

2024 Recruitment Trends

7 Trends Shaping the Industry



From the CEO

In this report, we've identified seven trends that will shape the strategies and priorities of leading Talent Acquisition (TA) professionals in 2024. We've consulted with top HR and TA experts to select these trends, recognising that while we can't predict the future, their insights have guided our choices.

To speak very broadly, the year ahead will be marked by three significant factors that will likely permeate all trends and focus areas for recruitment in 2024:

- **A candidate-driven job market:** Companies will continue to compete for talent. Coming out of the massive tech layoffs that dominated 2023, HR and recruitment teams in some industries will be vying for talent with smaller teams and tighter budgets. It will be essential to find ways to stand out from the crowd and find new ways to attract and retain talent.
- **A generational shift:** In 2024, Gen Z will increasingly enter the job market, with predictions of them making up around 30% of the workforce by 2025. This generation brings unique demands, emphasising purpose, diversity, inclusion, and work-life balance. They are unafraid to walk away from opportunities that don't align with their values or lifestyle preferences.
- **A growing reliance on AI and technology:** Technology has emerged as both a response to overcoming reduced resources on talent teams and a potential cause as companies turn more and more to AI to automate tasks.



One thing that is certain when it comes to technology, however, is the unprecedented pace at which it is developing. We're at a point in history where the pace of technological advancement is outpacing human's ability to learn and adapt. Many companies are having to adjust to a major skills gap between the technology needed to keep pace with the competition and their workforce's technological literacy.

These are pivotal areas that will influence the recruitment industry and will have an impact on all the trends mentioned in the following pages. I hope this report will serve as food for thought and inspire your strategic planning for 2024.

I'd like to thank everyone who contributed to this report, sharing their valuable insights and time as we navigate the ever-evolving world of recruitment in the new year and beyond.

[Aref Abedi](#)
CEO at Jobylon

Explore the 2024 trends

1. [Workplace culture](#)
2. [Employee experience](#)
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4. [Unbiased recruitment](#)
5. [AI & Automation](#)
6. [Purpose-driven employer branding](#)
7. [Recruitment marketing](#)

