

20 years the voice for the global staffing industry



THE GLOBAL RECRUITER

# Stop Quiet Quitting

Celebrating the Best of the Best

Prepare for 2023





# Celebration and ceremony

From the editor





“

All in all, the recruitment industry is ready and prepared for whatever comes in 2023

Simon Kent, Editor,  
The Global Recruiter



The end of the year is always a time for reflection and looking forward. This year it is also a time for celebration. At The Global Recruiter we're still coming down from the high of celebrating the very best of the recruitment industry as recognised by our UK Industry Awards. This event brought together recruitment industry leaders, pioneers and innovators to see who had particularly impressed our selected industry judges. Find out more in this magazine.

But while we're celebrating we also have an eye on the future. Challenges are still rife across UK industry and while the recruitment sector is undoubtedly performing well it is necessary to stay alert, agile and prepared for just about anything. In this issue of the magazine we consider how to grow your business despite the apparent deterring forces, and what exactly candidates prize from recruiters. Look out too for our Compliance Special - coming out soon to give you the guidance you need in a continuously stormy economic sea.

All in all, the recruitment industry is ready and prepared for whatever comes in 2023. The recession, the skills shortages, anything and everything that might happen. Are we at the New Normal yet? Or are we simply preparing for the next wave of change? I think we're ready to find out.

Simon Kent  
Editor



What does it take to **attract**  
and **retain** talent in an  
ultra-competitive landscape?





# Talent Trends Report 2023 & Beyond

**2,000+ global temp workers**  
weighed in to share their  
experience with staffing firms.



**Global Recruitment  
Insights & Data**

by Bullhorn 

What does it take to produce a loyal, engaged talent community? Consistent engagement and smart use of technology, to start. We surveyed **2,000+ global temp workers** on their experiences working with staffing and recruitment firms in 2022 to produce this year's GRID Talent Trends Report.

[View Report](#)



# News

- > AMS Appoint MD for Tech Development
- > Career Switch to Meet Cost-of-Living Crisis
- > EC1 Partner Boost US Presence
- > Agency Sees Workers Through IR35 U-Turn
- > Culture Can Drive Workers from Jobs
- > Over 50s Return to Job Market
- > Partners for Paralegal Positions
- > Flex or Lose





## AMS Appoint MD for Tech Development

Significant new role filled by highly experienced senior leader



## Career Switch to Meet Cost-of-Living Crisis

Cost-of-living crisis forces a quarter of the British workforce to change careers



## EC1 Partner Boost US Presence

EC1 Partners Opens Fourth Global Hub to Boost United States Market



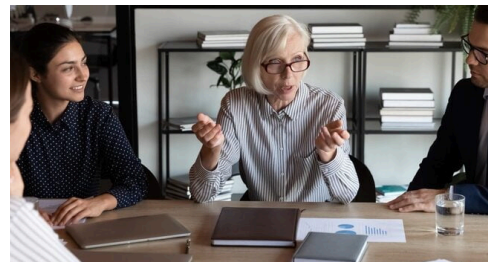
## Agency Sees Workers Through IR35 U-Turn

Encore supports workers through Government's Off-payroll U-Turn



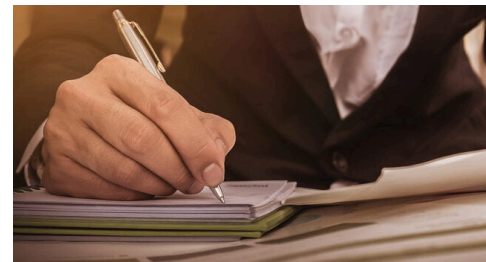
## Culture Can Drive Workers from Jobs

Survey shows 90% would leave their job if the company culture isn't up to scratch



## Over 50s Return to Job Market

91% of unemployed UK professionals over 50 considering returning to the job market



## Partners for Paralegal Positions

Momenta Group partners with paralegal non-profit to promote burgeoning job opportunities in sector



## Flex or Lose

Unit4 finds Inconsistency in Flexible Work causes Talent Attrition



# The Global Recruiter UK Industry Awards

Celebration and ceremony as The Global Recruiter recognises stand-out performances in the 'industries own awards'.



# INDUSTRY AWARDS 2022

Headline Sponsor







The best of the best from the UK recruitment industry gathered at East Wintergarden, Canary Wharf London on Thursday 17th November to to hear the results of The Global Recruiter UK Awards 2022.

Hosted by The Global Recruiter's own Gary King and headline sponsored by MIT, the afternoon was a chance for the industry to let its hair down and kick back after yet another challenging but successful year which has seen some the industry excel in terms of performance, innovation, expansion and investment.

The Global Recruiter UK Awards always offer something a little more special because this recognition goes beyond being on a shortlist or even paying for entry. The Global Recruiter prides itself on creating a level playing field for all-comers, newly created businesses, well established firms, new and old talent. Judged by experts from within the



industry, these awards are truly the industry's own and are a mark of real, demonstrable performance in each category.

And the winners and highly commended companies are celebrated with justifiable enthusiasm. With DJ sets and a live band and singer the afternoon gave a boost to



everyone there, marking an early start to end of year celebrations and a fantastic excuse to party into the small hours.

From In-house Training to Best Large Recruitment Business, these are the companies and people who hit a level of exceptional stand-out performance this year:



**Best In-House Training**  
Sponsored by The Recruitment Network  
**Winner: Carrington West**



**Best Innovation**  
Sponsored by Corpay  
**Winner: Opus Talent Solutions**



**Best Employer Brand**  
Sponsored by Keybridge  
**Winner: Placing Faces**

"We are incredibly proud to have won the 2022 Global Recruiter Best In-House Training Award. Learning is at the heart of everything we do and our "people first" business model. The award is well deserved recognition for our colleagues who come to work every day looking to continually develop and improve professionally and personally."

James Fernandes, Managing Director,  
Carrington West, Best In-House Training

"The team at Placing Faces are absolutely honoured to have been selected as the winners for this award. It can be difficult as a small recruitment business to stand out, in a highly-saturated market. This is why we created such a vibrant, fun brand. We are delighted that this has received recognition from the experts."

