

November 2016
A ResourceBank publication

Results of a major insight
survey of over 2,500
active job-seekers within
the UK Retail sector

ResourceBank



What
Retail
Candidates
want in
2016

1.0 Introduction

...over **2,500** active candidates completed an on-line survey...

Despite the uncertainties of Brexit, the UK economy remains strong and has the highest levels of employment we've ever seen. Future employment plans remain positive with the most recent CIPD labour market outlook survey showing a significant trend to hire more staff in 2017.

The "war for talent" shows no signs of easing and competition amongst employers in certain areas of the country is fierce.

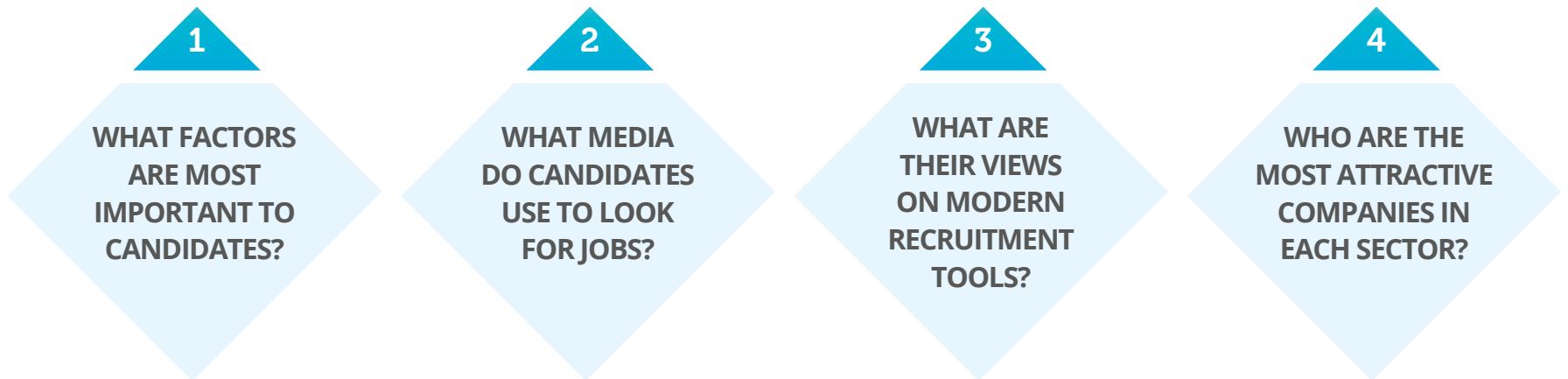
Employers need to understand what is important to candidates in their job hunting activity and what attracts them to specific roles. It is also key to understand which media channels candidates will use to search for jobs – so that employers can select the best route for their talent attraction strategies.

The annual ResourceBank Retail Candidate Insight Survey has been designed to give Employers clear insight into candidate needs, wants and behaviours.