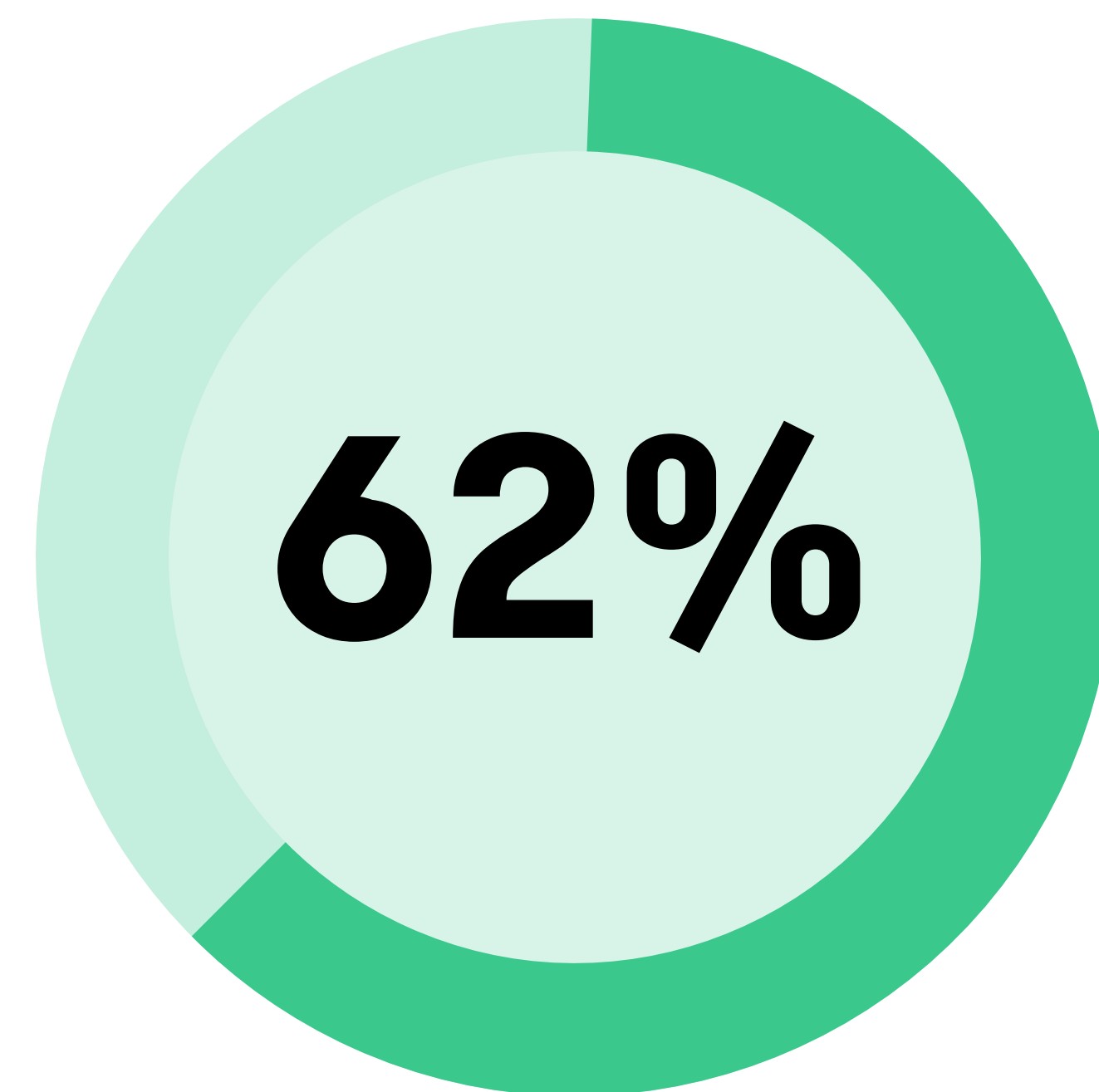


WORKPLACE CULTURE

Investing in workplace culture for talent attraction and retention

In what will likely continue to be a candidate-driven market in 2024, it will be critical to understand and communicate a workplace culture that appeals to candidates. In fact, despite expectations of tighter or stagnant budgets, according to a [LinkedIn survey](#), employer branding is the only line item where most TA professionals anticipate an increased investment.

The alignment between the workplace culture portrayed externally and what employees actually experience will be a central focus for many companies in this area. Candidates want to know *who* you are and *why* you do it, to understand the values you live by and the purpose that drives your actions. Top TA professionals are increasingly working on how to [authentically portray their company culture](#) while recognising the importance of the three-way match needed between: 1) the outward communication around one's brand; 2) the reality of what happens within the walls of the company; and 3) the desires of candidates.



of workers would rather stay in a job with flexible work options than take a higher-paying position with strict in-office requirements

Remote work

When it comes to candidate expectations, increasingly they seek flexible work arrangements, with no signs of this desire abating. More than 6 out of 10 workers (62%) would rather [stay in a job with flexible work options than accept a higher-paying position](#) with strict in-office requirements. The pandemic showcased the viability of remote work for most office jobs, prompting a shift in performance indicators and recruitment strategies to match hybrid or fully remote work arrangements. Rather than focusing on traditional in-office metrics, like physical office presence or hours of work, the emphasis is shifting toward outcomes and

results—irrespective of where or how the work gets done.

However, with the increasing emphasis on remote work, it's important to note that there may be variations in preferences based on generational and geographical factors. Gen Z and junior roles still [value in-person interactions](#). They are looking

for on-the-job training and are seeking a sense of belonging. For companies with a diverse workforce, balancing flexibility and demands for in-person arrangements will be a challenge to manage. ▶

Diversity & inclusion

In 2024, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) will remain central to corporate culture initiatives. Companies will continue their efforts to create diverse workforces and attract and retain diverse talent. The [World Economic Forum](#) found that among surveyed companies, DEI initiatives will prioritise women (79%), youth under 25 (68%), and those with disabilities (51%). While good from a societal perspective, this continued focus on DEI also makes sense from a business perspective. An inclusive corporate culture is connected with a [59% boost in innovation](#), and employees who feel very included in their organisations are nearly three times more likely than their peers to feel committed to their organisations.

Employees increasingly seek a sense of connection with their colleagues and the company's mission and values. Companies will focus efforts on creating a positive workplace culture that adapts to the diverse needs and attitudes of employees.

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In all the interviews I've had in the last few months, candidates have consistently asked about work flexibility. And quite often it's centred around our hybrid or remote work policies. But it's important to remember that flexibility is a lot more than just where you physically do your work. It's also about the timing of work, and looking at flexibility more broadly. I believe that expanding our options for flexibility—beyond remote or on-site work—is a key aspect to consider.



[Thomas Finell](#)

Head of Talent Attraction at YIT

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Understanding and boosting the employee experience

Companies, regardless of their size, are increasingly focused on understanding and meeting their employees' needs to keep them engaged and motivated. Gallup estimates that employees who are not actively engaged in their work—describing nearly 8 out of every 10 employees—cost the global economy a staggering [US\\$8.8 trillion](#), equivalent to 9% of the global GDP.

Upskilling & reskilling

To keep employees engaged, and perhaps also driven by labour shortages and market expectations, companies are placing a growing emphasis on upskilling and reskilling their staff. LinkedIn found that across the global workforce, candidates rank [advancement and skills development](#) as the #4 and #5 priorities when considering a given job. Candidates are not looking at just the role they are being hired for but the opportunities the company provides to learn new skills and progress into new roles.

