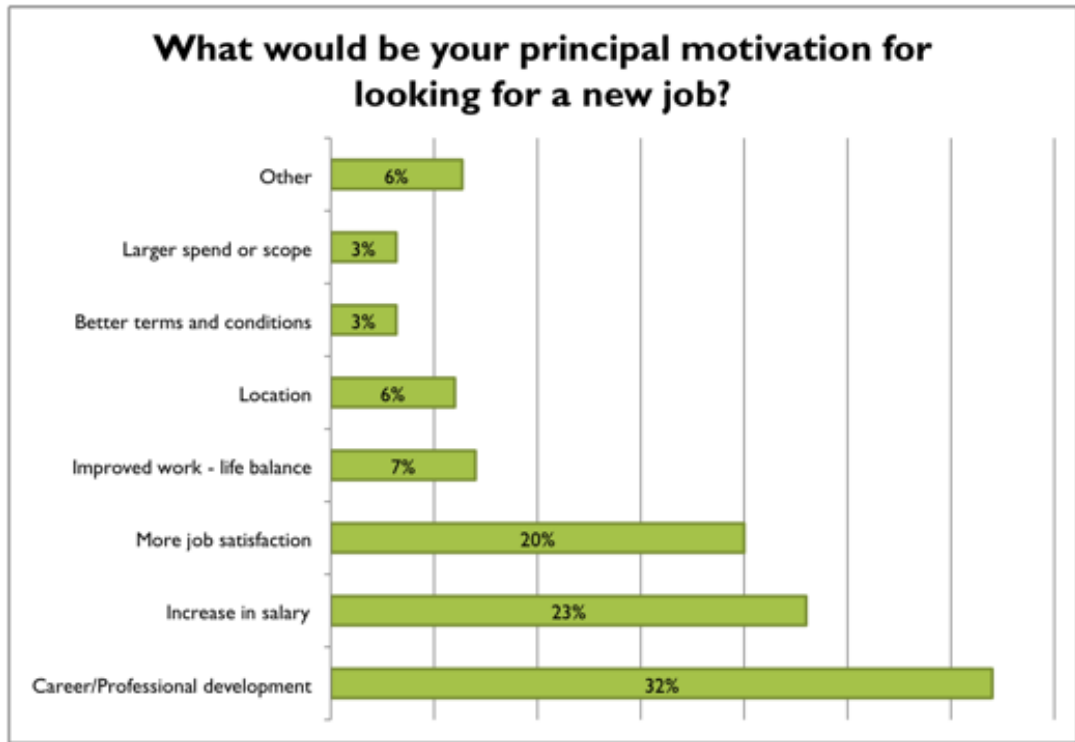
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Nearly 20% of you told us that your company isn't very good at developing people and almost one in six said that career plans are never discussed. Whilst this isn't that surprising in itself, it is worrying that those sentiments score more highly than the more positive options available. In fairness, more and more companies are addressing this area, but there also needs to be some drive from the individual if they are to fulfil their potential. Whether or not your employer is committed to your development, it's always a good idea to keep in tune with the job markets, either by keeping track of advertised opportunities, or by maintaining active relationships with your preferred recruiters.