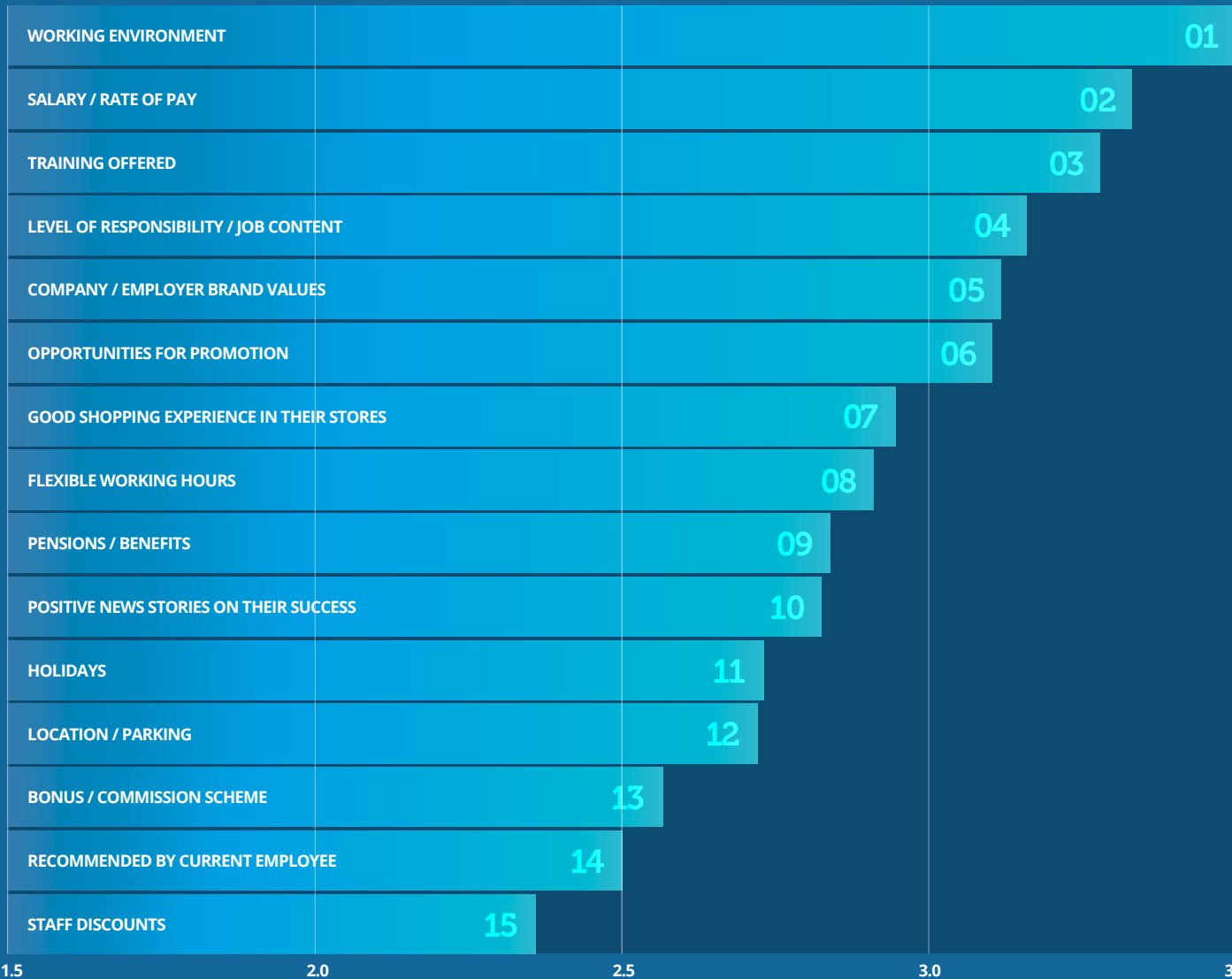
It also provides a clear ranking of the most attractive companies from a candidate perspective – and shows how this attractiveness has changed since the inaugural survey in 2015.

The following pages highlight the main findings of the survey and further data is available on specific skills, locations and sectors upon request.

Findings in this report include:



2.0 What candidates consider when choosing a new job / employer



Remaining consistent with 2015's results, a good working environment is still the number one factor for retail candidates. Having an environment where staff feel comfortable, valued and respected is the most important consideration when retail candidates are looking for a new job. Many candidates mentioned that they wanted to work as part of a happy friendly team where the employer and company managers treated candidates well.

"They need to treat employees like they would like to be treated themselves – not as slaves of modern times"

2.1 What candidates consider when choosing a new job / employer

Salary/Rate of pay was the second most important consideration for jobseekers. In a sector with one of the lowest average pay rates, salaries are understandably a key concern to all levels of candidate.

A number of candidates expressed a dislike for zero hours or flexi style contracts which are becoming increasingly popular with employers.

The actual job content and level of responsibility provided in the role has dropped to fourth most important factor from its previous position of third last year. In third place this year was the training offered by potential employers with many candidates making additional comments about the importance of opportunities to develop which is reflected in career progression being placed sixth overall in the rankings.

The company employer brand / values was ranked fifth with candidates commenting that they like to work somewhere they enjoy shopping as a consumer and ranking this seventh overall.

Candidates want to work with:

"A good team atmosphere with everyone working together to make the job more of a enjoyable experience rather than something you are doing just to live each day to day."

"Smiley happy people."

"Friendly staff and managers."



- 01 WORKING ENVIRONMENT
- 02 SALARY / RATE OF PAY
- 03 TRAINING OFFERED
- 04 LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY / JOB CONTENT
- 05 THE COMPANY / EMPLOYER BRAND VALUES
- 06 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION
- 07 GOOD SHOPPING EXPERIENCE IN THEIR STORES
- 08 FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS
- 09 PENSIONS / BENEFITS
- 10 POSITIVE NEWS STORIES ON THEIR SUCCESS
- 11 HOLIDAYS
- 12 LOCATION / PARKING
- 13 BONUS / COMMISSION SCHEME
- 14 RECOMMENDED BY EMPLOYEE
- 15 STAFF DISCOUNTS

Candidates are seeking:

"A business that invests and supports it's employees to the benefit of the company."

"The chance of extra training and career progression, having the ability to gain qualifications."

3.0 Where and how do candidates find jobs?

Similarly to last year a Google search is the first thing retail job hunters will do when seeking a new opportunity with a search on a company website coming a very close second.

Companies who are competing for candidates in retail must pay attention to where their vacancies appear on a Google Search in order to attract the highest number of candidates.

The second most popular method for candidates to find jobs is to search on specific retail company websites for open roles.

