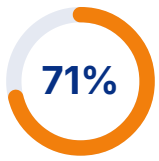
TAD PRIMARY INSIGHTS · NOTICE PERIODS

Cracking the Notice-Period Puzzle

Speed has a price. It just isn't the one most teams budget for.

Every TA leader knows the moment. The offer is signed, the candidate is right, and then the notice period lands. We spoke with **700+ TA leaders** about what they actually do in that gap: what they pay to shorten it, whether speed costs them quality, how they use buyouts, and what really stands in the way.

AT A GLANCE



pay a premium to land a joiner on under 30 days' notice



see little or no quality cost from shorter notice



keep buyouts to 5% of their hiring budget or less



say handover and backfill are what really hold a release back

02 The price of speed

03 Does short notice cost quality?

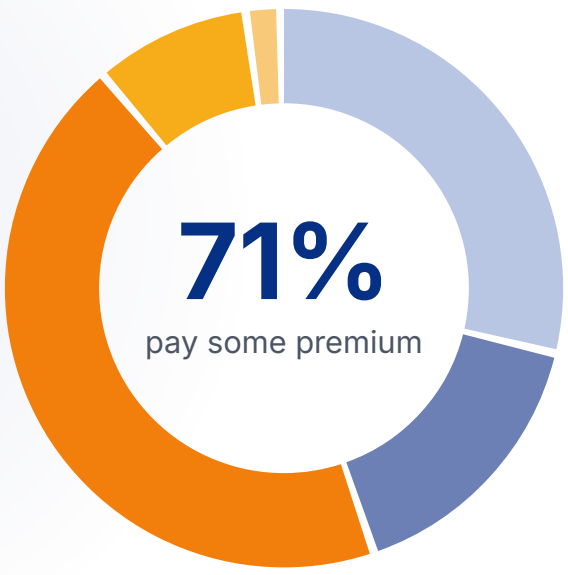
04 How buyouts get used

05 The real blocker

THE PRICE OF SPEED

Seven in ten pay for speed. Few pay much.

"How much extra hike (over your original planned hike) do you typically extend to secure a candidate with <30 days notice?"



EXTRA HIKE ABOVE THE PLANNED OFFER

0% (no extra hike)	29%
1–5%	16%
6–10%	44%
11–15%	9%
More than 20%	2%

There is a going rate for speed, and **it's lower than you might think**. The most common move is **a 6–10% bump on top of the planned offer** to get someone in within 30 days.

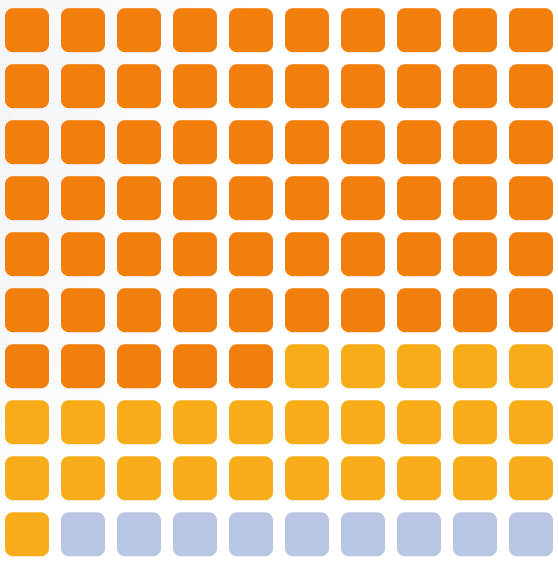
What's interesting is where it stops. Very few go past 10%, and nearly a third don't pay anything extra at all. **Money helps close the deal, but it's rarely what decides it.** Most leaders seem to have found their limit, and it isn't very high.

Agree the speed band before the offer, not during it. A pre-approved 6–10% lets recruiters close without an escalation. Anything above 10% puts you outside what most of your peers would pay, and deserves a business case.

SHORTER NOTICE, LOWER QUALITY?

Short notice rarely costs quality. When it does, it's the exception.

"If you prioritize reduced notice period (active candidates), how has the candidate quality compared to your baseline?"



Each square represents 1% of leaders

65% About the same quality as baseline

26% A slight compromise

9% A moderate compromise

Many hiring managers still get uneasy when a candidate can join quickly. 'Why are they free so soon?' The data says **that worry is mostly misplaced**.

