

Nobody trusts job descriptions anymore.



Real Human, 20



📍 70 miles away

Hello I am an real human I enjoy the human hobbies of breathing air and walking with my leg

Not candidates.

Not recruiters.

Honestly?

Not even some hiring managers!

And quietly, that's becoming one of the biggest problems in the hiring market right now.

Welcome back to **The Shortlist** from Belvedere.

If you've followed the first two editions, you'll know there's a theme emerging underneath the noise of the 2026 market...**TRUST**

Issue #1: More applicants. Still a shortage of specialist talent.

Issue #2: The "perfect candidate" is disappearing because adaptability is replacing rigid experience matching.

And now Issue #3 brings us to the next consequence of all that change:

Candidates no longer automatically believe what companies are telling them.

That's a massive shift.

For years, job descriptions were treated as information.

Today, candidates increasingly treat them as marketing.

And the more exaggerated the language becomes, the less believable the opportunity feels.

You can see it everywhere now.

Because “*hybrid*” often means, “mostly office.”



“*Urgent role*” means, “we’ve been interviewing for 11 weeks.”

“*Competitive salary*” means, “we’re hoping you say a lower number first.”

“*Fast-moving process*” means, “seven interview stages and personality assessment.”

And our personal favourite:

And “*entry-level*” somehow requires:

- 3–5 years’ experience
- stakeholder management
- AI exposure
- transformation capability
- advanced Excel
- Python
- resilience
- and ideally the emotional stability of a hostage negotiator.

Everyone laughs about it online.

But underneath the humour, there’s a serious business problem developing.

Trust is collapsing...

LinkedIn workforce insights show application volumes per role have surged over the last two years, while response rates continue falling.

At the same time, Greenhouse research found that nearly half of candidates have withdrawn from hiring processes because of poor communication or overly long interview cycles.

And honestly?

That makes perfect sense.

Because many professionals now approach job descriptions the same way people approach online dating profiles:

Assume half of it is exaggerated, and the rest will only become clear later.

That mindset changes everything.

It changes:

- how candidates apply
- how they interview
- how they negotiate
- how quickly they disengage
- and increasingly, whether they engage at all

Especially at senior and specialist level.

Because one of the biggest misconceptions in hiring right now is this:

Companies think candidates are applying for jobs.

Many candidates are actually applying for signals.

Signals of:

- leadership quality

- organisational stability
- transparency
- flexibility
- communication
- credibility
- and whether the business genuinely understands the role they're hiring for

And candidates can usually sense misalignment surprisingly quickly.

We see it constantly across banking, fintech, shared services and technology hiring across Poland and the wider CEE market.

A **company says** innovation matters, while the job description reads like it was written before ChatGPT existed.

A **business says** adaptability is important, while rejecting candidates for missing one “nice-to-have” requirement buried on page three.

A **leadership team says** AI transformation is a strategic priority, while advertising roles that AI is already beginning to automate.

And candidates notice all of it.

Quietly.

Immediately.

Because the strongest professionals in this market are not desperate applicants anymore.

They're careful buyers.

They are assessing:

- leadership credibility
- hiring maturity
- process speed
- communication quality

- salary transparency
- team stability
- and whether the reality matches the story being sold

That's a massive shift.

And many organisations still haven't adapted to it.

Some companies still write job descriptions like legal disclaimers.

Others write them like fantasy wish lists assembled by five stakeholders who all wanted different people.

And increasingly, some read so heavily AI-generated that candidates finish reading them without actually understanding what the role involves.

Ironically, AI may end up making authentic communication more valuable, not less.

Because candidates are becoming highly sensitive to tone, clarity and honesty.

Especially after years of:

- restructures
- layoffs
- fake urgency
- “growth opportunities” that never materialised
- and hiring processes that felt more performative than productive

The market has become emotionally intelligent.

And hiring communication is now being judged through that lens.

That changes recruitment completely.

Because increasingly, great hiring is no longer just about attracting attention.

It's about creating belief.

Belief that:

- the opportunity is real

- the leadership is credible
- the process is serious
- the expectations are aligned
- and the people behind the hiring genuinely know what they need

The companies winning strongest right now are not necessarily the loudest.

They are, the clearest, the fastest, the most aligned, **and often**, the most human.

Because clarity builds trust.

And trust builds momentum.

Especially with high-value candidates who still have options.

A few things we're seeing heavily across Poland & CEE right now:

- stronger candidate pushback around vague salary structures
- increased resistance toward excessive interview stages
- rising importance of employer credibility during hiring
- more candidates withdrawing from processes that feel emotionally misaligned



- AI-generated job descriptions reducing engagement quality
- passive candidates continuing to outperform active applicants in specialist markets
- businesses rewriting job adverts to sound more conversational and less corporate

And perhaps the biggest shift of all?

Candidates are no longer assuming companies are telling the full truth.

They're trying to decode it.

That means every part of the hiring process now communicates something:

- the job description
- the recruiter interaction
- the speed of feedback
- the interview structure
- even the silence between stages

Because whether organisations realise it or not...

Candidates are assessing trust long before they assess compensation.

So here's the question worth sitting with this week:

If your hiring process was experienced anonymously as a candidate... would you trust it?

This is Issue #3 of **The Shortlist**.

And if the response to the first two editions has taught us anything, it's this:

People are tired of recruitment content pretending everything is normal.

They want clarity. They want honesty. And increasingly, they want hiring to feel human again.

If this resonated, follow Belvedere and share it with someone navigating hiring, scaling or workforce transformation right now.

You probably already know who that person is.

And if there's a hiring contradiction, market trend or leadership challenge you'd like us to unpack in future editions, let us know in the comments.

We genuinely read every message.

— **The Belvedere Team**

Growing globally. Rooted in Poland & CEE.

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