Signs point out that in the new year, companies will invest more time in mapping the skills their employees have and finding the gaps that need to be filled. This relates to recruitment, but also to talent retention as companies turn inwards to fill skill gaps and work with what they have in a tight market. It is an opportunity for companies to get creative with their current workforce, be curious about where employees want to develop, and provide the channels for that. ▶

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Understanding what kind of company the candidate is applying for is more important than ever. Obviously fair pay is important, but so are questions like “How can I grow in this company? How can I feel a sense of belonging in this company?” The new generation coming in is super clever and smart. They want a culture that’s about accountability and empowerment. But, ultimately, regardless of whether it’s Gen Z or any other generation, we all want to make a positive impact one way or another.



[Eilin Gillesen](#)

Chief People & Culture Officer at Simployer



Meeting candidate expectations

While internal mobility and upskilling will undoubtedly be in focus for what will attract and retain employees, we would be remiss not to mention pay. Compensation remains at the top of the list for employee priorities at work. Pay needs to be commensurate with the market, but also within the company when breaking down things like experience and other variables that could affect the perception of pay equitability. Studies show that [equitable pay is more important](#) to employees than absolute pay and employees are demanding greater transparency, with developments at the [national](#) and [supranational](#) level supporting pay transparency.

Top candidate priorities

- ▲ 1. Compensation
- ▲ 2. Work-life balance
- ▲ 3. Flexible work arrangements
- ▲ 4. Advancement
- ▲ 5. Skill development

EU pay transparency directive

In May 2023, the European Union passed a directive on equal pay that will affect companies with 100 or more employees.

Under the Directive, EU companies will need to disclose how much they pay women and men for equal work and take action if their gender pay gap exceeds 5%. Binding measures to promote pay transparency and recourse for pay discrimination are part of the Directive, which also takes into consideration intersectional discrimination, such as the effects of disabilities.

In the 27 EU countries, male employees' gross hourly earnings were 12.7% higher than that of women in 2021, and the global gender pay gap is even wider, at 23%. At the current rate, it is estimated that it will take [257 years to close the global pay gap](#).

While EU member states have until June 2026 to implement the Directive into national laws, [companies can take steps now](#) to make sure their policies are in place in time. Companies can start preparing already, such as by looking into existing pay discrepancies, reviewing compensation policies, and taking any corrective actions to ensure their organisation is free from discrimination and promotes a culture of equal opportunity.



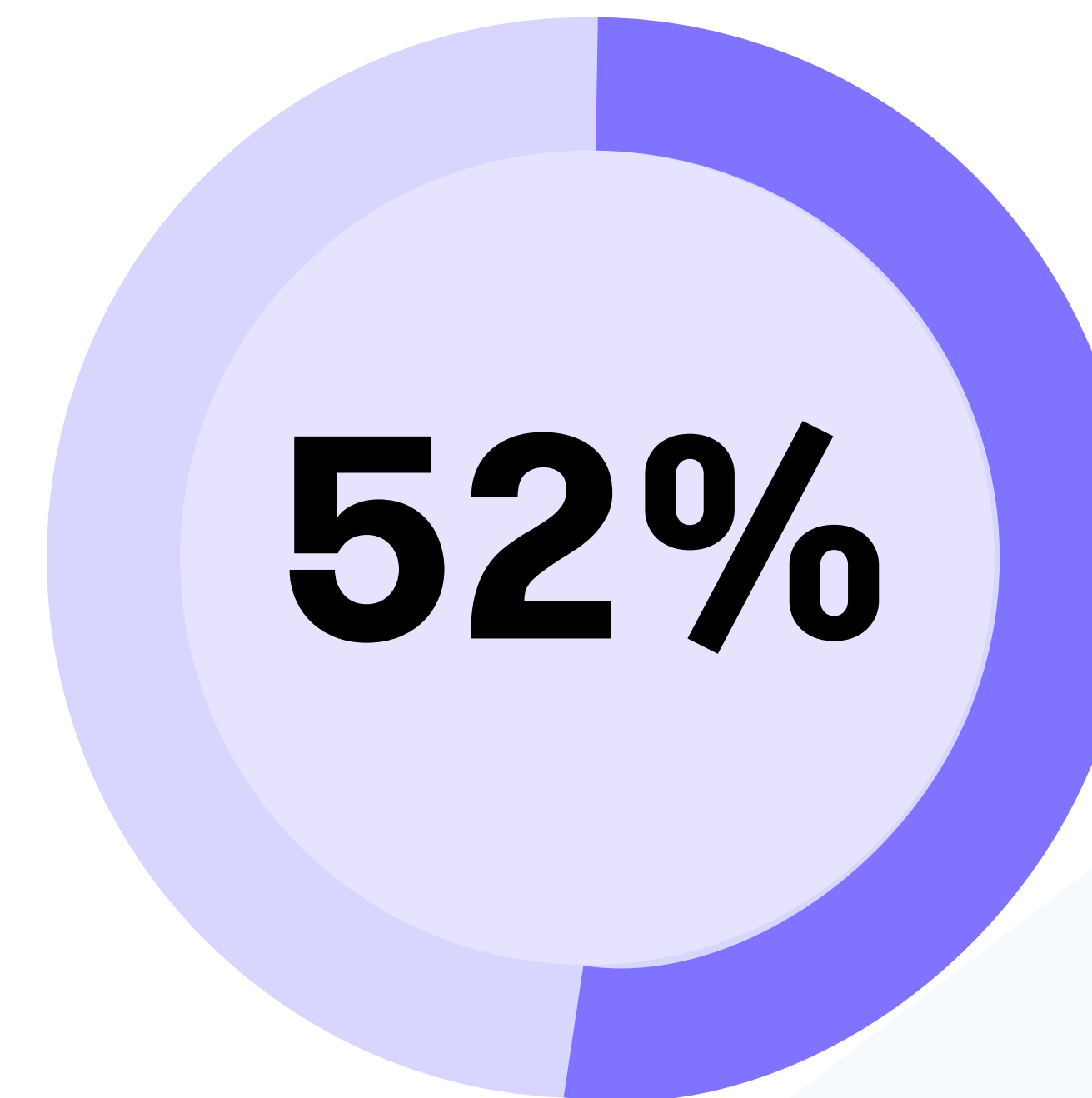
EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