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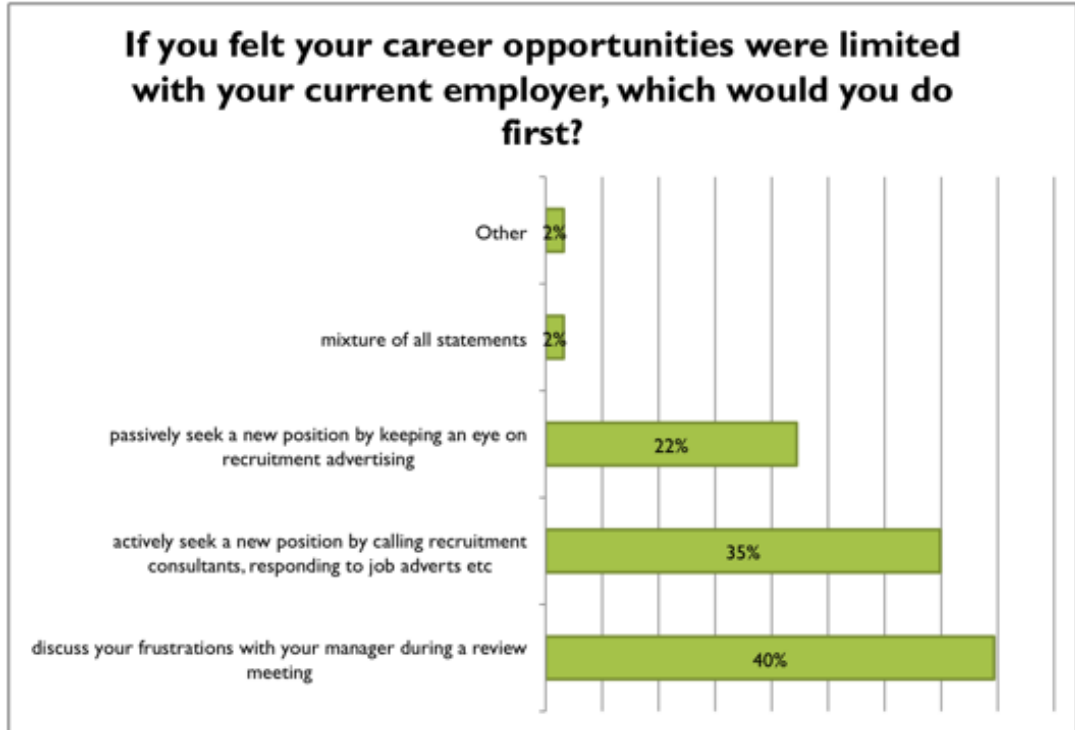
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It's encouraging that nearly a third of you are principally motivated by career development but surprising that only 6% favour a better work/life balance. This latter point may be explained by the trend of more and more companies accommodating employees in this area with schemes like working from home etc. 26% admitted money was the crucial factor and in our experience this is amongst 2 or 3 of the most important criteria for nearly every move we are involved in.

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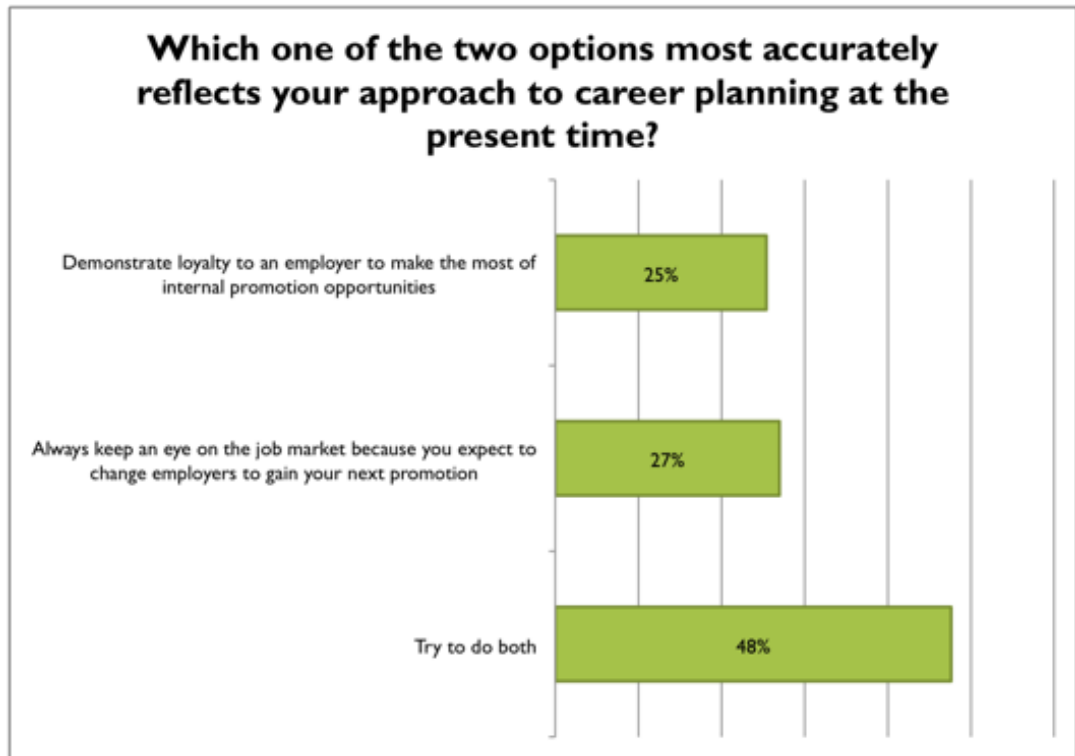
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No surprises here – over 70% of you would act positively if frustrated.

