

2022 MID-YEAR Q&A



A Question of Supply and Demand

The Copier Channel has a supply and demand problem. In the first half of 2022, the resurgent industry ran into an immense obstacle. There simply are not enough skilled candidates — from technicians to leadership roles — to fill positions across the industry.

“We just need to get some people in the pipeline,” says Paul Schwartz, president of Copier Careers. “The ‘do more with less’ model has worked for about a decade, but now the bottom has fallen out.”

What can be done? Good question. We talked with four of our top recruiters about the challenges of filling jobs in this intensely competitive environment and asked for their insights about how employers and job candidates can ride the high tide of market conditions to success.

How competitive is the job market?

Four recruiters working in four regions across the country offered very similar answers: “Extremely competitive.” “So competitive and fast.” “Very, very competitive.” “Super competitive.” They also agree that right now there are about two jobs to every one candidate. Yes, *that* competitive.

Jessica Crowley, Copier Careers senior vice president and Northeast regional recruiter, says job orders have exploded in 2022. She had 56 new searches in the first quarter of 2022, compared with 15 new searches in the fourth quarter of 2021. Recruiters in other regions say they are having a similar experience — lots of job orders and a shortage of candidates.

“Companies are really fighting to hold onto their candidates,” Crowley says. “I haven’t seen this level of response, especially for techs, in over 10 years.”



PRO TIP: In a candidates’ market, hiring managers need a sense of urgency and an efficient hiring process. Candidates are interviewing with multiple companies, so if you’re not moving fast, be aware that your competitors just might be.

What’s different about recruiting in 2022 compared with 2021?

For **Matthew Tien**, West Coast regional recruiter, the most notable change he has seen in the past year is how open candidates are to making a move.

“A year ago, candidates had been out of the office, unable to work and really wanted to get back out there,” he says. “They were more willing to meet in the middle, but now candidates are much pickier, and many are looking for remote or hybrid positions.”

Tien and the other recruiters say technicians want their roles to evolve, with more training and a chance to grow. Techs are also discovering that their skills are very transferrable to other industries.



PRO TIP: Be flexible. What attracted candidates last year may not be attractive in 2022. More than ever, time is of the essence. Pre-screen candidates and be ready to schedule interviews and make an offer quickly. If your process bogs down, candidates will move on.

Are you recruiting to fill existing gaps or for new positions?

Jenna Humbert, Midwest regional recruiter, says with the industry’s growth she is recruiting for new jobs across all positions — techs, sales reps and leadership roles. Retirement or early retirement is creating openings, too.

“We are also losing people to other industries — especially IT,” she says. “I am asked to backfill a lot of those empty positions.” Humbert and her colleagues know that when they place more sales reps at a company, they need to keep an eye out for techs also, to keep service aligned with growth.



PRO TIP: Network savvy technicians are in high demand because dedicated IT providers are competing directly for those candidates. Dealers must be proactive to keep those techs from being poached from the industry.

Are candidates getting higher, lower or the same compensation?

David Lind, director of recruiting and Southeast regional recruiter, says he has started to see increasing compensation as businesses scramble to fill open positions.

“The clients who are trying to expand their business and acquire other businesses — the ones with a strong growth mindset — are the ones offering higher wages right now,” he says. Some candidates — especially techs — are getting multiple offers, counteroffers and in some cases significantly higher compensation.

Smaller companies that can't afford a bidding war are retaining staff by promoting from within and only looking for new talent for entry-level positions.



PRO TIP: Don't offer pre-2021 compensation. Companies must at least match a candidate's existing salary. But money is not always the answer. Some candidates may take similar or even lower compensation for an exciting opportunity, a hot territory or new technology.

What are most candidates looking for in a new position?

Outside of compensation, many candidates are concerned about their career path, Crowley says. “Techs want challenges, technical training and more sophisticated tech in their future. Sales professionals want a higher base salary, exciting products and complex cases within managed services.”

Our recruiters note that candidates want to work for a company with a good reputation and for managers who don't micromanage.



PRO TIP: Compensation is only part of the conversation. Candidates are also concerned with company culture, opportunities to advance and work-life balance. Candidates from other industries might also want to talk about remote work. Be prepared to meet new or changing expectations.

What are most employers looking for in a new employee?

Three words: Stability, longevity and loyalty are the qualities employers are seeking in job candidates, our recruiting experts say.

“Employers tell me more times than I can count that they want someone who will want to stay and grow for years to come,” Humbert says. “Longevity and loyalty are really prioritized.”

Our experts say companies are also looking for a solid track record — techs with the right certifications and sales reps that are hunters not farmers. Most important, they are looking for candidates eager to embrace growth and innovative technology.



PRO TIP: Employers want to see stability in a candidate's pre-pandemic career, and candidates should have reasonable explanations for job hopping. Retention is a very high priority now with some companies even incentivizing stability and long tenures.

What are the most common reasons candidates refuse offers?