Having a strong consumer brand will be helpful here but all companies must make sure that their careers pages are easy to find and simple to search, correctly listing active jobs with a simple application process. With the growth of search volumes from mobile devices (c60% of all job searches) and tablets, companies must ensure that their websites are mobile friendly. Companies must also commit to managing the recruitment process swiftly and effectively as our survey has shown that many candidates still have a poor experience during retail recruitment processes.

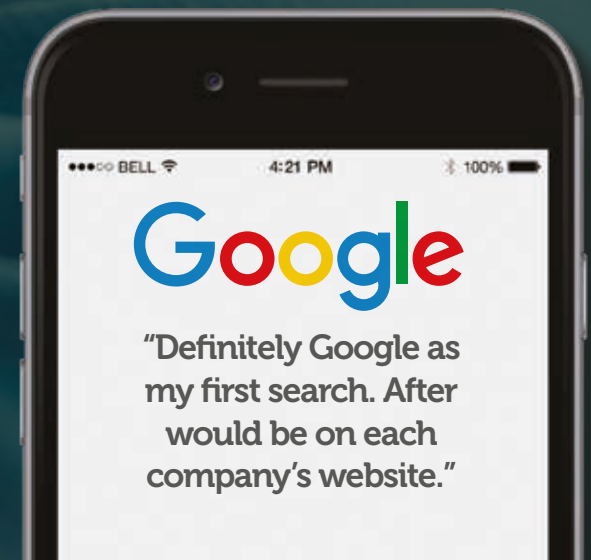
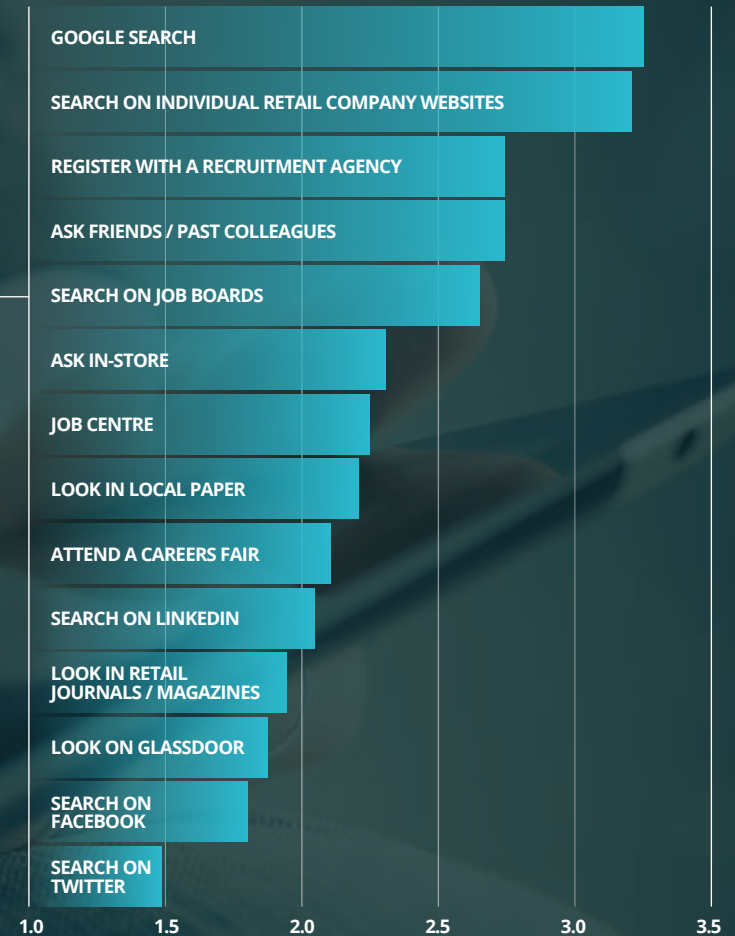
Searching on Jobboards has dropped two places from last year's third to fifth this year. Significantly only half the number of those indicating they were likely to

use a Google search would opt to look at job boards. Companies will need to review the budget spent on job board advertising against the investment in their own website as an equally if not more powerful means to attract retail candidates.

Register with a recruitment agency has moved up the ranking by one place this year to be listed third ranked similarly to asking friends and family. However, both these means are significantly overtaken by our top two rankings Google and Company websites. In the past candidates may have asked colleagues or recruitment companies about your business first but in 2016 they will search your careers site in-depth and if they are not quickly engaged and impressed, they will go elsewhere.