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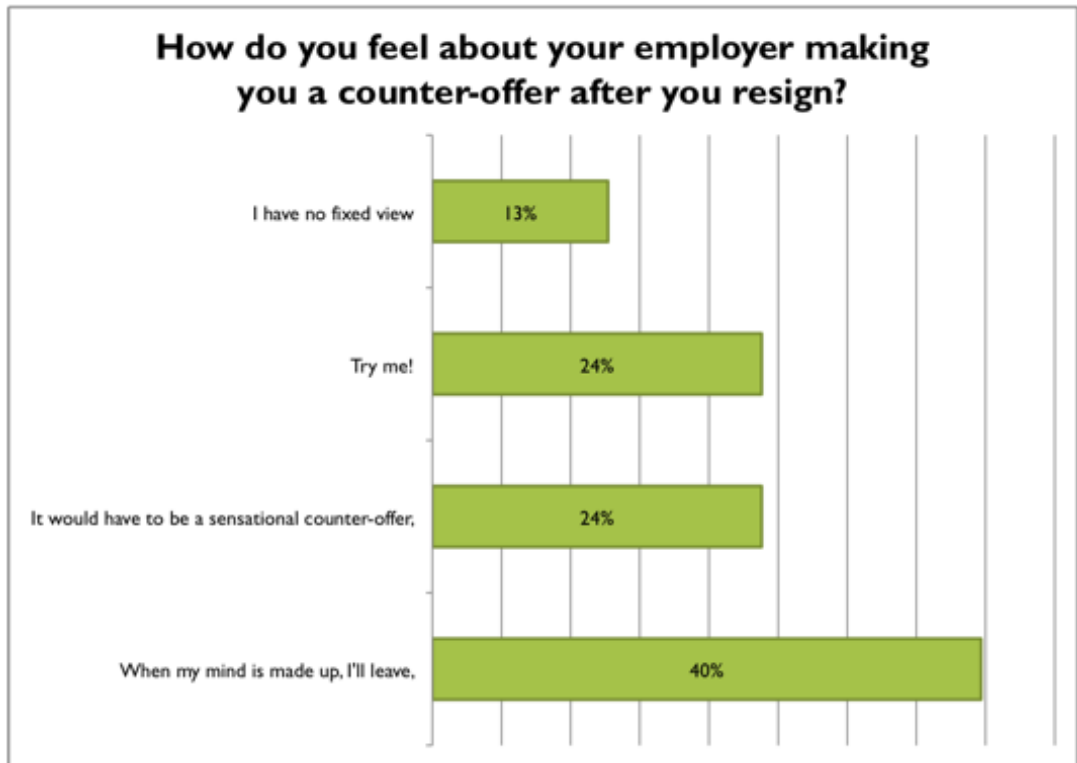


Again these results are broader than expected. The most common response we get from candidates is something along the lines of “I’m quite happy where I am but if something special comes up.....”

One of clients suggested the following: “The data here brings out an interesting point - namely that there is no conflict between being committed to your current employer AND keeping in touch with the jobs market”