“There are dozens of reasons a candidate may refuse an offer, but in 2022, counteroffers are short-circuiting offers more than ever,” Crowley says. Low-ball offers, inadequate benefits or too-little vacation time also cause candidates to balk.



PRO TIP: Be ready to negotiate or renegotiate with a strong candidate. They may be speaking with other employers and will walk away if they don't feel the offer meets their needs and market value.

What are common reasons employers don't make an offer?

Employers value loyalty, so a candidate who complains about their current employer is waving a red flag, because it shows disloyalty or disrespect. Most employers won't take the risk of hiring a potential problem. They want to hire people who are excited to be there.

But in some cases, the candidate isn't the problem, Tien says. “Some companies don't respond well to demanding candidates — they are used to having all the leverage and power,” he says. “I remind my clients that in this market, it's good for candidates to be transparent about what they want — how else can the company make them a truly attractive offer and ultimately hire them?”



PRO TIP: How a candidate represents themselves in an interview is very important. Companies want to hire people who have the right skills and are excited to be there. Candidates who do the best know their value but keep their professionalism — they can have both.

What factors do employers consider in making an offer?

Jessica Crowley: “Hiring managers really respond to candidates who demonstrate a sense of ownership for their career and who show excitement about the company and the new role. They are very wary of candidates who lack that enthusiasm.”

Jenna Humbert: “If the candidate checks at least half the boxes the employer is looking for — if they want to grow with the company, are excited, fit with the company culture, have good previous experience, if they're generally aligned on compensation — employers are willing to negotiate with the candidate, especially on the issue of vacation time.”

Matt Tien: “My clients make offers when the candidate has the right experience, are on the same page about compensation, compatible location and good timing. They are more willing to compromise on the technical skills if the candidate has the right soft skills.”

David Lind: “If they have the longevity, expertise, attitude/personality to fit with the company, that really cinches the deal. If they fall a bit short on expertise, employers are looking for their potential to learn and be trained to make up for that lack.”



PRO TIP: If you are hiring, be prepared, have a great conversation and be ready to evaluate skills, fit and potential. Then don't hesitate to make an offer. The competition for strong candidates is fierce.

What's your best advice for industry candidates in this job market?

- **Communicate** openly with employers and your recruiter. We're looking to get you in a position you'll be happy in for years to come.
- **Stay positive** and ask questions. Never forget that you are interviewing them while they're interviewing you.
- **Self-evaluate** to know what you want and what you want to do. Ask yourself if you are serious and if you can commit to moving forward.
- **Be open** to having a discussion with an employer, because you won't know what you can get until you ask them.
- **Wield** your power carefully. Don't forget that you are interviewing to work for these clients, so don't get cocky and blow a great opportunity.
- **Don't accept counteroffers.** Remember why you wanted to leave in the first place.



PRO TIP: During this process, you need to stay in communication — answer your phone, respond to texts, send an email. Our recruiters all say that the world will not end if candidates ask for what they want or if they tell an employer “no.”

What's your best advice for industry employers in this job market?

- **Prioritize** your communication and timing. You don't hold all the cards in this market, and you can't keep people in the dark or leave them hanging.
- **Be open.** Don't write off candidates based purely on their resume. It's always worth talking with a candidate on the phone.
- **Talk** to candidates as soon as you have them in front of you. Timing is essential, so you need to talk to candidates ASAP.
- **Be prepared** and ready to make decisions quickly.
- **Be flexible.** It is to your benefit, especially in training new hires.

Our recruiters all agree that it costs you more for a seat to be empty than it does for you to fill it. Remember it is unlikely that we will return to a pre-pandemic hiring landscape. There is no “normal” in 2022. Accept that it is where we are now. In our recent experience, we find that clients who recognize that we are operating in a strange new world are doing better at hiring and retaining.



PRO TIP: You don't have a lot of choices in this market, so you need to do the leg work. You can't just turn the rare candidate down on a whim or technicality. If you're on the fence, talk to the candidate or someone else will.



Meet our panel of experts



Jessica Crowley is the senior vice president and regional recruiter for the Northeast. She has been proactively recruiting with Copier Careers for more than a decade and celebrated her 500th placement this year. Jessica received the Copier Careers Recruiting Excellence® Award for her outstanding work in 2021.



Jenna Humbert is the regional recruiter for the Midwest and Texas. She is in her second year recruiting with Copier Careers. Jenna received the Copier Careers Recruiting Excellence® Award for her outstanding work in 2021.



Matthew Tien is the regional recruiter for the West Coast, Alaska and Hawaii. He recently celebrated his first anniversary with Copier Careers and is on-track for another strong year in 2022. Matt was recognized several times for his exemplary recruiting in 2021 and 2022.



David Lind, SFC USA Retired, is the director of recruiting and regional recruiter for the Southeast. He joined Copier Careers in October of 2021. Dave came to us with over 20 years of leadership, training, management and recruiting experience and hit the ground running with our Adaptive Retainer Recruiting® model. Dave was recognized several times for his exemplary recruiting in 2022.

ABOUT US

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