Alex Holland, Director, Placing Faces, Best Employer Brand

“To see our “Walk The Talk” Campaign be awarded this accolade amidst such an impressive finalists pool is nothing short of brilliant! The campaign is representative of our commitment to bettering the standing of DE&I in the financial services space; we’re making inclusion accessible, realistic, tangible, and actionable. This campaign has unlimited potential to inspire, raising the bar and expectation for what a recruitment marketing campaign can truly do. Thank you Global Recruiter and the judging panel for extending your support for this initiative, and recognising it’s ground-breaking character.”

Alexandra White, Marketing and Communications Manager, Harrington Starr, Best Marketing Campaign



### **Best Marketing Campaign**

**Sponsored by PGC Group**

**Winner: Harrington Starr**

### **Best Permanent Consultant**

**Sponsored by Simplicity**

**Winner: Amy Hambleton, RedLaw Recruitment**



### **Best Temporary Consultant**

**Sponsored by Simplicity**

**Winner: Cameron De Wit, Carrington West]**



### **Best UK Overseas Operation**

**Sponsored by 6 Cats**

**Winner: Templeton & Partners**



“Our second marketing-focused award of the evening – testament to the indispensable role it plays in Harrington Starr’s success. We are beyond delighted to see our trailblazing, expansive candidate attraction methods be recognised by the judges. We put particular emphasis on our 19% List initiative, exposing firms to those typically underrepresented in the financial services space, providing a platform for misrecognised talent. For the judges to acknowledge its value-centric nature, both to candidates and clients, is testament to the tireless work our entire team have put behind growing this; work that is redefining how we recruit and broadening our definition of talent.”

Alexandra White, Marketing and Communications Manager, Harrington Starr, Best Candidate Attraction Through Social Media



## **Best Candidate Attraction through Social Media**

**Sponsored by Access Financial**

**Winner: Harrington Starr**



## **Best Recruitment Process Outsourcing Business**

**Sponsored by UK Recruiter**

**Winner: ResourceBank**

“We are absolutely thrilled to win this award. We were severely impacted by the Covid pandemic and we worked very hard to respond to market conditions, launching new services and working with companies that needed help. Since the end of the pandemic we have been incredibly busy recruiting for clients that had shut down, launching resourcing centres for new customers and celebrating our 25th year (2 years late) with the opening of our ResourceBank school in Nepal. We don’t have a huge marketing & PR team and we occasionally enter awards – so it’s a great boost to all our team that the judges recognised our performance and picked us as the best recruitment outsourcing business in the UK. We encourage any business needing a recruitment partner to give us a call now!”

Mike Ellingham, Managing Director, ResourceBank, Best Recruitment Outsourcing Business



## Best Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Sponsored by Partners &

**Winner: Amoria Bond**



## Best Start-Up Agency

Sponsored by Job Adder

**Winner: UMATR**



## Best Newcomer

Sponsored by Chaps

**Winner: Nexus Search**



## Best Client Service

Sponsored by Professional Passport

**Winner: The Barton Partnership**

"It's fantastic to be recognised for our continued dedication to client service. Our purpose as a business is not just about finding talent; it's about helping clients solve their strategic business challenges. This award reflects our global commitment to client service and the efforts of everyone within the organisation to deliver on this purpose. A huge well done to the team!"

Nicholas Barton, Founder, The Barton Partnership's Founder, Best Client Service



## Best Specialist Recruitment Business

Sponsored by Azure Global

**Winner: Harrington Starr**



## Best Large Recruitment Business

Sponsored by Parasol

Winner: Harvey Nash



## Best Small Recruitment Business

Sponsored by Just Recruit

Winner: TDA Creative



## Best Medium Recruitment Business

Sponsored by Cloudcall

Winner: Seven Resourcing



# MIT reveals its retention secret

Are you seeking ways to improve retention rates?  
It's the burning question that organisations struggle to answer.

For any recruitment agency, the problem of retention is a significant concern. When employees leave, an organisation's hiring and selection procedures become time-consuming and expensive. Successful business growth depends on the talent pool of applicants and qualified personnel, and all businesses must avoid low retention rates at all costs. Along with interfering with productivity, it may harm client relationships and employee morale.

According to research, employee benefits can significantly affect retention rates: 43% of temporary employees claim that a better benefits package could persuade them to accept a full-time employment offer from an employer. Mandy Lemons, MIT's Sales Director, understands the importance of making it more straightforward for employees to receive benefit packages. She says:

**"Pay attention to your employees and learn what they want. Independent research demonstrates that employees want more programmes, benefits, and improved pensions."**

MIT's strategic employee engagement approach heavily relies on benefits. Through a user-friendly online platform that offers savings on leisure, health and wellbeing support, and GP services, to name a few, we help companies keep their workforces happy and motivated. This innovative proposal goes above and

beyond to consider factors like life quality, health and wellbeing, personal growth, and experiences outside of the workplace.

Our innovative employee engagement package far outpaces typical employer remuneration packages and has pioneered a fresh approach to the UK recruitment market. With exclusive services for individual financial needs, such as 24/7 access to payroll, payslips, and pension funds, We enable savvy recruiters to boost employee engagement. Physical and emotional wellbeing is also taken care of with 24-hour confidential counselling, fitness videos, and personal health assessments - all accessible through our cutting-edge portal. The numbers revealing the usage of our benefits app in 2022 demonstrate the extent of its daily appeal to employees of our client companies and, ultimately, its significant effect on engagement:



MIT transforms the business culture through its specialised services and ground-breaking engagement offering, helping clients save time and money and promote employee retention. Delivering the best range of benefits will increase employee engagement and help keep brilliant employees on board, happy, and deeply committed for years to come.

Contact us today to discover how we can increase your staff retention and save you time, money and resources. Effective employee engagement is truly an innovative approach to retaining talent.