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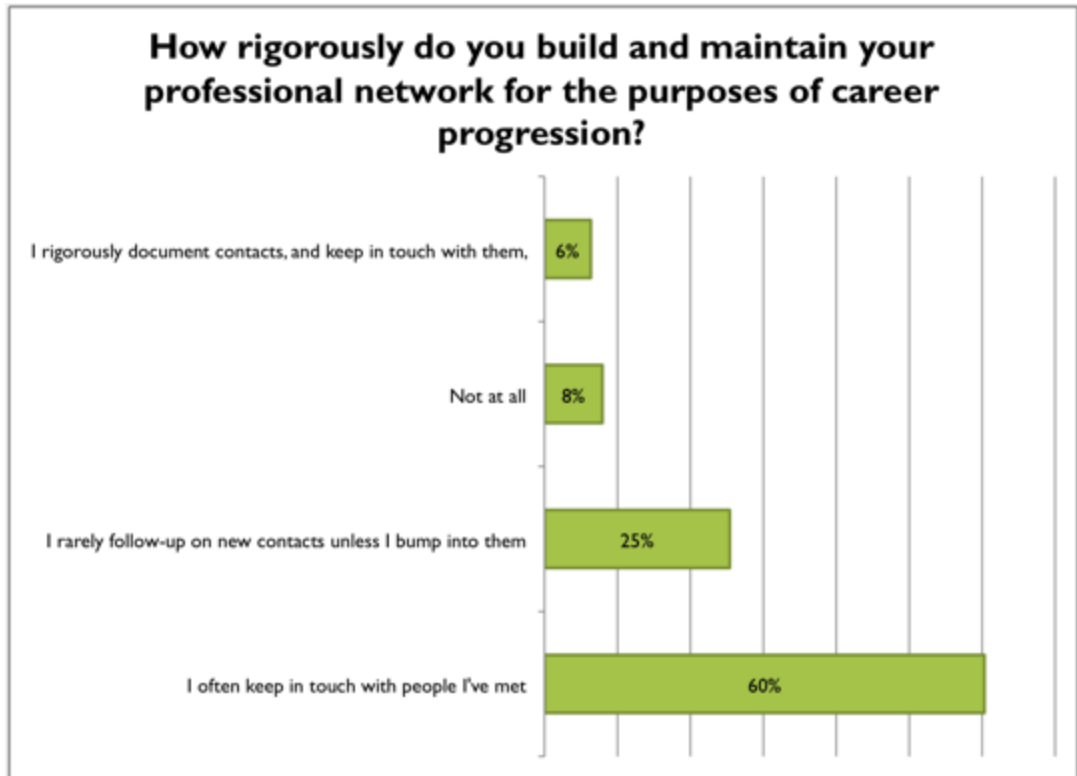
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Just less than 40% claim they are not willing to consider a counter offer at all and nearly a quarter say it would take something exceptional to make them re-consider, so the vast majority of you are sure you want to move by the time you resign which of course is how it should be.

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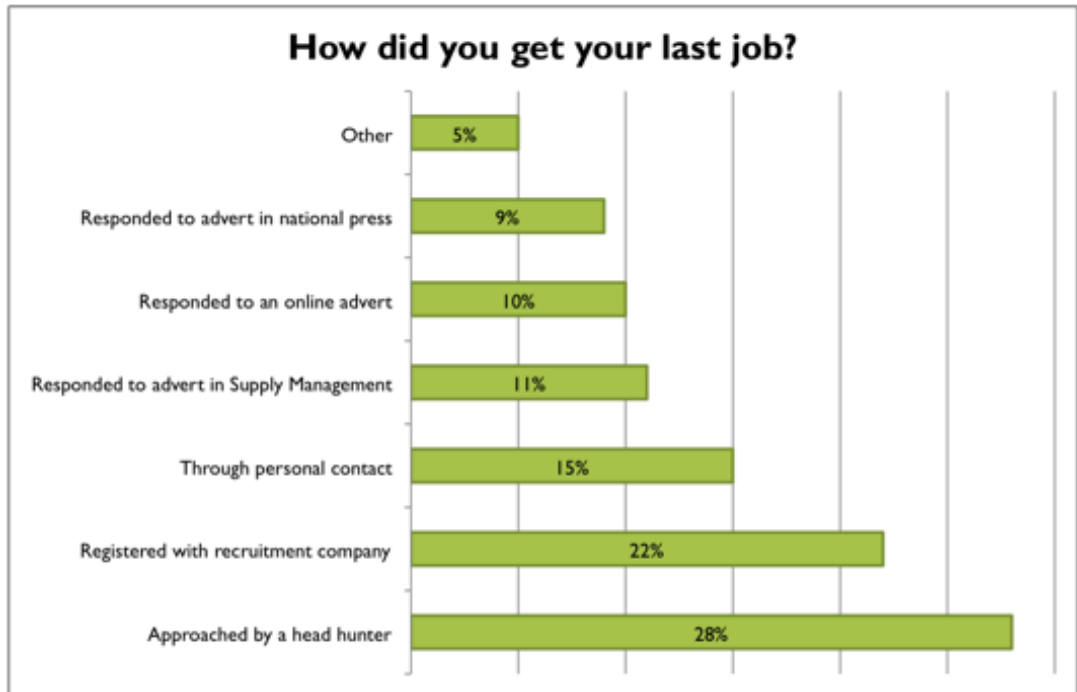


Over a third of you aren't networking enough and are therefore missing out on a valuable source of information and job opportunities. To us it is no coincidence that some of the most successful people have turned networking into an art form.