Prioritising employee wellbeing for organisational growth

According to the International Labor Organization, [one in five workers will experience a chronic mental illness](#) at some point during their lifetime. While the causes of these illnesses may vary, the organisation to which one belongs can play a role in alleviating or exacerbating the challenges associated with mental health. We will see companies invest more in employee wellbeing as they acknowledge the impact jobs can have on stress levels.

Work flexibility

As mentioned, the COVID-19 pandemic allowed us to reexamine how and when we work and introduced flexibility into the workforce. This included flexibility over when employees choose to work, where they choose to live, and where they choose to get their work done. 62% of employees report feeling [more productive when working remotely](#), and 52% of employees would trade a slight pay reduction for the option to work remotely, highlighting the importance of work-life balance to employees. Remote work allows individuals to better manage their professional and personal commitments, making it particularly beneficial for those with family or caretaking responsibilities.



of employees would take a slight pay reduction in exchange for the option to work remotely

However, remote work is not without challenges. It can blur the boundaries between work and personal life, making it difficult for workers to disconnect and recharge. A 2023 report by Buffer and others, found that one of the biggest struggles facing remote workers is spending too much time at home, and 23% of remote workers reported [struggling with loneliness](#), as they miss the energy of their colleagues for motivation and productivity. ▶

Companies take responsibility

While companies are taking steps to support employee wellbeing, the responsibility for mental health still [predominantly falls on the individual employee](#). In 2024, we may see a shift with companies taking more responsibility and implementing supportive policies. It's critical to note, however, that there can be a disconnect between company policies and the actual experiences of employees. Companies will need to be mindful of this if they genuinely want to prioritise employee wellbeing.

For instance, many large corporations, such as Zoom, Netflix, and Evernote, have been lauded for their generous unlimited leave policies. However, surprisingly, it was found that employees at companies with unlimited paid time off [take fewer vacation days](#) than employees with traditional paid-time-off policies. If the official policy of unlimited vacation clashes with a culture of presenteeism, it can impact the efficacy of these policies used to attract candidates but not significantly improve employee work-life balance.

Considering that working in a job one dislikes has a more [negative impact on wellbeing than being unemployed](#), and that the nearly 12 billion workdays lost annually due to depression and anxiety cost the global economy US\$1 trillion, it is imperative for companies to address these issues and provide support to reduce employee stress.

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It is extremely challenging to retain talent if you don't prioritise employee wellbeing. Creating an environment where individuals can be their true selves is vital for any company's success. Previously, many companies, especially tech firms, prioritised growth without needing to focus on revenue and results. But times have changed. We've reached a point where companies are realising it's not a matter of prioritising business or people. If you don't prioritise the wellbeing of your employees, then you won't have a business.



Sahar Kupersmidt

Founder at Kupersmidt & Partners

UNBIASED RECRUITMENT

Finding new ways to reduce bias in recruitment

Bias can creep into all aspects of the candidate and employee experience—from how job descriptions and ads are written, to how candidates are screened, what skills and backgrounds are considered necessary for the role, and how performance is assessed once in the job. While it might be impossible to eliminate bias completely, things can be done to reduce its impact on hiring. The key isn't to eliminate bias entirely but to acknowledge it and work with it.