☎ 0800 211 8709

@ ee@mitbenefits.co.uk





# Getting To Work

View from WEC: Ann Cattelain, CEO of Federgon, the federation of private employment services providers in Belgium discusses labour market participation and skills shortages.



**Q: What are the main challenges and opportunities currently facing your labour market?**

**A:** Getting more people to work is a core challenge in Belgium. One out of every four people of working age is not actually working, and the challenge is particularly stark in the south of the country. We have a generous social security system, but nevertheless this is not normal.

We need to encourage people to work, and the government target is to have 80 per cent of 18-65 year old's in active employment. This is important economically, but also for people's well-being. Unemployment can be isolating, as people lose contact with their window on the world. Federgon members provide the government with private sector services such as career guidance and career management to address the issue and help people into work.

The war in Ukraine and ensuing energy crisis have come hot on the heels of the Covid



crisis and also placed strain on labour markets. With the country likely moving into recession, some people will lose their jobs, but we are still struggling with skills shortages. On top of this, we have the challenge of an unprecedentedly high level of inflation in Europe.

Belgium has the dubious distinction of having one of the continent's highest inflation levels. Many

workers will receive an indexation of 10 per cent in January and while this will be welcomed by individuals it will make us a lot less competitive. For example, we already lose work and taxes to logistics companies that base themselves just over the border in the Netherlands where the system is far more flexible. These companies then snap up contracts that should rightly go to Belgian companies and deliver taxes to the Belgian state.





**Q: How do you see the industry's role evolving in both the short and long term? What is the outlook for flexible staffing?**

A: Over the years our role has changed. While in the past we predominantly offered a certain range of HR services, today we are more solution oriented and look to address societal problems. We work closely with ministers and political parties to offer guidance and advice. Just recently we

presented a position paper and action plan on supporting people back into work following long-term illness. It was much appreciated, and I am pleased to say that the government has listened and has now earmarked a budget to make it happen.

The Belgian employment market is highly regulated and the new, more flexible forms of work are not easy. Temporary agency work however is well established and offers the

greatest chance of flexibility, coupled with social protection for workers. At the same time, the industry still faces discrimination in some sectors, such as construction, it nevertheless offers people a first step into work.

**Q: The World Employment Confederation is promoting social innovation as a way of accommodating new challenges. What does this mean in your market?**

A: We must constantly adapt to volatility and change. We need to stay creative all the time and be open to new ideas. Covid was surely the ultimate example of volatility and we had to learn to adapt fast as everything became more digital and we had to embrace new approaches.

One innovative initiative of which we are particularly proud is the work we have done in elaborating transition plans to support workers in moving jobs. While it is important that individuals stay in the labour market, this does not mean that they should stay in the same job. Some sectors eg. banks,



employ many people but not always the ones they want. So, we have created transition paths and career guidance to address this. Plans first consider whether people need extra training to take on future roles, or whether they would be better to find another job. What differentiates the initiative is that it allows workers to experience other sectors while remaining in their job and receiving their usual salary and benefits.

It is senseless for people to stay in jobs for which they are not suited and where they don't have the skills that employers need. With this approach they have the chance to try out different roles and then transition smoothly between jobs, thereby avoiding unemployment. This is social innovation in action and something that we have presented to federations in other countries. It offers a win-win situation for workers, companies and governments and an excellent example of how future labour markets should work.

**Q: What actions are you taking to support your members, their client companies and workers to lead in the new normal?**

A: At Federgon we have ten different sector groups ranging from interim development to recruitment search and selection and HR Tech. We keep our 650 members informed on an almost daily basis and they can phone or email anytime.

With such a complex system of legislation we spend a good deal of time lobbying and engaging with politicians and trade unions. Our legal services are in high demand, and we also have a collective service offering advice on contracts, career guidance and government policy and members appreciate the added value that that this brings.

In addition, we offer services that help members to ensure that they are abiding by equal opportunities and non-discriminatory legislation in all their branches. Our anonymous callers phone member agencies to

check that they are operating within the law and provide a scorecard on how they fared.

Self-management and auto-regulation are the cornerstones of our organisation, and we are committed to ensuring that members always uphold the very highest industry standards.

**“We offer services that help members to ensure that they are abiding by equal opportunities and non-discriminatory legislation in all their branches.”**



# There's No Quit in Engaged Workers

Workforce: Kris Harris, Regional Director, Robert Half believes that improving employee engagement is the way to boost retention and quell 'quiet quitting'.

Like the 'Great Resignation' before it, ('Great Reset', 'Great Reshuffle' – however you want to call it), 'Quiet Quitting' is the latest trend to have sent ripples throughout the business world. It's even made it into Collins' words of the year list. The famous English dictionary's definition is, 'The practice of doing no more work than one is contractually obliged to do.'

The premise here is that there is no reason for workers to do more – after all they're not being paid extra – so why should they put in the additional hours? The concept does conjure up images of people slouched at their desks, hiding behind their screens for fear of being disturbed and demotivated. Does this do the UK's workers a disservice and what are the root causes? And do we as employers expect too much?

## Disengagement and disenchantment

You could, however, argue that 'quiet quitting' has always existed. In my eyes, it's the disengagement that should be the real