One such person commented "Building and maintaining your network is always a good idea. In the early days of your career you have a great opportunity if you stay in touch with fellow students, graduate colleagues, early work colleagues etc. You and they are the people who will progress to positions of influence in due course, and it's not what or who you know that counts, its how you grow, cultivate, and derive true value from the relationships with people you know."

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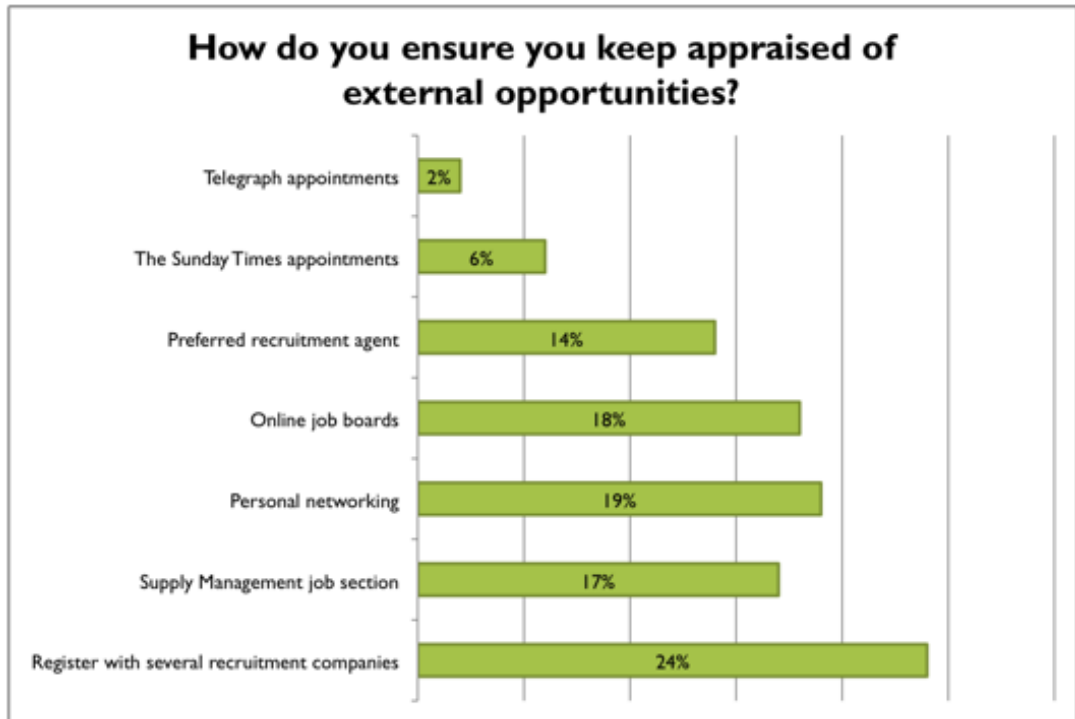
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Some more figures to emphasise the strength of the recruitment profession (please note the use of the word 'profession'!) with over 50% of job moves involving an agent in some way.

