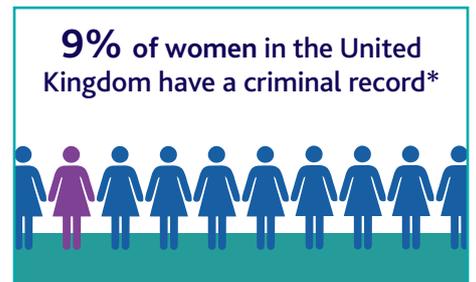


Removing barriers for candidates with criminal records – what recruiters can do

People with criminal records face barriers when trying to find a job. A [survey by Business in the Community](#) found that **three quarters of employers admit to discriminating against applicants with a criminal record**. Recruiters can play a key role in helping to tackle these barriers by adopting inclusive recruitment approaches and encourage their clients to do the same.

This is an issue that affects more candidates than you may realise. About **one-third of males in the United Kingdom have a criminal record** of one kind or another. Far **fewer women have a criminal record, perhaps around one in ten**. By not ensuring your recruitment processes are inclusive you risk missing out on suitable candidates and the chance to make a difference to people’s lives.

*Stat from Unlock

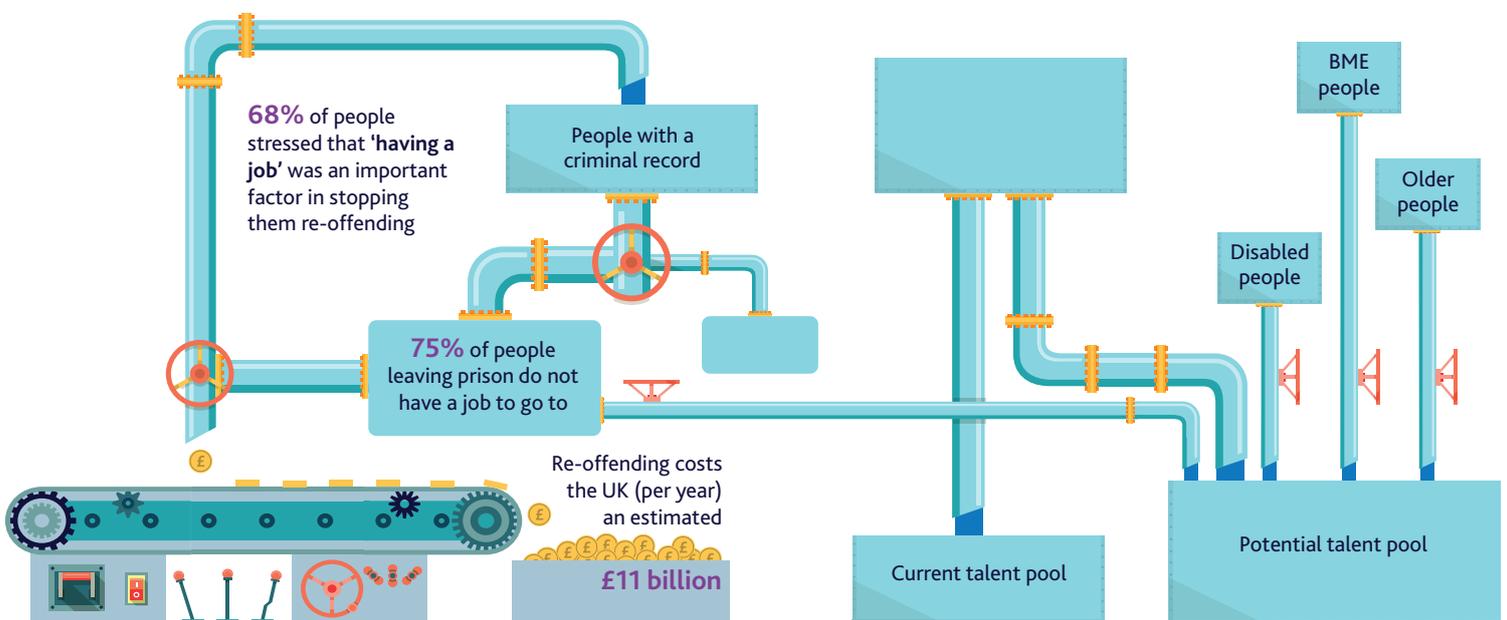


Jobs transform lives

Recruiters connect people with opportunities and make businesses more successful by helping them find the people they need to build a successful organisation. For a person with a criminal record, getting the right job can transform their life. It is a fact that one of the best ways to stop people getting in to trouble again is to challenge the marginalisation and exclusion caused by past criminal behaviour.

Access to a wider talent pool

With candidate attraction getting more challenging and client expectations evolving, it’s essential that recruiters evolve and reinvigorate their strategies and processes. Expanding your candidate pool to include people from under-represented groups is one way in which you can meet client demand, fill skills shortages and add value. This is a key message of REC’s [Good Recruitment Campaign](#).



Inclusive recruitment is becoming more and more important to clients

A succession of government reviews have highlighted the challenges faced by people with criminal records and the role of recruiters and employers in tackling this. More and more employers including:



are supporting campaigns like [See Potential](#), [Ban the Box](#) and [Fair Chance recruitment](#) which aim to remove barriers for people with criminal records. Understanding these initiatives and tailoring your processes will help you cater to your clients' needs and win more business.

We have produced a [guide for recruiters](#) on removing the barriers for candidates with criminal records. It includes more information on our checklist and details on how to present and have a conversation with a candidate who has a criminal record. Further information can also be found on our [legal guide](#).

Organisations that can provide further information and advice on recruiting people with criminal records include [Business in the Community](#), [Nacro](#), [Offploy](#) and [Unlock](#).



**BAN
THE
BOX**

Ban the Box is Business in the Community's campaign calling on UK employers to give ex-offenders a fair chance to compete for jobs

by removing the criminal convictions tick box on application forms. Asking about criminal records later in the recruitment process allows candidates' skills and abilities to shine through.

Some recruiters have signed up and incorporated the Ban the Box principles into their processes to become Ban the box employers.

Recruiters are encouraged to follow Ban the Box principles as far as possible.

"Removing the barrier of a tick box when applying for a role can make all the difference to a person's future. We recognise the valuable contribution people with convictions can bring to our society."

Vicky Black, Prestige Recruitment

Checklist for recruiters

- 1) Know your legal obligations as a recruiter
- 2) Have a clear and accessible policy on the recruitment of people with criminal records and keep this under review
- 3) Review the terms and conditions you have for candidates, clients and other intermediaries
- 4) Ensure your procedures support candidates with criminal records
- 5) Encourage clients to be as inclusive and flexible as possible
- 6) Consider if, when and how you ask candidates about criminal records
- 7) Ensure you consider and consult both the candidate and the client when agreeing an approach to the disclosure of criminal records:
 - a. Seek clarity from your clients and encourage them to be inclusive
 - b. Don't make assumptions
 - c. Discuss the issues with candidates
 - d. Agree on who should make the disclosure to the client
- 8) Train your staff
- 9) Sign up to initiatives like [Ban the Box](#), and if you can, encourage your clients to do the same.