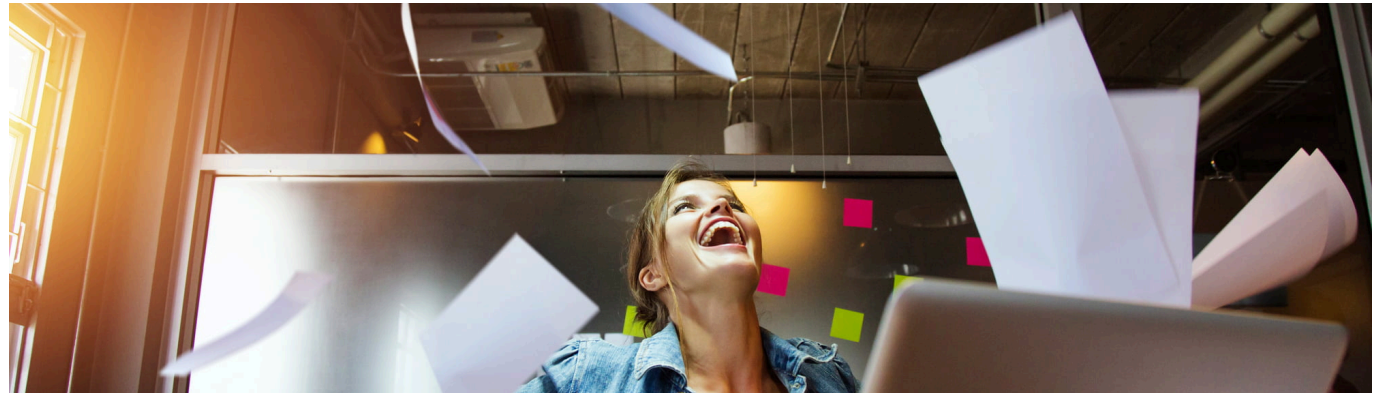




red flag for business leaders. Indeed, according to the 2022 Gallup '[State of the Global Workplace](#)' report, only nine per cent of UK workers are engaged and we rank 33rd out of 38 in the employee engagement table.

Now this is a real cause for concern. At Robert Half we don't just have a responsibility towards our own people but we must ensure that the many candidates we place for the clients across the range of sectors we serve are the right individuals for those roles and cultures. And part of that means they have the right attitude to succeed.

The pandemic has clearly left its mark and as a result, our working habits changed – a greater focus on wellbeing, mental health and personal interaction – than what we were used to before Covid struck. And with the cost-of-living crisis, rising energy bills, consumer price inflation at over 10 per cent and real household incomes falling, people are struggling. This will spill over into their work. Many are staying put for financial reasons, which only perpetuates a lack of engagement.



This is why I believe we need to be careful here and make a distinction between those who are disgruntled and those happy to just do their hours. 'Presenteeism' we know achieves little, isn't healthy and is certainly not productive. We all want our staff to achieve a good work-life balance to avoid excessive workloads and the potential for burnout.

## Investors in people

The bigger concern is a seemingly persistent apathy. In a nutshell, many employees feel that their company isn't investing in their development. Others aren't being recognised for their efforts. They're not getting pay rises

or the promotions they feel they deserve. Indeed, 'lack of training and development programmes' was cited as one of the chief barriers to career progression in the workplace as revealed in the CIPD's '[Good Work Index 2022](#)'.

So I believe that a positive around the discussion of 'quiet quitting' is that it serves as a timely reminder that we must listen harder and question are we putting the career development and wellbeing of our people first. Beyond salary, learning and development, training and flexible working consistently feature highly in the list of things employees most want.



Talent attraction is hard enough in today's tight labour market so companies can ill afford to lose valued employees, which not only hits morale but is extremely costly. Retention is so important especially during these difficult and unpredictable economic times. Companies that invest in their human capital are more likely to retain their talent and these individuals are likely to stick around when the economy improves and organisations will reap the longer-term benefits.

## Management training

'People don't quit a job, they quit their boss'. We hear this often and, of course, there is truth in it. So, we also need to make sure that people leaders receive appropriate training. And that those promoted into management roles are cut out for leadership. Not everyone is. Remote working has added a layer of complexity so virtual working – and the risks it can inadvertently create – should be an important training focus. As author and professor Adam Grant recently

tweeted, 'Good organisations elevate those who elevate others'.

The good news: a number of tools can measure employee engagement, such as employee surveys and structured, regular check-ins. But more importantly, think about daily conversations with your team and how as we leaders, promote and instil a feedback culture. People should openly talk about their issues without fear that it might damage their career. It's often said that when your most passionate people go quiet, that's when you need to worry. So, let's not wait for an exit interview to find out why!

Does 'quiet quitting' need to be taken seriously? In so much as it is a broader engagement issue, then yes it should serve as a timely reminder. And if we tackle the root causes, listen to what our people are saying and take action to improve retention, we'll all be in a far better place.

And one would hope the noise around 'quiet quitting' might quieten down.



# Power Up

Strategy: Rhys Jones, recruitment business investor and founder of Davidson Gray discusses how to grow your recruitment business in 2023.







Ok, so we swapped Liz Truss for Rishi Sunak, but no matter who is running the UK economy, 2023 will be dominated by external international factors – the EU, US policy, and China I'm sure will affect the worldwide economy with their unpredictable machinations. However, the biggest factor will remain the war in Ukraine. So how does that effect the strategy for growth for recruitment

businesses? The UK and worldwide economies may be unpredictable next year, but five key factors will remain constant if you want to grow your recruitment business.

## Marketing

If you watch any of my video blogs, you will see one called 'Why most businesses are crap at marketing'. I explain in this why the

benefit of quality marketing is so misunderstood in the recruitment industry. Not only can it untap additional income but it can also help you win the war for talent in attracting and retaining the best recruiters. If you can make your environment and easier place to make money by implementing a first-class marketing strategy then recruiters are far more likely to want to work there, and importantly stay there.



## Staff attraction

Which brings me nicely on to the biggest barrier to growth in any recruitment business, the attraction and retention of quality staff. I cover areas of staff retention in some of the other parts of this piece, but attraction is huge if you really want to grow your recruitment business. Any business needs a well thought through strategy on how to attract the best talent and that strategy must be well executed. A lot of businesses don't have an actual staff attraction strategy – they wing it. They may use rec-to-recs, advertise a bit, put some stuff on LinkedIn but there's no real thought in it. Plus, if you have no strategy, how you can target the key areas and measure those areas for success?!

You may have seen I have a fair few blogs and downloads on KPIs and not just for recruiters. To hit your hiring target, business leaders need to KPI their own activity in staff attraction. Any owner/managers reading this, can you tell me your interview to hire ratio on

recruiters for your business? If you can't, how can you set a target for how many recruiters you need to attract to interview each month to hit your hiring projection? Start with those numbers and cascade it down from there on how you can attract enough good potential hires to interview each month and you'll be on your way to a genuine staff attraction strategy.

