

ROBERT WALTERS



2024 top talent trends in recruitment



Specialist Professional Recruitment

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Introduction

In this e-guide we have gathered insights and views from experts within the recruitment industry to share the talent trends for 2024.

From how AI will affect recruitment, to Gen Z entering the workforce, inside this guide you will find the top 10 talent and recruitment trends you will be seeing throughout the course of 2024.

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Attracting and retaining Gen Z professionals

In 2024 we will see Gen Z (born between 1997-2012) overtake the number of Baby Boomers in the workplace.

Tech-savvy Gen Z are flagged as being the most disruptive generation yet and will make the biggest changes to the workplace with their different approaches to ways of working and work/life priorities.

Organisations will need to change and adapt their employee value proposition and recruitment processes to align with what is important to Gen Z, including their desire for expedited career development, instant gratification from tasks/projects and preference for remote/hybrid working.

23%

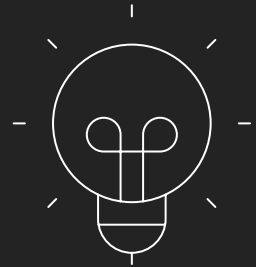
of the workforce will be Gen Z in 2024

9 out of 10

Gen Z see remote/hybrid working as the biggest lever when choosing a role

57%

of Gen Z would leave a role due to lack of professional development opportunities



Key takeaways on attracting and retaining Gen Z professionals

1

Assess your business's need to hire Gen Z professionals over the next 12 months.

2

Consider whether your current employee value proposition matches the needs of Gen Z.

3

Review your working practices to ensure they cater for all levels of professionals including Gen Z.

4

Consider what flexible working options you can offer to attract Gen Z and ensure you develop effective strategies for managing remote teams.

5

Review the learning and development opportunities you offer to help attract and retain Gen Z professionals.

Skills-first hiring

Over the last few years, we have seen an increase in the costs and time it takes to recruit professionals. This alongside continued skills shortages has resulted in organisations re-evaluating their recruitment priorities and processes.

In 2024 we will see employers move from a more traditional credential-based hiring model to a skills-first approach.

Years of experience and qualifications will become less important with more focus being placed on finding the right person for a role. Moving to this model will help companies expand their talent pools and improve diversity.

Organisations who are fastest to adopt a skills-first methodology will be the quickest to source talent.

79%

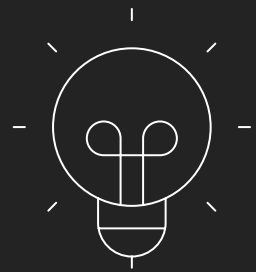
of HR professionals value skills assessments over traditional hiring processes

46%

of candidates plan to upskill in 2024

36%

of HR professionals would progress a candidate if they possessed the skills but not the years of experience required



Key takeaways on skills-first hiring

- 1 Establish a skills framework for your business, detailing the skills you already have and the skills areas you want to focus on attracting.
- 2 Implement a skills assessment model within your recruitment process to measure a candidate's fit for each role.
- 3 Review the learning and development opportunities you currently have in place to ensure there is a focus on skills development.
- 4 Consider creating an upskilling program within your business to ensure you can build and nurture the skills of current and new employees in your high demand areas.
- 5 Don't underestimate the impact of moving to a skills-first hiring approach and ensure all employees are briefed and trained on the changes.

AI adoption in recruitment

In 2023 we saw companies start to experiment with using AI and this trend will continue to grow in 2024 with both employers and candidates utilising AI tools.

In terms of recruitment AI does have a lot to offer especially when it comes to processes. Not only can it be used to help support assessing candidates in the pre-screening and interview process, it can also be used to write job ads. Whilst AI can speed up current recruitment processes it is important to note that there are still a number of risks around using AI with the accuracy of tools still being under question.

Understanding and utilising AI will increasingly be an in-demand skill-set and candidates with a better understanding and experience of AI will become more attractive to employers.

