



**glassdoor**

*Can it make the biggest impact on the  
recruitment sector since LinkedIn?*

## GLASSDOOR

### Can it make the biggest impact on the recruitment sector since LinkedIn?

**Glassdoor** has the potential to have a major impact on every employer's ability to attract new talent, yet the vast majority of businesses across the North have either a limited or no plan around it.

We have met up a wide range of employers and discussed the subject with their HR and Talent leads to put together this article which will;

- Provide a simple overview of **Glassdoor**
- How **Glassdoor** can have a detrimental effect on recruitment plans
- How **Glassdoor** can improve the attraction of your business to candidates
- Simple tips that will allow you to start an effective **Glassdoor** strategy and develop it for the longer term.

Special thanks to **Matt Hughan** (Head of People Proposition at [Sky Betting & Gaming](#)), **Katy Sampson** (Senior Resourcing Adviser at [Grant Thornton](#)) and **Fran Galbraith** (Group Talent & Development Director at [SIG plc](#)) for spending some time with us and contributing to this article.

## What is Glassdoor?

### Key Facts

- An online platform that allows employers to communicate their EVP and employer branding.
- A website that allows all employees (current and past) and interviewees to rate your business – providing a score, a rating on the CEO and commentary on pros & cons.

***“Trip Advisor is the most powerful tool for attracting new customers for restaurants and hotels. Glassdoor provides a similar function to jobseekers across all levels of seniority and discipline”***

- Attracting 64m monthly visitors, with 45m company reviews and with 830,000 employers on the website (from huge corporates) to SMEs. Glassdoor was bought by the same company that owns Indeed for \$1.2bn in 2018
- A global platform but with 2,628 employers in the Leeds region and 1,268. It is already having a strong influence on our region’s employers – Over 2,700 employees have reviewed Asda.
- Job adverts are placed alongside company reviews, allowing candidates to decide whether they apply to a 5-star employer or take the risk on a 1 star

### What content does it provide?

- Most of the content is provided by the employee – This includes review, photos and scorings.
- Employers can control the company overview and can respond to every review. All of which are publicly displayed
- Overall scores are summarised as a mark out of 5 for every employer, with the average score being 3.4
- Employers can subscribe to a number of reports that provide a very good benchmark on employee satisfaction, salaries & benefits and scores for other comparable employers
- Annual awards for the best ranked employers. [Anglian Water](#) is currently the top ranked UK company to work for with [Sky Betting & Gaming](#) top of the Yorkshire region at position 6 in the UK for 2019

### Our opinion

- Glassdoor was started 6 years after LinkedIn but has the potential to provide as much of an impact on the recruitment industry. Easy access to views from existing employees is viewed by many job seekers as a more authentic and persuasive source of information than corporate career websites.
- The comparison with Trip Advisor is very useful and shows the potential benefits as well as some of the faults;

*“Potential customers looking for a good Indian restaurant should disregard the 1-star review given by the diner who ordered the omelette. A Financial Controller may gain some decent information from the reviews of the contact centre operative, receptionist or Production Director, but can not get a totally accurate reflection on the pros and cons of working in finance in the same business”*

## Can Glassdoor have a detrimental effect on employer reputations?

If you are not a large employer or recruiting regularly, Glassdoor need not be an important initiative. If you are and you do not have a particular focus, it can have a significant negative impact on your recruitment plans.

**62% of reviewers are millennials.** This proportion will only increase, and the impressively simple functionality of the website and the app make it very effective. A report by [Glassdoor](#) suggested that most jobseekers will look at as many as 6 employee reviews on [Glassdoor](#) before applying for a job.

Contrast the job market 20 years ago with that of today;

1999	2019
Jobs advertised in the press	Jobs advertised online and candidates can be 'found' through LinkedIn and online CV databases like CV Library and Total
Written applications made by post	One-click applications online
Some recruiters would keep the identity of the employer private until the day before the interview	Candidates have access to careers pages, company & individual LinkedIn pages, Glassdoor before they commit their interest

*"Candidates are now armed with so much more information, provided by so many different sources. This information is not as controlled as it was in the past – this is a good thing if employers can respond to this. There is no point in putting your head in the sand"*

**Katy Sampson** is Senior Resourcing Adviser at [Grant Thornton](#) but previously worked in a large telecommunications business in Canada.