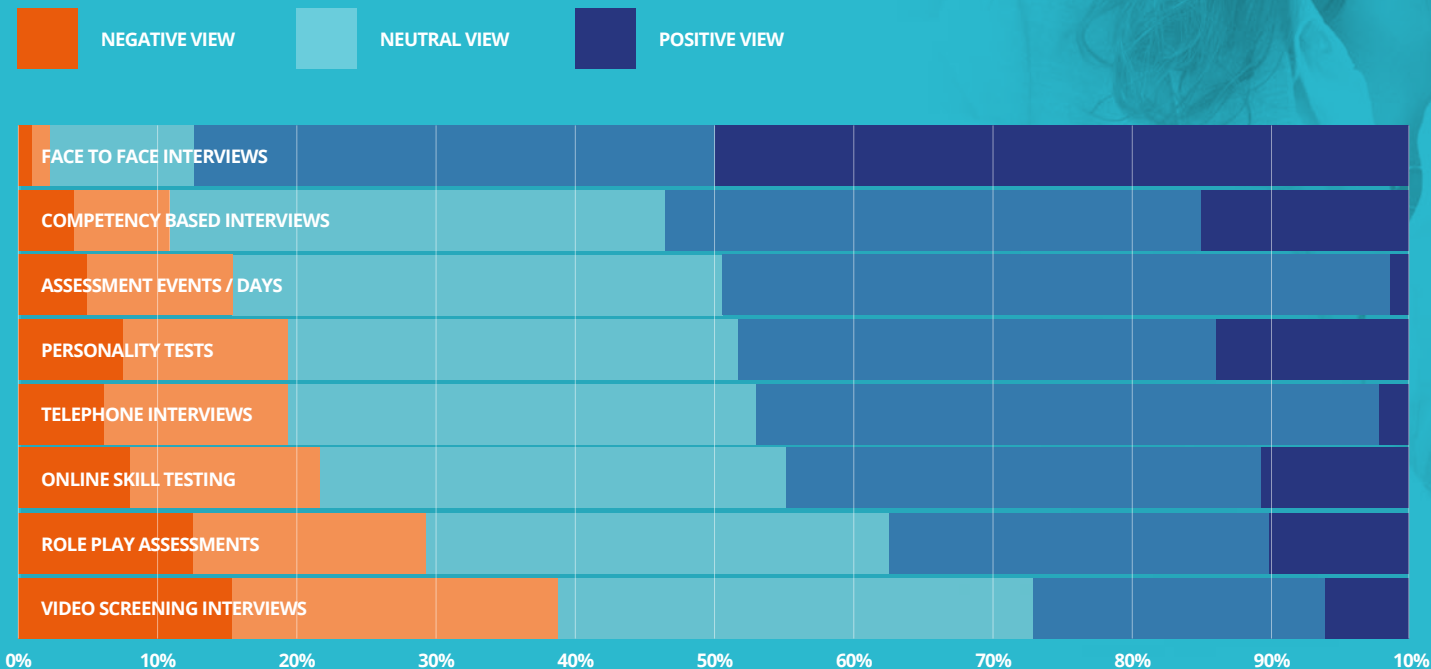
We're just not Social in retail

This year we specifically included separate social media channels to see in more detail how candidates are using these tools and how they compare to other sources. The survey revealed that retail candidates are unlikely to search for jobs on social channels. In particular twitter came rock bottom of the list with very few candidates indicating that they would use this media to search for jobs.



4.0 What do candidates think of video interviewing and other recruitment methods?

We asked candidates for their experiences of the tools used by employers during the recruitment process – how do they feel about their experience of different recruitment methods? Candidates were most positive about traditional face to face interviews, closely followed by competency based interviews:



"Normal face to face interviews seem the most professional."

4.1 What do candidates think of video interviewing and other recruitment methods?

Assessment days and personality tests came next in third and fourth place – with a mix of additional comments from candidates:

"I love on-line skill testing, assessment days are fun, I am not thrilled about telephone interviews because there is a better outcome with face to face interviews where it's a personal interaction."

"I dislike talking to nothing, I prefer to have a real life person on the other end."

"Testing does not represent knowledge and experience. It can make you feel belittled."

"Assessment events aren't a natural environment and I feel it does not show people at their best."

Online testing was less popular in sixth place:

Role play assessments and video interviewing were ranked as least positive with candidates. Comments from candidates show that they feel these methods create a contrived or false environment giving an advantage to those with confident and outgoing personalities. Many candidates feel they don't get a chance to show their real strengths and skills and some might opt not to take part in a process that involved these elements.

"Video interviewing, you don't have enough time to answer and because you have a time limit it puts more pressure on you."

Candidates want to feel valued and to be treated with respect in the recruitment process in the same way that they seek this in their working environment – they also see the process as an opportunity to

interact and engage with their prospective employer – the recruitment method we choose is one of the starting points of long term candidate engagement:

"I believe in face to face contact and giving people a chance to prove themselves."

This comment provides good advice for us all!

"Getting people to jump through hoops doesn't create a positive experience for anyone. Treat people as you would want to be treated and create a fair and balanced process that people understand and can follow."

5.0 The most attractive employer brands in retail

"Top of the list was Zara..."