82%

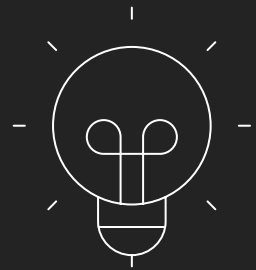
of senior leaders believe AI will have a significant impact on recruitment in their business

96%

of employees say that generative AI can benefit their job

50%

of employees are using generative AI in their role



Key takeaways on AI adoption in recruitment

1

Review your current recruitment processes, utilise AI for the most manual and time-consuming tasks you have, to speed up your recruitment processes.

2

Understand the limits of AI – ensure you have a clear understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the AI tool you are using.

3

Consider how you are going to implement AI within your business – what teams are going to use AI and what training will you provide.

Changing face of pay

As candidate priorities shift, employers know that it's no longer just about pay and that they need to be offering benefits that candidates want and that can be easily used, to help attract and retain top talent.

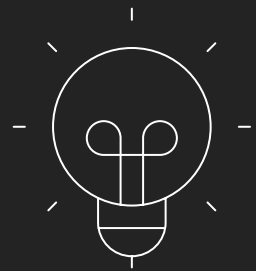
While traditional benefits such as training, free meals and wellness perks will remain, we are seeing more companies look to modernise their benefits packages to include benefits that employees can tailor to their lifestyle including things such as virtual services, flexible working hours and paternity leave.

50%

of employees would take a pay cut if they could tailor their benefits to their personal needs

62%

of employees believe that mental health and wellbeing benefits are vital to their overall job satisfaction



Key takeaways on the changing face of pay

1

Survey employees to see what benefits are important to them and what would entice them to work for/stay with a company.

2

Complete a competitor review – how does your current benefits package compare to others in the market, is there something you can offer over your competitors to attract and retain the best talent.

3

Ensure your benefits packages covers all areas – financial, wellbeing, lifestyle and learning and development.

Double down on ED&I & ESG

ED&I will remain a top priority for businesses in 2024 thanks to evidence showing that more diverse businesses are not only better places to work but also perform better financially.

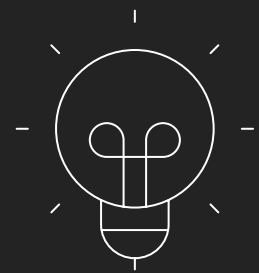
We will also see businesses focus on ESG (environment, social and governance) commitments as it becomes increasingly important to potential employees when looking for a new role.

20%

of UK employees are unhappy with their employer's sustainability proposition and initiatives

86%

of employees prefer to support or work for companies that care about the same issues they do including issues such as sustainability and ESG



Key takeaways on doubling down on ED&I & ESG

1

Share your ED&I and ESG strategies with all employees and ensure that it is communicated as part of your recruitment process with potential candidates.

2

Carry out employee engagement surveys to gather insights and trends into the perspectives of your own employees.

3

Explore running your own ED&I and ESG training sessions inhouse.

Focus on middle management

2024 will see businesses focus more on their middle managers after seeing a rise in the number of accidental managers due to job title inflation and employees stepping into roles without managerial experience or training.

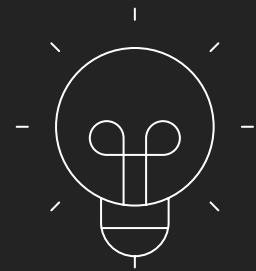
As staff retention continues to be vital in 2024, we will see more businesses review and invest in their management training programmes to not only help their middle managers succeed in the roles but to inspire, lead and empower their teams to help retain their best employees.

66%

of employees say having a bad manager makes them feel unmotivated in their current role

50%

of employees who claim they have a bad manager intend to leave their job in the next 12 months



Key takeaways on focusing on middle management

1

Do consider the importance of leadership experience when recruiting for a managerial position.

2

Review your current management training programme – what areas are you happy with and what areas can you improve on?

3

Ensure that you offer all new managers management training whether they are an internal or external hire.

4

Ensure new managers have a support network in place to help them flourish in their new leadership role.

5

Create an employee feedback programme, so you can spot and address issues as they arise.

The gig economy

The gig economy and freelance work will continue to boom in 2024 with more individuals exploring and choosing temporary or freelance work as well as side-hustles.