## Invest in staff training and development

This is another area that impacts your staff retention. In lists of the most common reasons people decide to leave their employer, lack of training and development appears frequently. Staff want to feel you're investing in them and recruiters want development so they can not only bill more but grow in other areas, so training is a big deal. That and of course you want to improve the productivity of those people – it's common sense if you want to grow your business.

The key bit here is 'invest' in staff training

“Staff want to feel you're investing in them and recruiters want development so they can not only bill more but grow in other areas, so training is a big deal. .”

and development. In SMEs, the managers or owners often do the training. But training and coaching is a skill, so just because you feel you or your managers are good, they may not be great trainers. Plus, just because you're good doesn't necessarily mean you know why you're good, so you're not consciously competent. If you're not consciously competent, how can you train and coach others on the key skills and behaviours in your success? Just because the way you work has made you successful doesn't mean it will for everyone.



## Business Culture

Business culture has come into vogue, and I see a lot of new content on the subject. However, I do find when something comes into fashion the speed people want to get new content out often leads to misleading and waffly content that tells you little and it can send you down the wrong track.

I can't cover culture in this piece and do it justice but what I can tell you is having a winning culture in your business can make up for a fair few deficiencies in your business strategy.

A winning culture will work extremely well for staff retention, teamwork and sharing ideas (and candidates!) plus help mental wellbeing, drive employee engagement and contribute to staff development.

But it's not just the internal effect, a winning culture can affect the external brand perception, which not only helps with clients and candidates, but also comes back to staff attraction again. Your staff can be your

Larger companies often have in-house trainers, but don't stop there – invest in external trainers, send your team on external courses, give them new content and a different voice plus it feels good to know your employer is spending money on your development. And, do a double whammy and get your managers and yourself trained on how to train and coach. Trust me, I know from experience how much of a huge benefit this

had on my ability to train and coach well.

Don't forget that training and coaching is only half the battle - implementation of the training is the key, otherwise the training will be a waste. You don't generate money by what you know, you perform by what you do, and that's how to look at it with the implementation of training, knowing is OK, but doing is where the money is at.



# How to grow a recruitment business into 2023

DAVIDSON GRAY

A man with short grey hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and a brown belt, stands against a dark blue background. He is smiling and has his right hand resting on his chin, with his left arm crossed over his chest.

Lastly, if you really want to grow your business, you need leaders. Hiring in leaders can come with all sorts of risk, whereas growing your own is not only is a safer bet, but it shows the people in your business the career path and progression open to them.

biggest advocates when attracting new staff, and importantly, key in securing them when it's decision time for the potential new hire. Introduce potential hires to some of your team to help reinforce why your business is the place they should move to next.

grow your own leaders, I would say empowerment. If you show your people you trust them and give them real empowerment, your natural leaders will appear, the cream will rise to the top. Empowerment is similar to delegation in that it doesn't come naturally, however, just like delegation if you don't embrace it, you will hold your team's development back and it will stall, if not prevent succession planning.

For any business leaders reading this, you may be OK in some of these areas, but I suggest asking your team their opinion on how your business scores in these areas.

You may be not only surprised by the responses, but if you ask in the correct way you will, I'm sure, get some source of inspiration in the answers. Plus, it might show you some leaders who you can empower to help build and implement the strategies for you.

Rhys Jones attracts 3000 readers a month to the blogs on his [Davidson Gray](#) website, which also includes audio downloads. Find Rhys Jones on YouTube with his recruitment specific blogs here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/>

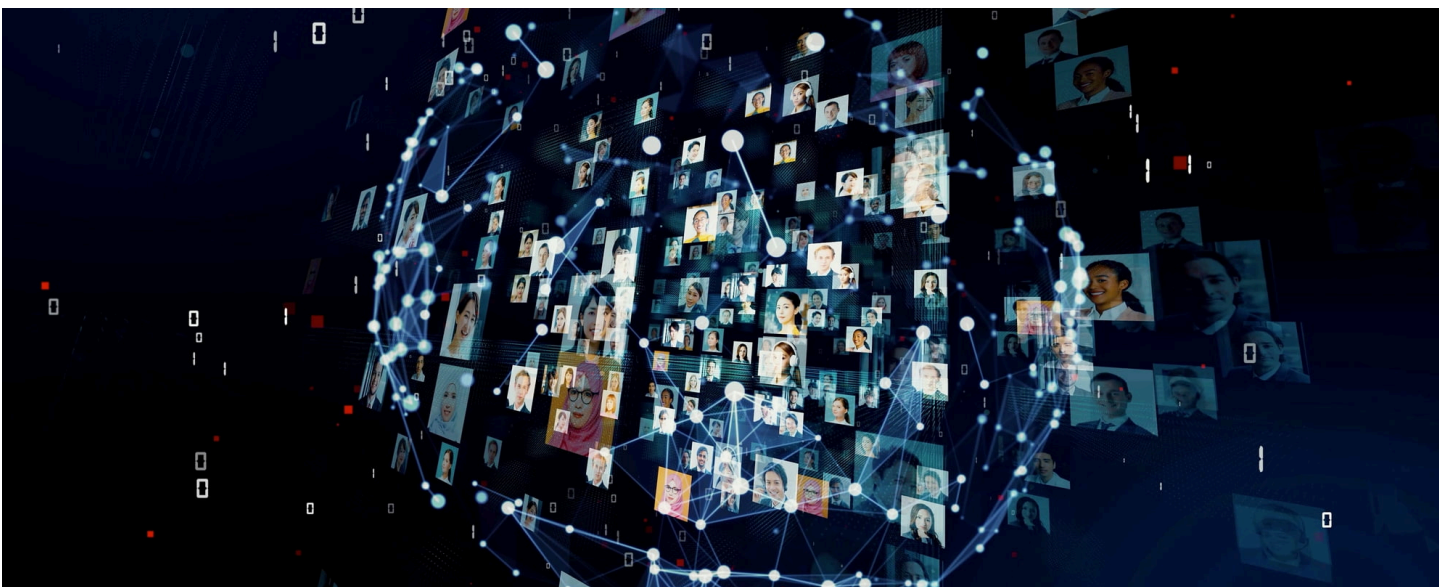
# The Year Ahead

Opinion: Ann Swan, Global CEO of APSCo gives her view of the coming year for the recruitment industry.

