KELLY SERVICES®

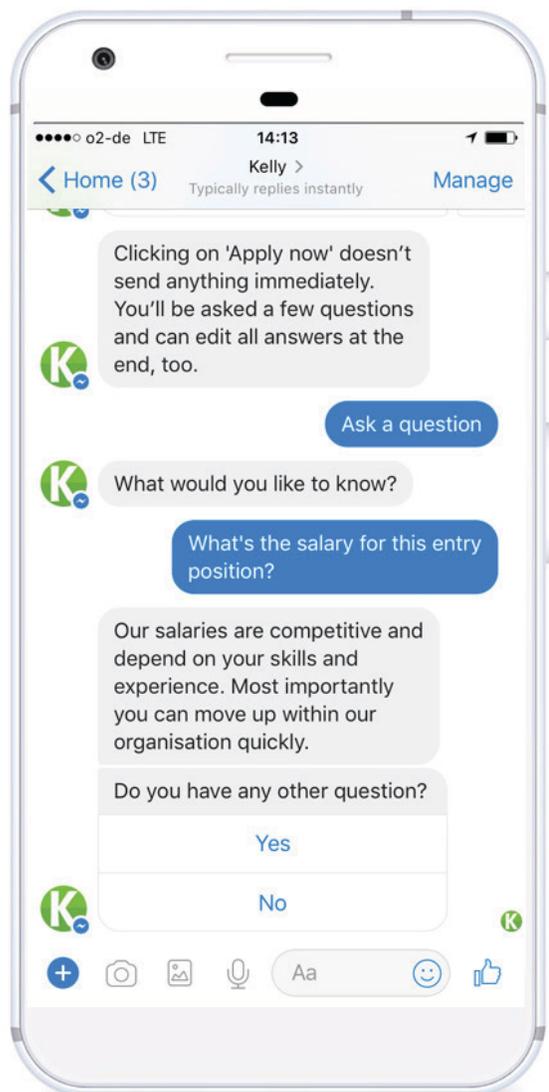# Utah Employment Trends Report
WASATCH FRONT

An example of the type of interaction that occurs between a candidate and chatbot (Source: KellyOCG)

New Interactive Technology Strengthens the Candidate Experience and Initiates Employment Relationships

Technology has changed the way the world does business in every industry. One way that it has impacted recruiting involves an increased focus on the candidate experience, and the use of interactive machine learning and chatbots to establish relationships with jobseekers.

Today's candidates approach the job market with a consumer mindset, hoping to align their own personal values, motivations and needs with an employer's brand and culture. Forward-thinking employers recognize this changing dynamic and have integrated a balanced strategy of automating certain recruiting processes with offering human interaction when necessary.

Because many candidates are comfortable with technology – using the web and social channels as primary sources for information and referrals – employers should deploy these types of tools to engage with jobseekers.

Here's how it works. During their job search, candidates interact with an online talent community via a social media platform like LinkedIn. As candidates review job postings, they are solicited to provide some basic information about themselves and their wants. Based on a candidate's input, an automated chatbot begins sending text messages with links to content that matches the candidate's interests and browsing behavior. This can include videos, events, and information about an employer.

Eventually, the chatbot will send a link to a job description that will align with the candidate's passion and skills. If the candidate proceeds with an application, an automated process walks him or her through the submission in a matter of minutes.

If a candidate waits to apply, the chatbot has great follow-up skills. It will maintain ongoing contact with the candidate, resending the link to interested jobs and encouraging the jobseeker to apply.

Chatbots actually help facilitate more human interactions by accelerating the recruiting process to enable candidates to more quickly reach a recruiter or hiring manager if they are interested in a position. Also, time-savings from the automation of routine tasks that recruiters would typically perform allows them to spend more time with the right candidates.

For employers, chatbots support "always on" recruiting, operating 24/7 with instant, relevant replies to candidates anywhere in the world and in different languages.

A 2016 SHRM study indicates that the average cost per hire for employers is $4,129, and it takes 42 days on average to fill a position. Using chatbots to engage with multiple candidates at the same time will dramatically reduce this time to hire and will cut the overall costs associated with recruiting.

Many large employers have already begun to develop their own candidate experience strategies using chatbots. For mid-sized or smaller companies, they may need a partner to help them navigate these new approaches and determine the cost-savings that they may realize from implementing them.

It's a brave new world of non-human and human interaction in the world of staffing, and the days are soon coming where it will become increasingly difficult for jobseekers to tell where a chatbot-driven candidate experience ends and a live person begins.