*"Glassdoor was a major factor for candidates in North America to decide whether to apply to a specific company or not. Like many other companies, it was a leading part of our HR strategy.*

*We had a challenging period where our Glassdoor rating dropped significantly, which mirrored a growing problem with our employee engagement.*

*We came up with a solution that asked all of our employees 8 questions every quarter, all of which were based on our Glassdoor pros and cons. This ensured that we focussed on all of the feedback, make actions on it and engage with our team. It was a successful strategy that had a positive effect on our HR strategy"*

*"Glassdoor could be a more powerful resource for management than LinkedIn. I would urge everyone to review their company's Glassdoor page and those of their nearest employers before looking at LinkedIn again – it is a lot more insightful"*

## Things to avoid

- Never fall into the trap of dismissing **Glassdoor** as just a platform for disgruntled ex-employees to vent their anger. This does happen but you can filter out results from past staff. These reviews can also provide HR and management with valuable information for HR strategies
- It can be blatantly clear when a company has just started a Glassdoor plan and is managing it – Imagine a company that has existed for 10 years and has 15 reviews, all of which appeared in the same 2 weeks this year!
- Candidates need to dig deeper than just looking at headlines. **Glassdoor** is not an even playing field for employers to be assessed. It may be the case that blue-collar employees have more or less issues than white-collar, finance staff are more motivated by the CEO than IT staff and teams in Yorkshire are generally more positive than those in London! If you are looking at a finance job in Sheffield, just look at the head office results and prioritise those from the finance department
- CEO approval ratings are flawed in our opinion! Many staff are not directly influenced by the CEO and where he/she changes, the scores revert back to zero
- Employers with a low number of reviews as a proportion of their headcount
- Be mindful of employers who have 5 stars and no negative reviews! This may be the case and that business deserves every plaudit it receives. Interviewing candidates regularly allows us to build up a strong impression of where there are some problems for some employers, which are affecting their engagement and retention. These impressions do not always tally with what we then see on Glassdoor

## Top Tips

1. Raise the profile of **Glassdoor** with your managers. Spend half an hour in your management meetings to show how it works and to reflect on how the business appears to the potential candidate pool
2. Encourage your employees to use it. Tactical encouragement rather than coercion! Ask for a “review” rather than a “good review”
3. Asking your staff across the year and at positive times to write a review is a practice undertaken by many employers to a very positive effect – on promotions, probationary reviews, work anniversaries, bonus time, year-end. These are all positive times that will provide a positive balance to the disgruntled few who have left and vented their spleen
4. Respond to all negative reviews. **Glassdoor** allows every employer to respond to each review (and no further dialogue so there is no risk of a protracted exchange). These responses are visible to all and can reflect really well – A negative review highlighting the poor training culture is a concern. A response from the HRD to say they understand that and are sorry to read it, the company is investing more in the L&D strategy and is recruiting additional resource, not only paints a more positive picture but shows an employer who listens. Employer pages where the CEO, CFO or COO respond to reviews that highlight issues in their areas can paint an even more powerful picture of the organisation – A board who listens, cares and will personally intervene to respond
5. Always conduct exit interviews. These will allow the unhappy ‘bad leavers’ to have a more controlled environment to unload and remove some of the toxins that may appear in the Glassdoor review. Positive interviews can be encouraged to produce a review that can help attract future candidates
6. Build a strong **Glassdoor** page. Only individuals validated by **Glassdoor** are allowed to do this and it allows you to compose the key information, post your own photos, videos, values, job adverts and be recognised on your page as an “Engaged Employer” which has a positive impact on your profile
7. Employers and employees need to choose the right employers to benchmark the business against. Location, sector and job function all make a difference – pick a couple from each category and that provides a balance

## Our last thought

Glassdoor has not had an impact on the majority of employers across the North of England. Neither has artificial intelligence or robotic technology, but not many would be bold enough to put up their hand to say that they will not within the next decade!

LinkedIn is the most significant technological development in the recruitment sector in the past 20 years. I do not predict that Glassdoor will have the same impact, but it has the potential to have a significant impact on the attractiveness of every business to the candidate market. Not every business needs to invest in a comprehensive Glassdoor plan, but all should start a plan to benefit from the quick wins and protect against the potential challenges.