Skill-based hiring

Shifting to a skills-first approach can help uncover overlooked talent and help with unbiased recruitment. While the majority of hiring is still based on work experiences, recruiting based on skills and behaviour, may be a more effective method for matching roles with the best candidates. Research from McKinsey shows that [hiring for skills is five times more predictive of job performance](#) than hiring for education and more than two times more predictive than hiring for work experience.

Another aspect of mitigating bias is reevaluating degree-requirements for certain job



5x

Hiring for skills is five times more predictive of job performance than hiring for education

positions. According to LinkedIn, “removing four-year requirements is one of the most important things you can do to promote diversity.” This is particularly significant when considering that nearly [80% of companies](#) report grappling with talent shortages. Removing four-year degree requirements opens you up to a wider talent pool as many people may have lacked the opportunity, or desire, to attend college but nonetheless have the skills to excel at the job. ▶

Removing degree requirements also impacts employee retention, as employees without college degrees tend to stay in their positions 34% longer than those with degrees. This does, however, require hiring teams to have a clear understanding of the skills that are actually needed for open roles. Tighter budgets and higher pressure on finding the right candidates for roles quicker and cheaper mean that hiring teams and managers are motivated to get it right the first time.

Furthermore, with the pace of technological advancement, it is nearly impossible to say what skills and jobs will be outdated in the future. Estimates predict that nearly [half of all skills will be outdated](#) in two years. This staggering number really puts into focus why recruiting for past experience and education may be a thing of the past. How can we use the past to determine what is needed for jobs and skills that may not yet exist? Hiring for potential rather than experience may be the answer.

The role of AI

Although it can be tempting to look to AI and machine learning as tools to reduce bias in recruitment, it's crucial to remember that these machines are trained by humans. The data AI relies on is selected by humans and may inadvertently replicate human biases. Relying too heavily on AI for hiring decisions can be risky when striving for diversity and unbiased recruitment. In fact, legislation is emerging to address these concerns, such as [New York's Local Law 144](#) and the [European Union's AI Act](#), aiming to ensure fairness in AI-driven hiring.

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Anyone who is working with recruitment today has come across or experienced, the so-called “talent shortage.” I believe this is just a matter of perspective. I don't believe there is a lack of talent out there. It's actually quite often that your own bias stands in the way of finding that next great talent. Nowadays, employees can learn new skills outside of traditional institutions. Yet, university degrees are still a prioritised factor for many companies when they recruit. We need to look at other methods that may be more effective at predicting work performance.



[Karin Bergström](#)

Head of People & Culture at Jobylon

AI and Automation: Turning theory into real-world application

AI is undoubtedly transforming the recruitment landscape and affecting recruitment strategies. Although there has been significant hype around AI and automation for some time, we're now at a point where reality is matching the hype. The theoretical discussions of what could be and predictions of radical transformation are shifting to actual practical applications. So much so, in fact, that 27% of American workers say they [interact with AI at least several times a day](#), and 50% report their companies use AI, up from 22% in 2018. While many people have been quick to use generative AI tools, like Chat-GPT, it still is in a phase that is mostly individual use. Companies have been slow to adopt policies around how employees should and should not incorporate AI into their work. These include legal discussions around [privacy and copyright, but also proprietary](#) concerns when workers input sensitive company information into AI tools.

AI has the potential to disrupt every stage of the candidate journey. In Eightfold AI's report [The Future of Work: Intelligent by Design](#), the 250 HR leaders surveyed broke down some of the ways they are currently using AI across HR functions, including employee records management (78%), payroll processing and benefits administration (77%), recruitment and hiring (73%), performance management (72%), and onboarding new employees (69%). ▶

Ways HR teams are incorporating AI into their work

- ▶ Employee records management
- ▶ Payroll processing and benefits administration
- ▶ Recruitment and hiring
- ▶ Performance management
- ▶ Onboarding new employees

While the predictions posit that AI will not replace HR and TA teams, nearly three-quarters (74%) of hiring professionals are optimistic that integrating generative AI into recruitment will enable them to [automate routine tasks](#), allowing them to focus more on high-value strategic work. In October of this year, LinkedIn released details of its upcoming [AI tool](#) that will help recruiters in all parts of the recruitment process, including building talent pools, shortlisting qualified candidates, and automating candidate communication.

While lauding the undeniable capabilities of AI to streamline tasks, it's crucial to acknowledge some of its pitfalls. One in particular is bias, especially in generative AI models like ChatGPT. The "P" in GPT stands for pre-trained, highlighting the fact that these models learn from data selected by humans, meaning their outcomes are based on the input they've received. This input is determined, sourced, and prioritised by humans, making it susceptible to the same inherent human biases.