We asked candidates which retail brands they would most like to work for. This year Zara has moved from fourth to first overtaking John Lewis – last year's winner.

Candidates are highly motivated by their own retail preferences, in store experience and environment. The retail brand is key.

John Lewis last year's number one is down two places to number three (Waitrose also dropped eleven places in this year's survey)

Amazon remains steadily at number two with River island up three places from seven:

"River Island because I buy most of my clothes there and the staff are friendly."

Topshop is up three places from number eight and New Look is up ten places from last year's twenty one: **"New Look this is where I shop the most often. I like the layouts, designs and the clothes."**

Wickes and Co-op moved up eleven and twelve places respectively with Lidl and Howdens both up six places. TK Maxx has moved up fourteen places and Argos is up twelve.

There is perhaps a trend towards budget and middle market brands becoming more popular than boutique or higher end brands, for example Net a Porter are down fourteen and Not On The High Street down sixteen. House of Fraser and Selfridges are down two places, M&S are down nine places, Monsoon are down seven and French Connection are down four with Harvey Nicks down five.

GAP and Boden increased nine and six respectively.

Candidate comments about their No 1 choice:

"Zara is the company I find most attractive due to the reputation of the brand."

"Zara. It's a good retail brand, I would like to work in a place that I believe in."

"Zara because the shop is always clean well kept with plenty of staff"

"Zara, I love them!"

"Zara, this is because of how well set out and easy the application was to fill out. Also the company has many benefits and take pride in their respected reputation."

A photograph of a Zara retail store at night. The store's name 'ZARA' is illuminated in large, white, sans-serif letters above the glass entrance. The interior is visible through the glass, showing clothing racks and mannequins. The lighting is warm and inviting.

ZARA

01

5.1 The most attractive employer brands in retail

SCORING EXPLAINED

Candidates were asked to score each company in terms of how attractive they were as a potential employer. A four scale ranking was used:

- 1 NOT ATTRACTIVE
- 2 QUITE ATTRACTIVE
- 3 ATTRACTIVE
- 4 EXTREMELY ATTRACTIVE

The numerical figures shown in the report show the mean average score received by each company.

2016
WINNER!

ZARA

01

amazon

02

John Lewis

03

RIVER ISLAND

04

TOPSHOP

05

Harrods

06

HOUSE OF FRASER
SINCE 1947

07

SELFRIDGES & CO

08

H&M

09

ASOS
discover fashion online

10

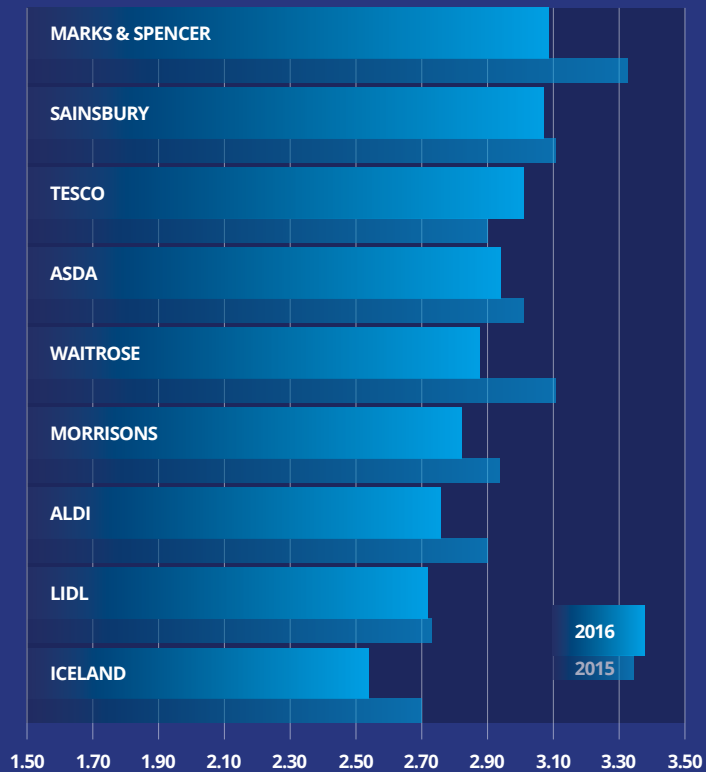
POSITION	2016	2015 POS	MOVE
1. ZARA	3.4	4	▲3
2. AMAZON	3.36	2	0
3. JOHN LEWIS	3.32	1	▼2
4. RIVER ISLAND	3.29	7	▲3
5. TOPSHOP	3.2	8	▲3
6. HARRODS	3.19	-	-
7. HOUSE OF FRASER	3.18	5	▼2
8. SELFRIDGES	3.13	6	2
9. H&M	3.13	9	0
10. ASOS	3.09	12	▲2
11. NEW LOOK	3.08	21	▲10
12. MARKS & SPENCER	3.07	3	▼9
13. DEBENHAMS	3.06	13	0
14. SAINSBURY	3.06	11	▼3
15. TESCO	3.02	24	▲9
16. WORLD DUTY FREE	3.0	18	▲2
17. NEXT	3.0	20	▲3
18. ASDA	2.98	17	▼1
19. HARVEY NICHOLS	2.97	14	▼5
20. FRENCH CONNECTION	2.91	16	▼4
21. WAITROSE	2.86	10	▼11
22. WICKES	2.83	33	▲11