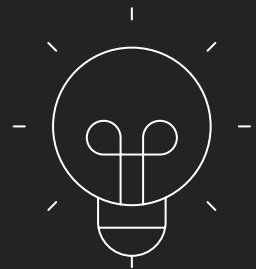
This is a great opportunity for businesses to create a more agile and responsive workforce by utilising freelancers who have specialised skills that businesses require on temporary or short-term contracts.

54%

of young professionals have expressed a desire for a career made up of a variety of roles and separate gigs

36%

of freelancers do freelance work as their full-time career



Key takeaways on the gig economy

1

Identify what areas of your business would benefit from the support of a consultant or freelancer and the skills you require from the contract hire.

2

Set clear expectations from the start including the length of the project, how you will communicate on the progress of the project and where they will be working from.

3

Ensure you maintain a consistent company culture if you are heavily reliant on a temporary workforce.

4

Promote collaboration between your permanent and temporary workforce to create a positive team culture and help with the progression of projects.

Strategic boomerangs

The great resignation saw millions of people move jobs in 2022 for various reasons including a better work-life balance or higher salary. Now a couple of years later some are calling the aftermath “the great regret”, with many individuals now feeling that the grass is not necessarily always greener.

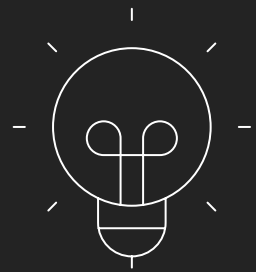
In 2024 we will see a rise in boomerang hires (returning employees) with smart companies strategically reaching out to key employee alumni to fill open positions and their current skills gaps.

41%

of employees would go back to their old employer if it was an option

1 year

is the most common time when employees who left a role during the great resignation start looking for a new role



Key takeaways on strategic boomerangs

1

Take steps to ensure a departing employee leaves on good terms as they are still part of your future recruiting pool.

2

Consider your strategy on how to stay in contact with employee alumni.

3

Check in at the one year departure anniversary with previous employees – it's quite a natural check-in milestone and will give you the opportunity to pitch a rehire.

Leadership soft skills

In 2024 employees want to be heard more than ever and they are looking to work for leaders who not only have the right technical skills but also have the right soft skills to be a good leader. Key soft skills that a good leader needs to have in 2024 are empathy, authenticity and openness.

Research shows that empathy makes leaders more effective, when showing empathy, they connect with their team members on a deeper level and team members are more likely to be engaged.

A leader in 2024 needs to have the ability to listen to their employees of all levels without judgement and take more consideration for people's personal circumstances. This will have a positive impact on their company's retention and performance strategies.

72%

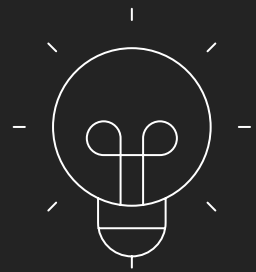
of employees believe leaders showcasing empathy increases employee motivation

87%

of employees believe that a leader showing empathy inspires positive change within a company

92%

of employees said company culture has an impact on their decision to remain with current employer



Key takeaways on leadership soft skills

1

Leaders need to focus on ensuring their soft skills are just as strong as their technical skills.

2

Empathy is the key soft skill leaders need to develop and build in 2024.

3

Employees now expect to be heard and leaders need to develop a company culture that includes a listening forum for employees to share their thoughts and ideas for change with the leadership team.

International assignments

The international assignment is especially popular with younger generations in the workforce, who say it gives them the opportunity to explore and travel whilst still progressing their careers.

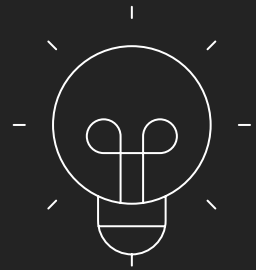
In 2024 we will see the international assignment continue as a trend. Research shows that companies that offer international assignments see a decrease in employee burnout and resignations and we will see companies try and incorporate international assignments and global mobility within their retention strategies to retain their high performing employees and avoid employee churn.

59%

of millennial employees are willing to work abroad

49%

of employees who complete an international assignment said the key reason was career advancement



Key takeaways on international assignments

1

International assignments are most popular with the younger generations within the workforce.

2

Offering an international assignment can help reduce staff burnout and resignations.

3

Employees see an international assignment as a way to advance their career.