**2023**  
**START**

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To say that the last year has been disruptive is an understatement. We've seen record-breaking vacancy numbers from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), three separate Prime Ministers, and a Mini Budget that included a repeal of Off-Payroll before a complete reversal on everything once markets began to crash. And that's just the top line news items.

The recruitment market has really felt the impact of fast-paced change in what is already a difficult climate. As the year comes to a close with talks of a recession on the

cards, now is a time not only for reflection but also planning for the uncertainty ahead.

## What 2023 holds in store

It may be difficult to fully plan for the future when change is the norm, but there are a number of key moments to keep on the radar. The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill contains a sunset clause at the end of 2023, meaning all EU-derived law must be in a UK statute by that point, otherwise it falls away. It is certainly one element of the political landscape that

recruiters will need to keep a close eye on throughout next year, although the Bill allows for the sunset clause to be extended.

This bill provides a perfect opportunity for policymakers and influences to revisit and simplify the regulated employment market.

Agency Worker Regulations (AWR) and Working Time Regulations (WTR) are too complex and over-protective of the highly skilled workforce, inadequately differentiating them from those in lower pay brackets. These are two examples of the regulations we hope will be reviewed in the next year. These requirements are burdensome for staffing firms and those highly skilled contractors that are so valuable in the current economic landscape.

While we don't expect to see another reversal on Off-Payroll from this Government, the initial repeal does suggest that policymakers may, on the whole, agree that the regulation is flawed. We will continue to push for a review to maximise the prospects

“

We might not be able to currently say what lies ahead for the county's immigration agenda, but we remain advocates of the need for controlled immigration that benefits the UK economy, rather than deters from it.

Ann Swain APSCo



of achieving a genuinely flexible and productive labour market.

## An Employment Bill at last?

The elusive Employment Bill remains a key agenda item for APSCo and its members. There is a need for more appropriate legislation of the recruitment and umbrella markets that differentiates between worker levels and status. Having the same defined classifications of 'worker', 'contractor' and 'employee' written across legislation will help protect those who

need safeguarding from exploitation, without limiting the flexibility of others.

The introduction of any Bill which achieves this should always be delivered under clear consultation with those it impacts. As we've seen in the past, flaws can appear in legislation where the proper parties haven't been consulted with. While our members have echoed their desire for an Employment Bill, many have also raised concerns that such action doesn't lead to unintended consequences for an already over-burdened

recruitment sector.

## A globally viable workforce

While it's unfair to blame all of the country's skills shortages on Brexit, it's no secret that since the UK left the Bloc, its attractiveness to international talent has waned and the ability of the brightest and best to move to the UK has been restricted. In particular, the flexible segment of the global workforce has seen little opportunity to make the move to the UK for work.



We might not be able to currently say what lies ahead for the country's immigration agenda, but we remain advocates of the need for controlled immigration that benefits the UK economy, rather than deters from it.

There is still a need for a highly skilled visa for the self-employed which helps industry across the country compete on more equal grounds for both global talent and international business. APSCo's public policy team will continue to drive this conversation with the relevant parliamentary officials to ensure a new visa is steered by the valuable insights from the recruitment sector to make it a truly viable and attractive route for these individuals.

## Skills development

While attracting new skills to the UK is needed, upskilling of the workforce is also necessary for the current environment if the UK's economy is to be bolstered. At the time of writing, we had already seen the new Prime Minister vocalising the need to focus on skills and education and we believe this must remain



a top priority for the Sunak administration.

There are several changes that APSCo and its members feel are necessary to help grow the UK's talent pools. Revamping apprenticeships and the Apprenticeship Levy, for example, will have a positive impact on skills development. The current setup is too rigid and doesn't align with the modern make-up of the workforce.

The workforce is ageing, people are coming out of retirement (and being actively encouraged to do so as skills remain in short supply) and more individuals are choosing to work flexibly. Yet apprenticeships aren't appealing to older workers or viable for contractors, agency workers or the self-employed.

Little flexibility is also afforded to the Levy itself, meaning that funds are going unused rather than being channelled into the right routes to upskill the country's workforce. Apprenticeships need to be flexible, portable and accessible to all.

## Supporting the skills agenda

The political landscape looks set to impact the recruitment market in the coming year. With a general election nearing, parties are ramping up their calls for change and policy upheaval. Having experienced such uncertainty for the last three years, the policies of the Conservative, Labour and other opposition parties will be closely scrutinised by the recruitment sector.

As we've seen recently, the strength of the labour market does underpin the economic stability of the UK. We will continue to work with representatives from across the political landscape to ensure the skills agenda is prioritised for the country in what will no doubt be a tough year.



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Keeping together is progress.  
Working together is success.



# Tech Up

Skills: Tom Barron, Head of Revature UK gives three radical strategies for fixing the UK tech skills gap.





The tech industry, in theory, should hold tremendous appeal: it's dynamic, creative, well paid, and pivotal to making companies and the digital economy tick. On average, [tech salaries are 80 per cent higher](#) than non-tech salaries—and there are plenty of openings in the industry. Last year, there were over two million tech job vacancies in the UK alone.

With a recession looming and the cost of living rising, one might think people would be flocking to these job vacancies en masse, and yet that's simply not the case. Workers, by and large, do not have the skills that tech jobs require. [In a recent survey](#), over 80 per cent of UK bosses said a lack of digital skills is negatively impacting their company. Meanwhile, according to UK Tech News, [12 million UK workers](#) lack basic digital skills.