POSITION	2016	2015 POS	MOVE
23. MORRISONS	2.81	19	▼4
24. B&Q	2.80	29	▲5
25. CO-OP	2.79	37	▲12
26. HOMEBASE	2.77	28	▲2
27. ALDI	2.77	26	▼1
28. LIDL	2.75	34	▲6
29. BOOHOO	2.74	30	▲1
30. HOWDENS	2.71	36	▲6
31. WREN KITCHENS	2.70	43	▲12
32. MONSOON	2.7	25	▼7
33. VERY	2.69	38	▲5
34. NOT ON THE HIGH STREET	2.67	15	▼19
35. GAP	2.67	44	▲9
36. TKMAXX	2.65	51	▲15
37. DOROTHY PERKINS	2.63	41	▲4
38. FURNITURE VILLAGE	2.62	-	-
39. IKEA	2.58	-	-
40. BATHSTORE	2.57	47	▲7
41. ICELAND	2.57	42	▲1
42. ARGOS	2.56	54	▲12
43. MAGNET KITCHENS	2.55	40	▼3
44. FENWICKS	2.53	39	▼5

POSITION	2016	2015 POS	MOVE
45. NET A PORTER	2.52	31	▼14
46. DREAMS	2.50	62	▲16
47. PLUMB, PART & DRAIN CENTER	2.50	53	▲6
48. ONESTOP	2.50	58	▲10
49. BODEN	2.48	55	▲6
50. SPAR	2.46	-	-
51. COSTCUTTER	2.46	-	-
52. DFS	2.45	63	▲11
53. M&M DIRECT	2.39	48	▼5
54. AVENUE 32	2.37	46	▼8
55. BENSONS FOR BEDS	2.35	65	▲10
56. PRIMARK	2.35	61	▲5
57. SCS	2.33	-	-
58. MATALAN	2.32	57	▼1
59. SOFAWORKSHOP	2.30	-	-
60. SOFOLOGY	2.30	-	-
61. LONDIS	2.30	-	-
62. NISA	2.29	-	-
63. SHARPS	2.19	56	▼7
64. BUDGENS	2.19	60	▼4
65. CARPETRIGHT	2.09	66	▲1
66. DWELL	2.06	-	-

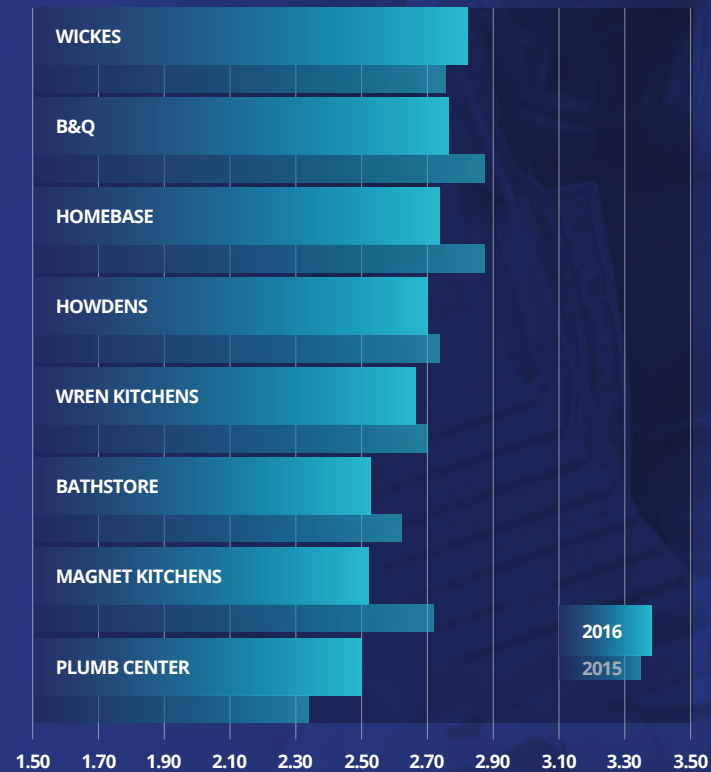
6.0 The most attractive employer brands in each sector

Food / Groceries



Marks and Spencer is still the most attractive employer in the food sector. However – their lead has been cut with Sainsbury and Tesco close behind. In fact Tesco has moved up significantly since last year while Waitrose has dropped back to fifth in the sector.