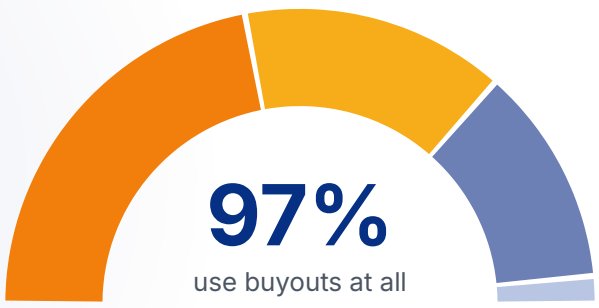
Two in three leaders **see no drop in quality at all**, and only about one in eleven see a real compromise. The risk exists, but it's small. Ruling out short-notice candidates by default means **walking away from a lot of good people** to avoid a few weak ones.

Judge short-notice candidates on fit, not on timing. Ask why they're free to move now, lean on references, and save the extra scrutiny for the cases that genuinely raise a question.

HOW BUYOUTS GET USED

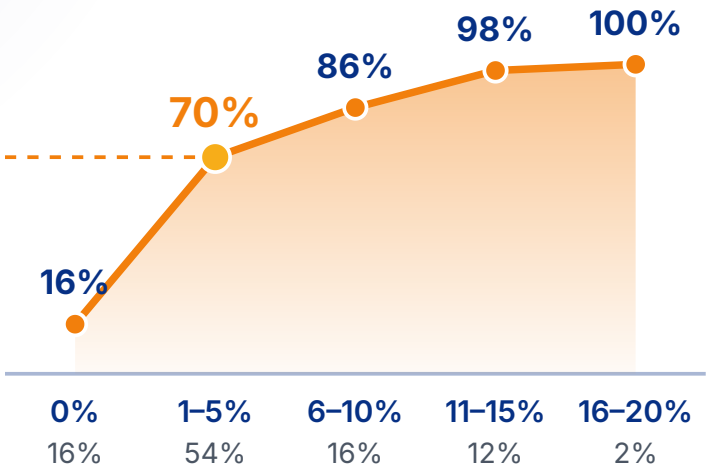
Nearly everyone uses buyouts. Most keep the spend small.

"How deliberately do you use notice-period buyouts as part of your offer strategy?"



Selective, for high-value roles only	44%
Rarely	29%
Regularly	24%
Never	3%

"Across a typical project or quarter, what percentage of your overall hiring spend is buyout cost?"



70%

spend 5% of their hiring budget or less on buyouts

The line is a running total across spend bands; the smaller figure under each band is that band on its own.

Buyouts are now a normal part of hiring. Almost everyone uses them. But most leaders treat them like **a special tool, kept for the roles that really matter**, not something offered to every candidate.

The spending backs this up: most keep buyouts to a small slice of the budget. And it isn't because they can't afford more. When we asked what really stops people joining sooner, **budget came last**. **A bigger cheque simply doesn't fix the real problem.**

Treat a buyout as an escalation, not a habit. Decide upfront which roles qualify, whether business-critical, revenue-linked or slow to ramp, and cap how much of the hiring budget it can take.

THE REAL BLOCKER

The blocker is rarely money. For 91%, it sits with the current employer.

"Apart from employer policy/contract constraints, which single blocker most prevents earlier releases or shorter notice periods?"



Block size reflects how many leaders named each blocker

Here's the twist. The thing that most often delays a joining date **isn't money. It's the candidate's current job.** Nearly three in four leaders say the real holdup is **handing over work and finding a replacement**.

Another one in five say the current employer is actively trying to hold on to their person. Both problems sit inside someone else's company, which can feel out of reach. It isn't entirely: a recruiter who **plans the exit with the candidate**, rather than waiting for it, has more say than it might seem.

Start the joining conversation at offer stage, not after acceptance. Help the candidate map their handover before they resign, and stay close through notice, because one in five will feel a pull to stay.

CONCLUSION

Speed is a process outcome, not a purchase.

We spoke to **700+ TA leaders**, and one thing stands out. They do pay for speed, but **only up to a point**. They use buyouts, but carefully. And when they name what actually slows a new hire down, **money barely features**.

The real holdup sits in **the gap between offer and joining**: unfinished handovers, missing replacements and employers trying to keep their people. The good news for TA teams is that this is **exactly where they can make the biggest difference**.

Four places to start

01

Price speed within a band

89% of peers stop at a 10% premium. Pre-approve 6–10% and treat anything higher as an exception.

02

Stop filtering on availability

91% see little or no quality cost. Assess short-notice candidates on fit, not on timing.

03

Ration buyouts by role

70% spend 5% of their budget or less. Define the roles that qualify and cap the spend.

04

Work the release, not the budget

72% are held back by handover and backfill. Agree start dates at offer and coach the handover.

> The teams that bring people in faster won't be the ones that spend the most. They will be the ones that treat the notice period as part of the hiring process, rather than the wait that comes after it.