Solving this skills gap is good for everyone. Tech employees get a future-proofed career path, while their employers get the technical know-how required of the digital age. In order to remedy the current skills gap, UK

recruiters need to embrace alternate approaches to recruiting tech talent. Let's take a look at three radical strategies business leaders can use to do just that.

## 1. Align tech and human resources priorities

When the time comes to fill a tech vacancy, IT departments tend to focus on technical competency, while human resources departments tend to value retention and diversity. But hiring solely based on what an employee can contribute on day one is short-sighted – both because it knocks strong employees with great potential out of the running and because any company's tech needs will naturally evolve and change. IT and HR should put their heads together and think about what a potential hire could contribute after a few months of training, or even better, a year or two from now.

Additionally, recruitment is traditionally done one position at a time, with no overarching pipeline or strategy in place. A manager has

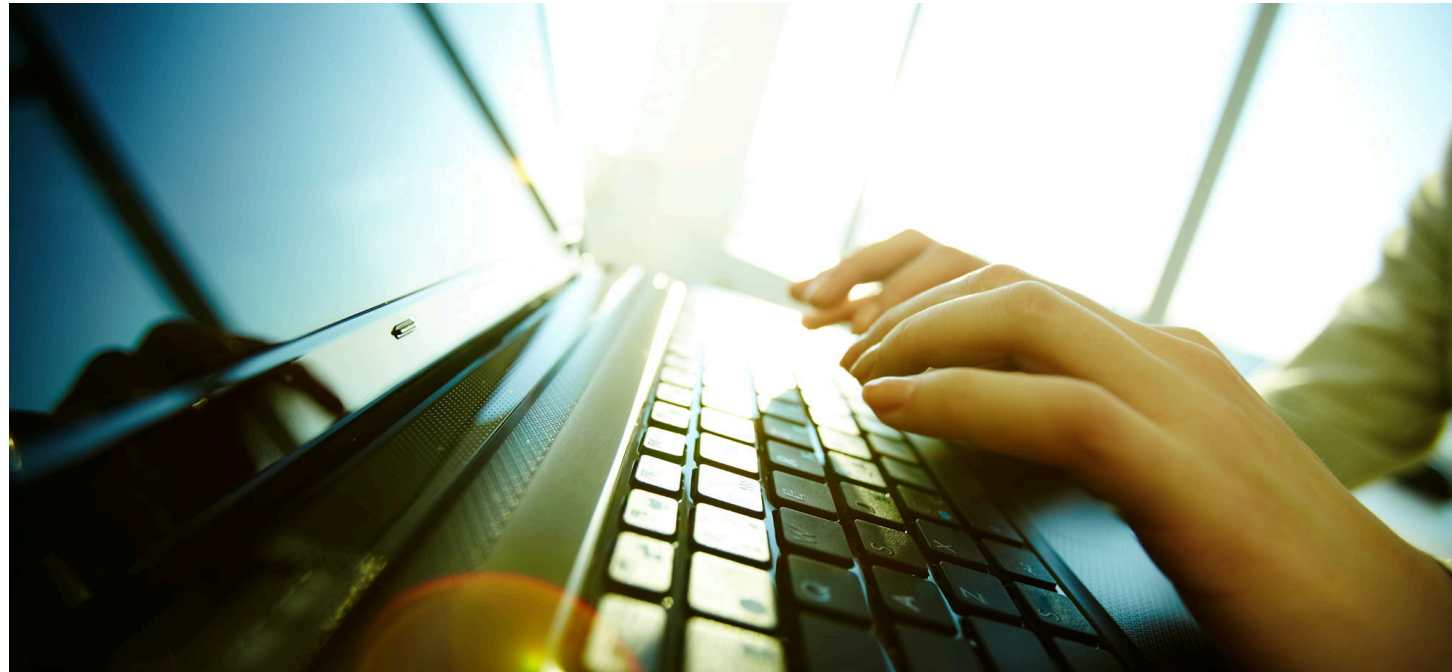
an opening and tells their recruiter what kind of employee –level, skills, etc. – they are looking for. This is the fatal flaw many companies still adopt time and again. To truly align IT and HR priorities, hiring should happen at volume and with a clear plan in place, with the short and medium term future in mind. It makes far more sense, particularly at the junior level, to approach hiring as if you were offering someone a career, not just a job. This builds training into the process. Additionally, it allows companies to have a much better view of their own talent pipeline and reduces hiring bias from individual managers who typically only care about the current project, often resulting in companies finding themselves over-reliant on 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to provide resources for them. Insufficient planning then deprives them of funds that could be better spent and invested in their own talent.



## 2. Tap into non-traditional sources and improve the traditional ones

To fill the tech skills gap, recruiters also need to tap into non-traditional sources, whether university graduates who didn't study tech or candidates who didn't go to university at all. Consider a candidate who studied poetry – their passion – during uni. While they graduated without technical skills, they are used to struggling with dense material. Such a person could be a great candidate for a technical position. There will simply be a learning curve in the beginning. But they may not have ever considered a technology job before, partly because they typically haven't been targeted before.

Hire-train-deploy models are a natural fit for organisations seeking to diversify their recruitment strategies. Under such a model, a trusted talent partner hires and trains candidates with both the aptitude and attitude to succeed. They'll screen prospective employees from a wide range of



non-traditional sources, with an emphasis on soft skills like values and resilience. Then, they'll train the talent to the client company's liking, place them on client projects and keep developing them until they are ready to be converted permanently.

Furthermore, companies should definitely be looking more seriously at the non-graduate pathway for their tech talent. There is plenty of untapped A-level and T-level talent currently, that could with intense technical

training and development, become great employees. This talent pool can do more to fill the tech talent gap, if only more companies take a chance on them, but also give them meaningful and challenging roles, with a really clear career path.