This doesn't mean abandoning the technology, but understanding and making choices that take this constraint into consideration. AI and automation can be incredibly useful for automating repetitive tasks. However, in the context of recruitment, it's important to let tech and AI make recommendations that need human approval rather than allowing AI to make decisions. Until we can ensure that training data doesn't perpetuate bias and we have a clear understanding of how the system was constructed, it's best to maintain a level of scepticism and not overly rely on AI as a source of unbiased truth. ▶



The rise of AI-enabled applicants

In a world where recruiters and talent teams are enabled with AI and automation tools, we can't forget the flip side of the coin—candidates also have access to these technologies. Candidates can use AI tools to apply to multiple jobs with a tap of a button, which can lead to significant bottlenecks for recruitment teams as they are inundated with applications. Candidates can also use tactics to “outsmart” AI, tailoring their applications to artificially boost their chances of being selected by AI as a fit for the job. LinkedIn, for example, is releasing [AI features](#) that offer personalised writing suggestions to help candidates optimise their profiles and better showcase their skills and experience.

Although AI and automation offer significant benefits when it comes to recruitment, it needs to be looked at as an enabler rather than a replacement for the human touch. AI can be a great tool to cut down on administrative tasks while leaving HR teams to focus human resources on high-impact activities and strategic initiatives.

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One of the things that recruiters will have to deal with in 2024 is candidate usage of artificial intelligence. Current recruitment processes are designed for a non-AI-enabled job seeker. Applicants can now send personalised applications in bulk with just one click. So suddenly the problem isn't actually attracting candidates. The problem is how do you sift thousands of applications when you previously had hundreds. Our systems will not be able to handle it. I think in 2024, that will be one of the big topics: How do we actually handle AI-enabled candidates?