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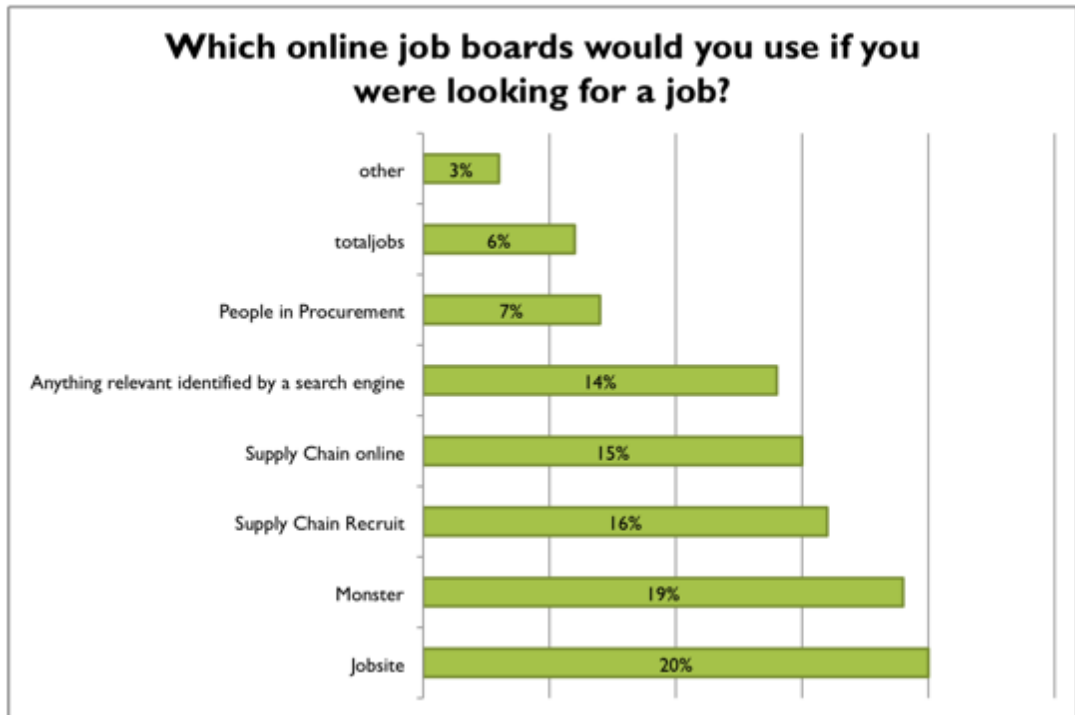


All the obvious methods feature strongly here, and the figures relating to recruitment companies demonstrate just how prevalent their work has become in the profession.

The online job boards outperform all elements of the printed media apart from Supply Management (which is also online) and this simply confirms a trend that now seems irreversible.

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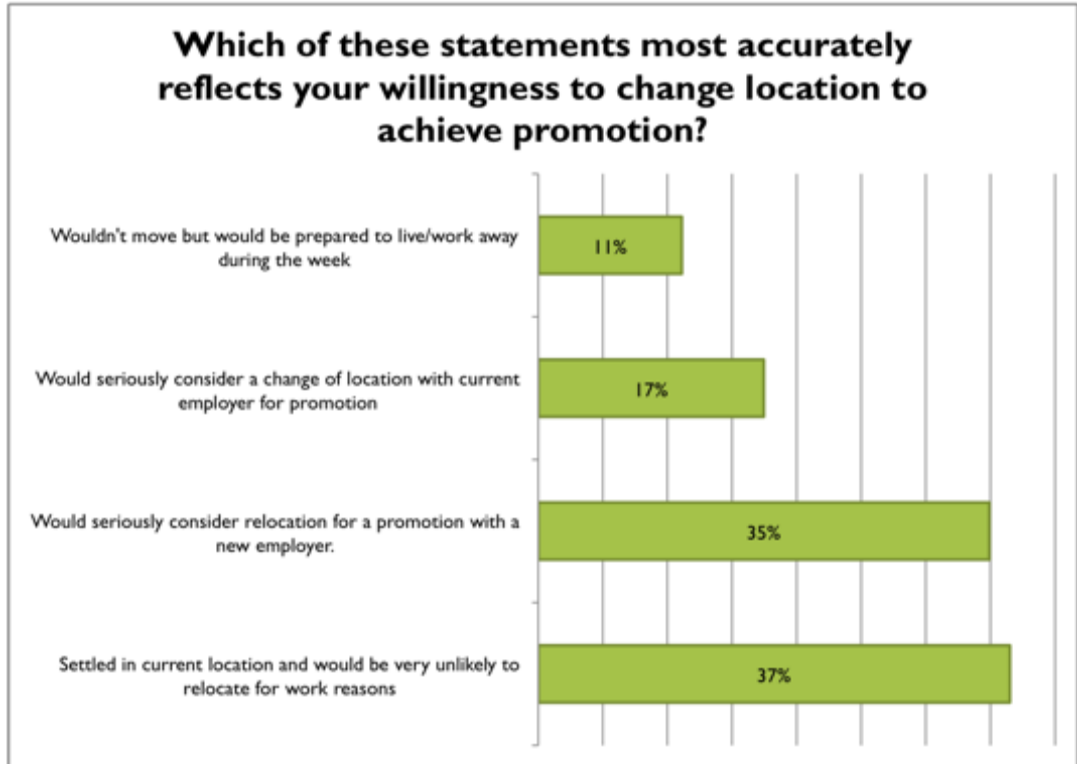
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This surprised us slightly simply because we personally have received better advert responses from specialist sites. However, the two main generalist sites enjoy high profiles and are clearly respected by procurement people.