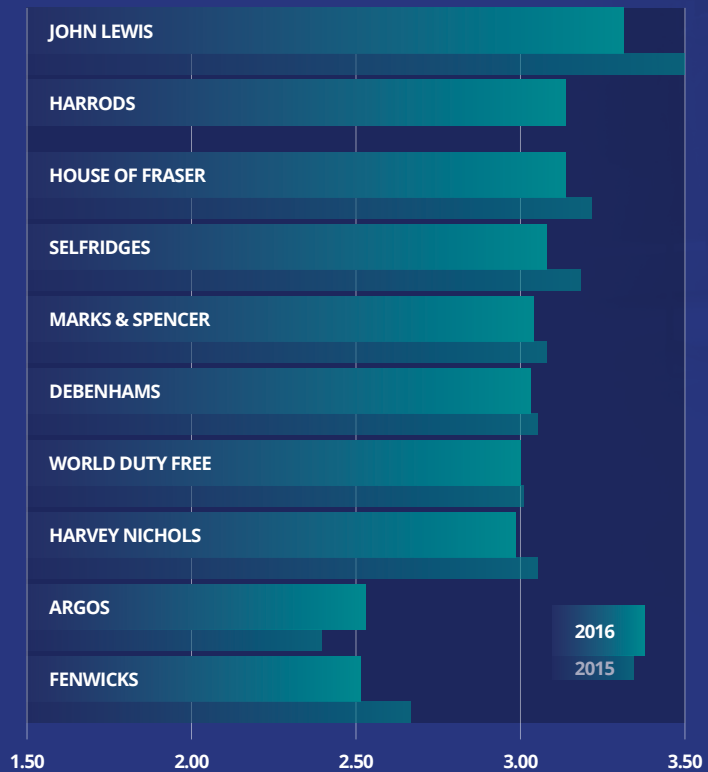
Home / DIY



Wickes has replaced Homebase as top of the Home/DIY retail sector while B&Q remains in second place.

6.1 The most attractive employer brands in each sector

Department Stores / Multiple retailers



John Lewis remains top of this sector even if it has dropped from the top of the overall chart. Harrods, not included in last year's survey, is in second place with House of Fraser and Selfridges in third and fourth respectively.