Hung Lee

Chief Curator at Recruiting Brainfood

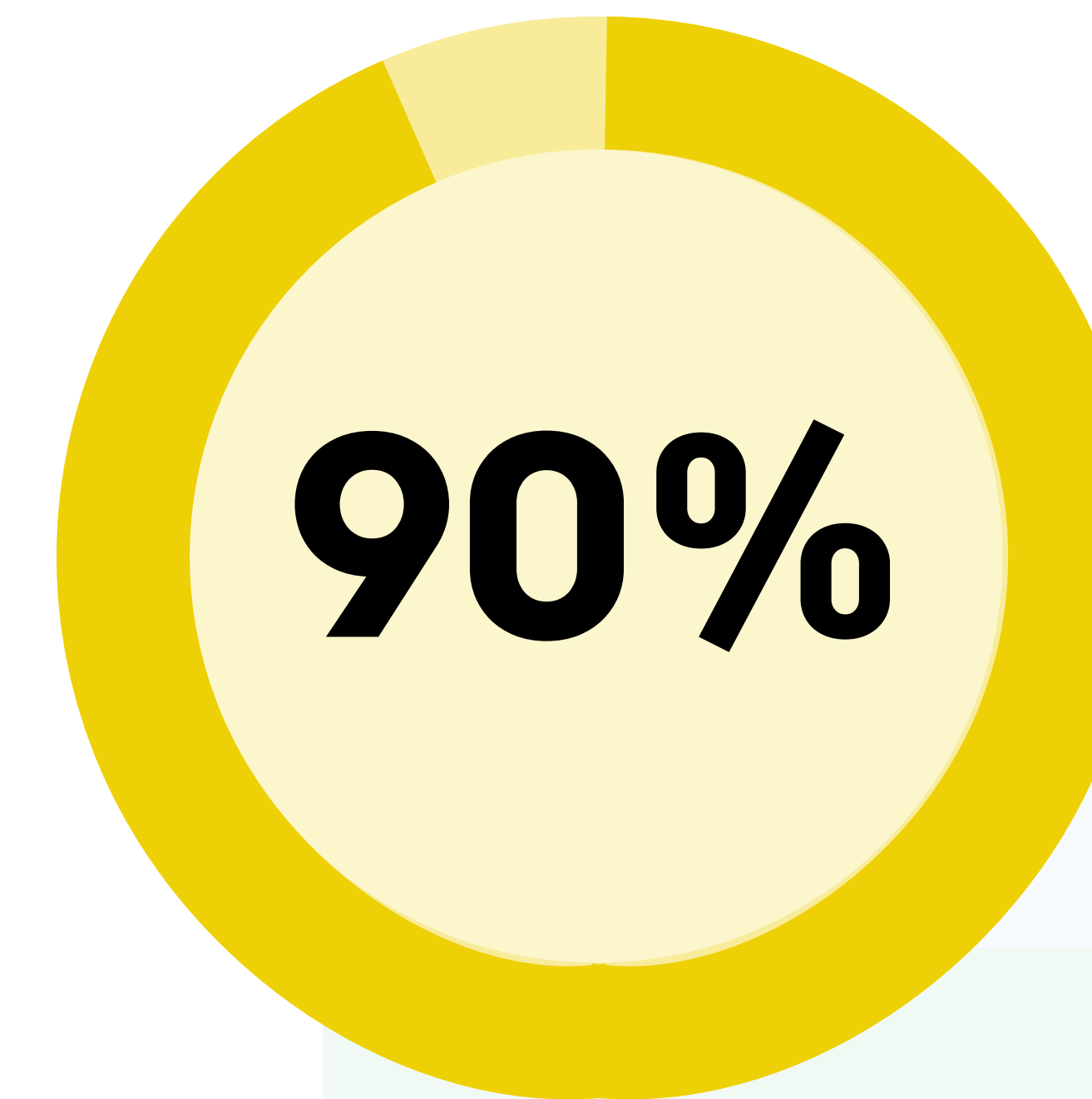
PURPOSE-DRIVEN EMPLOYER BRANDING

Leading with purpose to build a strong employer brand

Having a clear sense of your company's purpose is essential in a candidate-driven market. It not only differentiates you but helps you attract the right people who will actively contribute to your company's purpose and vision. Research shows that 82% of employees believe it's [important for their company to have a purpose](#). The Harvard Business Review found that 9 out of 10 employees, irrespective of age or salary, would trade a percentage of their lifetime earnings in exchange for more meaningful work, confirming why the publication declared "[meaning is the new money](#)" back in 2011.

In fact, the importance of purpose can be seen across generations of workers, but Gen Z, in particular, is compelled by a strong sense of purpose. To engage and retain this "[most purpose-driven generation](#)" of talent, focusing on the company's values, sustainability initiatives, and DEI efforts is a logical starting point.

However, Gen Z is a tech-savvy bunch and adept at detecting inconsistencies. They will readily call out companies whose online culture does not align with reality. Within HR circles, there is a debate on whether it is possible, or even desirable, ▶



90% of employees would trade a percentage of their lifetime earnings in exchange for more meaningful work

to attain a [truly "authentic" employer brand](#). What happens within a company often differs, at least to some degree, from the image online. Companies are becoming more conscious

that overly glossy depictions can backfire, but some level of polish may be necessary. Authenticity is increasingly central to employer branding and finding the right balance between reality and candidate expectations.

We see that the trend of purpose-driven employer branding is affecting companies of all sizes. Gone are the days when larger companies could rely on name recognition alone. Candidates want to know their work matters and how it contributes to a great purpose. Smaller companies have an opportunity to offer candidates better alignment with their values and a meaningful work environment, potentially outweighing the legacy or history of larger companies. Instances like the [perceived “toxic” work cultures](#) at Tesla and Amazon demonstrate how the disconnect between brand perception and reality can impact brand reputation and talent attrition, no matter how large the company or recognisable the brand.

In a world where candidates and employees are searching and demanding purpose, companies will increasingly need to be able to connect the dots and find ways of tying the company’s purpose with employees’ personal priorities and values.



RECRUITMENT MARKETING

Engaging passive candidates through recruitment marketing

Acquiring top talent starts long before a potential candidate even applies. Traditional recruitment techniques relied on candidates actively looking for a job, using job boards and Google searches that match role descriptions, and then applying. With so many workers [seriously considering leaving their jobs](#), companies need to find ways of attracting these talents even when they are not actively looking. There is a growing consensus that candidates need to be treated with the same care and attention as customers and borrow strategies from sales and traditional marketing departments to “keep candidates warm.”

To effectively reach potential hires, targeted messaging and personalised marketing strategies are key. It's not just about creating engaging job ads, candidates are interested in knowing what it's like to work at your company. However, companies don't always have full control over their marketing as they are not the only voices that speak for the brand. Customers, employees, and former employees have access to platforms to influence your brand's reputation and shape how applicants perceive your company. A poor candidate experience, such as long and unresponsive processes, can be shared on social media and impact your reputation.