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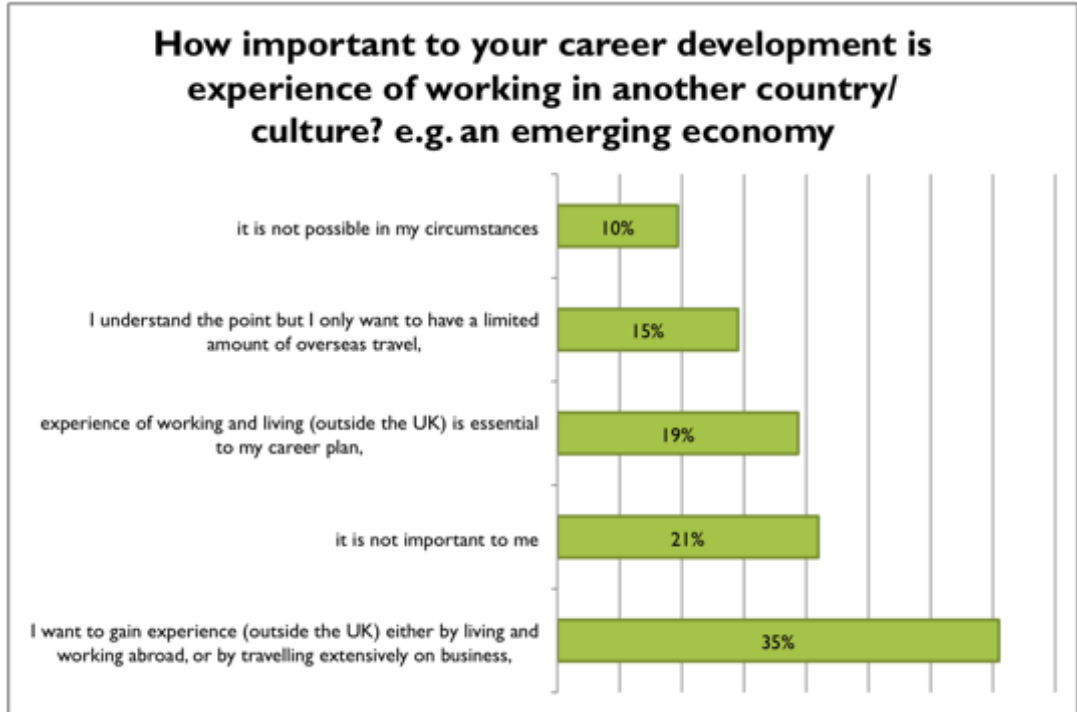
In our experience relocation is actually less common than this but these figures suggest that for a really good career move, people are prepared to make major change in their personal life.

There is also a theory that relocation used to be more common than it is today when many people prefer to opt for long commutes or working away from home during the week. This maybe because relocation is not on offer, or it is not practical for them for various reasons with the most common being a partners career or children's schools.

Recruitment consultants should certainly urge people to think through all the issues here ranging from potential burn-out to cost effectiveness to the impact on personal or family life.

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We have seen a sharp increase in the demand for jobs with broad geographical responsibilities over a period of 3-5 years. This is now developing into an increasing appetite for overseas secondments and longer term moves. This is undoubtedly a by product of the increasing globalisation of procurement.