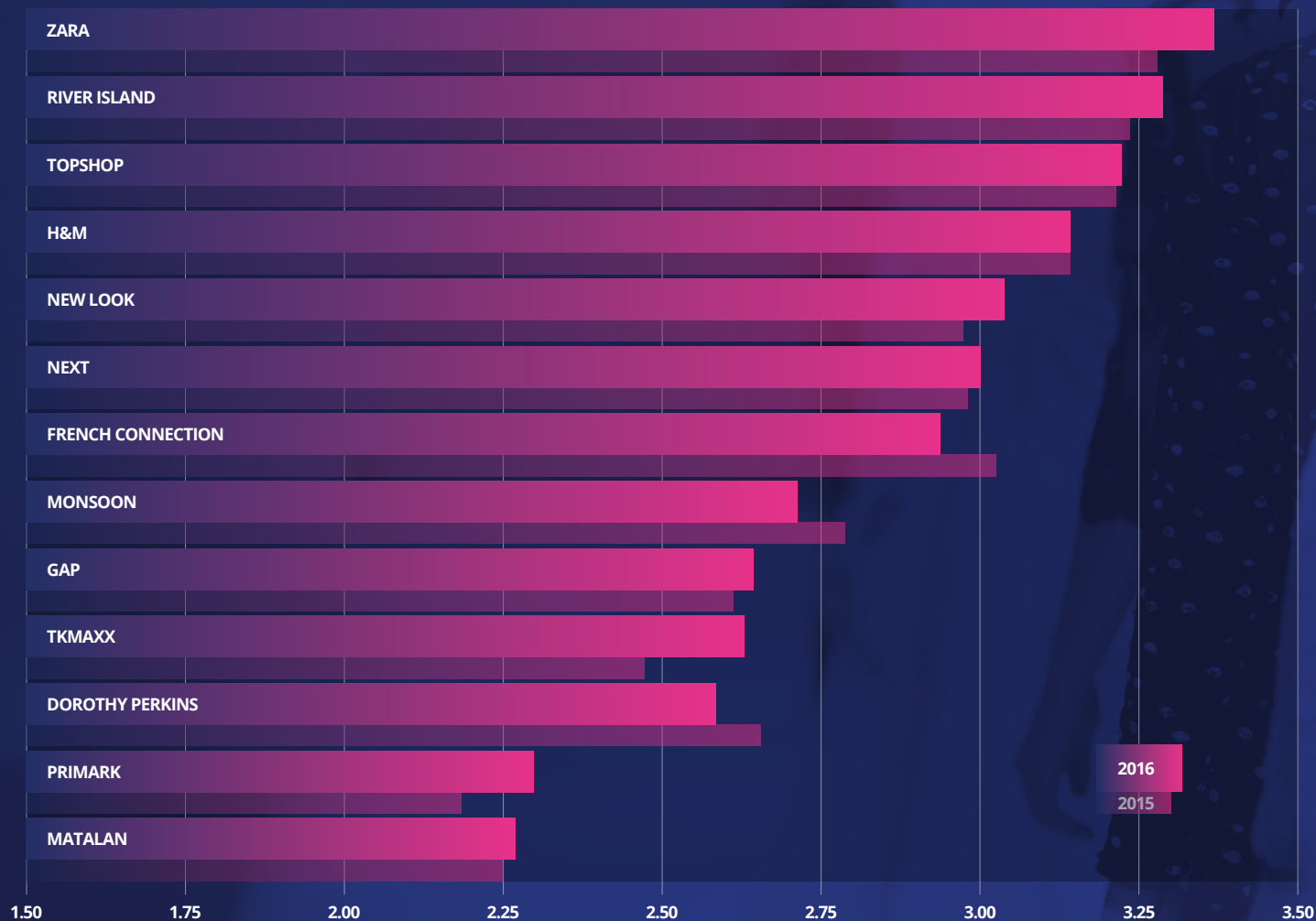
Online retailers



Amazon remains top of the online retailers with Asos in second place. Not on the High Street has dropped back while Boden has made the largest move forward.

6.2 The most attractive employer brands in each sector

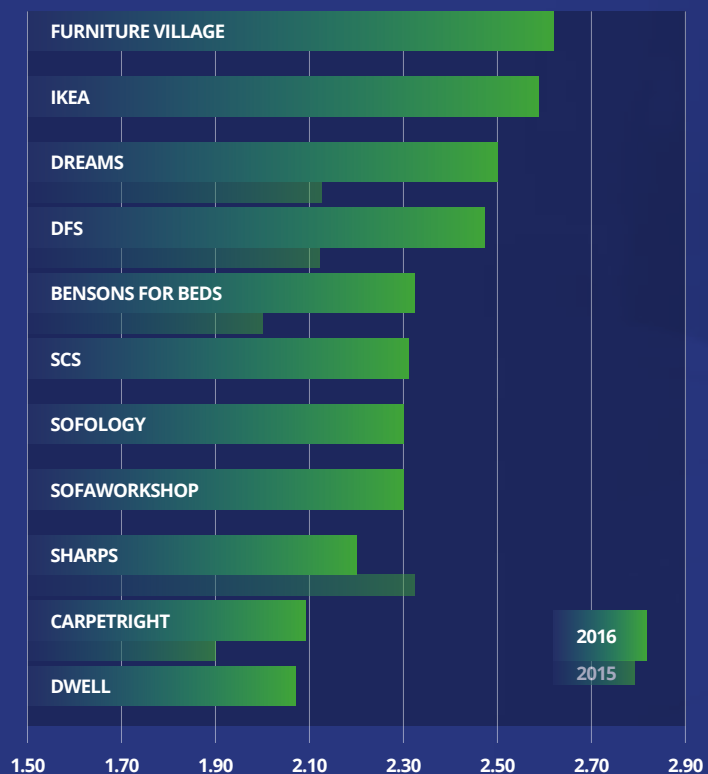
Fashion Retailers



Zara tops the list of the most attractive employer in the Fashion sector for the second year running. New Look, TKMaxx and Primark have all increased in attraction since last year's survey.

6.3 The most attractive employer brands in each sector

Furniture Retailers



In a new separate category for 2016, Furniture Village tops Ikea with Dreams and DFS in third and fourth respectively. The attractiveness scores for furniture retailers as a whole increased on 2015.

Convenience Retailers



In another new separate category for 2016, Co-op heads the list of convenience retailers with One Stop in second place.

7.0 About the research & publisher



Established in 1995, ResourceBank recruits, retains and manages talent on behalf of leading organisations in the UK and Europe. The business offers a range of services including recruitment outsourcing, executive search, HR administration outsourcing and workforce assessment.

ResourceBank employs teams of experienced HR and recruitment professionals working with clients such as World Duty Free Group, Vector Aerospace, Dyson, DFS, Northgate Vehicle Hire, Coats, Pitney Bowes and Aliaxis.

This research project was undertaken during August and September 2016. 2,454 full surveys were completed. Further data is available on specific skills, locations and sectors upon request (see below).





ResourceBank Recruitment Ltd, RBR House, Hawksworth Road, Central Park, Telford, Shropshire TF2 9TU
Tel: 01952 281900 Fax: 01952 291272 Email: info@resourcebank.co.uk Web: www.resourcebank.co.uk