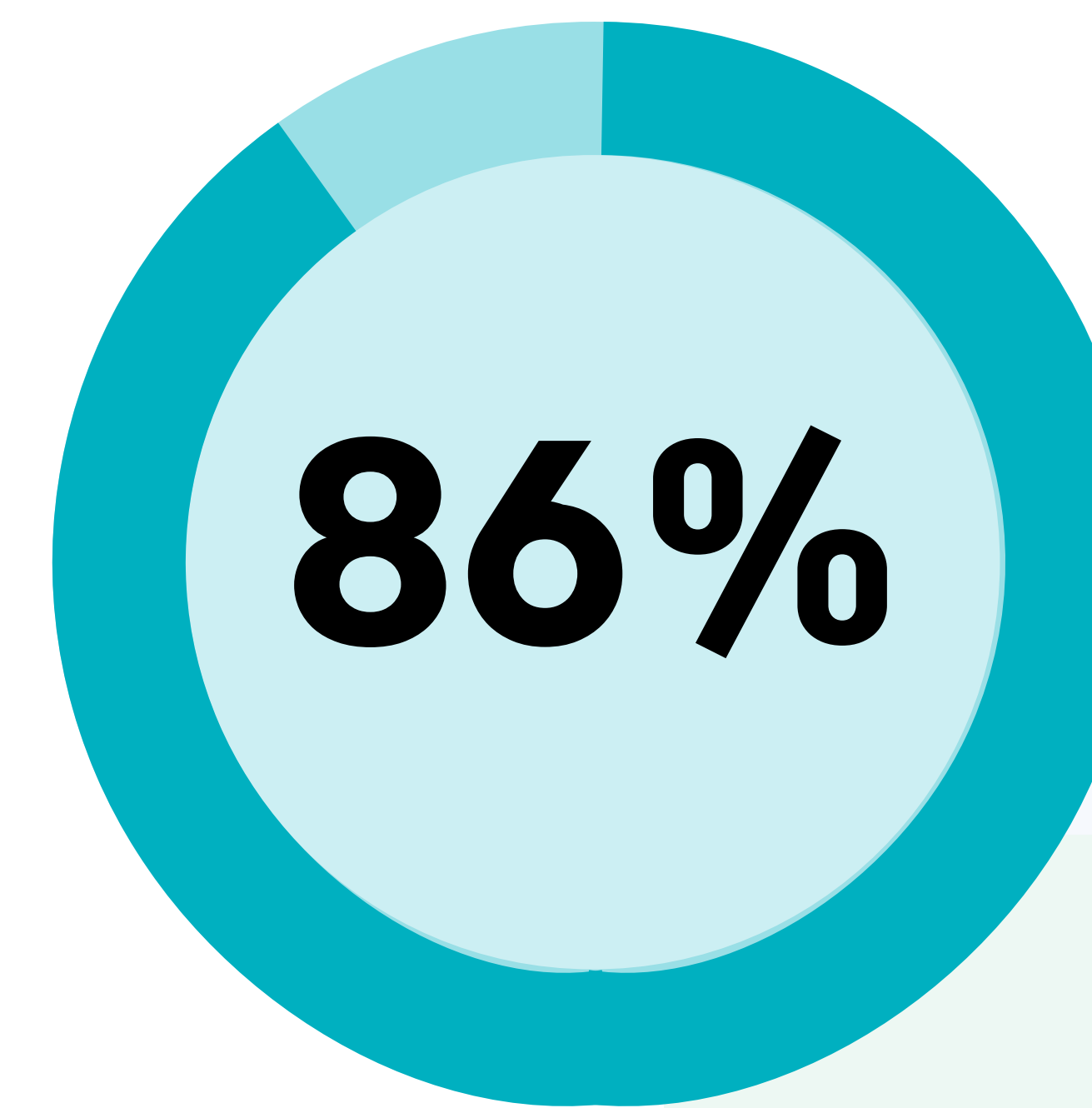


What it's like to be rejected by your company also holds significance. Any interaction with candidates—and employees for that matter—is a marketing opportunity that can either work for or against you.

It's crucial to understand that candidates, particularly digital-native Gen Zers, rely heavily on social media and digital channels to evaluate potential employers. In fact, [86% of job seekers evaluate a company's reputation](#) as an employer before applying. This is especially important to remember when your company is going through layoffs. How you manage downsizing can significantly affect your brand reputation. Ironically, when LinkedIn laid off 25% of its staff in 2023, many affected employees used the platform to express their grievances and look for other jobs. How you treat your employees while they're with you is vital, but equally important is how you handle their departures. In today's fast-paced digital world, news travels fast and can even [go viral](#).

Attracting talent in a challenging market

To attract the right people, it's essential to refine your [Employer Value Proposition \(EVP\)](#) and create personalised EVPs that resonate with your target audiences. Understand the channels where your potential candidates are active and invest your efforts there. Instead of deprioritising your recruitment marketing when the market is slow, consider it an opportunity to stand out, especially when there's less competition for talent. It may be the perfect time to increase your visibility and reap the benefits of your efforts when the market picks up again.



of job seekers consider a company's reputation as an employer before applying

Conclusion

The recruitment landscape is rapidly evolving, and HR and TA professionals are finding themselves needing to navigate these changes with leaner teams and tighter budgets. Technology, namely generative AI, is emerging as a helpful tool to automate repetitive tasks, but some fine-tuning is still needed to make sure AI does more good than harm. Additionally, a new generation with unique needs and demands is becoming a significant part of the workforce.

The upcoming year will be marked by these changes, bringing both challenges and opportunities. The ability, or willingness, of organisations to adapt will inevitably vary, leading to a variety of responses to the shifting landscape.

In early 2024, we will release an in-depth follow-up report that will take a closer look at these emerging trends and offer practical guidance for companies and HR teams on how to respond. The report will provide real examples of what companies are doing to address these trends and meet the challenges of the year ahead.

If you'd like to receive a copy of the upcoming report, please [sign up for our newsletter](#).



Want to learn how Jobylon's flexible ATS can help you work with any of these trends?

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