Graduate and Apprenticeship schemes are a great way to bring in technology talent. However, too many companies fail to offer participants a genuine plan either during or following their two-year programme. In fact,

many companies expect Grads and Apprentices to simply move on and find their own jobs after a light touch matching scheme. Companies should invest far more energy into the programme activity and the retention at the end of these schemes, even if it means moving them to a different office or a different role within the company. If managed and trained properly throughout, candidates are more likely to stick around for the long haul too, this includes those brought in from the non-traditional routes.

### 3. Hire for soft skills

Training for technical skills is a crucial component of closing the skills gap, but companies can't overlook the importance of soft skills. According to a [recent survey](#), focusing solely on 'hard' skills in the tech realm costs businesses a whopping £240 billion per year. Meanwhile, nearly 60 per cent of knowledge workers have never received technical upskilling from their employer. But upskilling is non-negotiable in the world of tech, as things are ever-



changing. [IBM estimates](#) that the average 'half-life' of any given tech skill is just 2.5 years. By hiring for soft skills, you'll have employees who can adapt as tech changes and recognise that training is an ongoing

process. You will also retain that important corporate memory, that helps people fit into corporate culture and processes, that is not easily replaced.



One way to consider soft skills during the hiring process is to conduct probing 'values and behaviours' interviews. You aren't trying to hire a robot who can complete a particular technical task as quickly as possible, you're trying to hire a person who can complete the task, collaborate with others and be supportive and perhaps become a leader. By asking questions that focus on attitude, resilience, behaviours and flexibility, you're future-proofing your talent pool and the employee's career which brings significant loyalty.

The bottom line is that tech is an exciting industry – and it will only become more exciting as we begin to build bridges between existing vacancies and available talent and look beyond the age-old singular requisition by managers and the dreaded annual forecasting process, which means companies hire aplenty in March to July, slow down in summer and then have to satisfy imposed budget cuts by Q4. It's time for UK businesses to dedicate themselves to solving the skills gap holistically with foresight, so they can fill workplace

shortages and drive digital transformation – today and into the future.

But it's not all doom and gloom. We asked respondents of the survey to share some of their better experiences working with recruiters, both internally and externally.

By far the thing that impressed people the most was thorough feedback and criticism (67 per cent). This is followed by swift feedback (65 per cent), closure of process (63 per cent), well written job descriptions (60 per cent) and personal service (42 per cent).

Interestingly enough, the lowest scoring elements were employer branding (26 per cent), intuitive websites (23 per cent) and gamification (14 per cent). This just goes to show that if want to impress applicants and provide them with an enjoyable recruitment experience, we are better off picking up the phone for a good old fashioned phone call than pumping copious amounts of money into a fancy careers page.

From delving into the findings of The Great Big Recruitment Industry Survey, we can conclude that in a post-covid world, candidates now have more power and higher expectations. If an organisation is neglecting its applicants, either directly, as a result of their agency's processes or as a result of their combined lack of care then it is the organisation's sales that will suffer. However, if an organisation is able to provide personal, swift feedback, either directly, via its agency or as a combined effort, then its sales will be positively impacted.

# How to Be Better

Analysis: The Recruitment Company, based in Sydney, Australia carried out The Great Big Recruitment Industry Survey. Here they discuss what the findings mean for recruiters.





[The Recruitment Company](#), based in Sydney, Australia carried out [The Great Big Recruitment Industry Survey](#). Here they discuss what the findings mean for recruiters.

It's fair to say that the majority of people these days have had experience working with a recruitment agency at some point during their career. It's also fair to say that on the whole many people haven't had the most enjoyable experience.

Now you might say we are just speculating or being pessimistic even, but the unfortunate truth is that over the years, the recruitment industry has developed a rather bad reputation.

## How do we know this for sure?

We took it to the market and conducted a survey to provide a snapshot relating to the impact of current challenges, particularly living in a post-Covid world, and how they have influenced the market's view of the recruitment industry.

When asked respondents to rate recruitment



agencies based on the percentage of agencies they felt were 'exceptional' and the percentage they felt were 'terrible'. The market certainly spoke. On average 56 per cent of agencies were rated as 'Terrible' and sadly, only 10 per cent were rated as 'Exceptional'.

What is even more interesting, is that a staggering 88 per cent said that the treatment they received during their experience with the recruitment agency impacted their view of the end client's products and services. A total of 50 per cent stated that their experience would significantly impact their future buying decisions. This is a significant increase on

pre-covid results in terms of applicants holding the end client accountable for the service provided by the agency.

## What does this mean?

If you are a Hiring Manager – how applicants are treated when applying to your roles can positively or negatively impact sales.

If you are a Recruitment Agency or internal recruitment team – if you treat applicants poorly, you could potentially be destroying your brand's reputation, along with your client's brand reputation too.

So what is it that people dislike so much when it comes to the recruitment industry?

## All gone quiet

It's no surprise that the biggest grievance was around not getting a response to an application, with 84 per cent of respondents voting on this. This is followed by poor interview feedback (61 per cent), then a close grouping of misrepresentation of roles (53 per cent) and a lack of understanding of the actual roles (53 per cent).

"I am just sick of lengthy application processes only to be ignored and given no feedback. We want easy, streamline application processes that actually get to the point of whether you're right for the organisation and even the tiniest bit of constructive feedback. It can be soul crushing doing so many applications selling yourself to get nothing in return."

'I am annoyed when I go into the city for a chat with a recruitment agency and they are



"I believe the relationship between recruiter and client is a reflection of the client overall - if the recruiter is a bit half-arsed I assume the client will be too."

'A bad recruiter shows the company isn't totally on top of their suppliers or how new potential employees are treated.'



all over me so to speak then there is just nothing, no calls no emails not unless you are in their direct spotlight for a role. I waste a lot of time going in for chats, and then nothing comes of it."

'I've rarely gotten any feedback on the applications I've submitted. Maybe twice out of literal hundreds of times I've submitted applications has a company actually emailed me (automated or not) to say whether or not my application was successful.'

But it's not all doom and gloom. We asked respondents of the survey to share some of their better experiences working with recruiters, both internally and externally.

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"It is a joy to meet the occasional recruiter who knows that each recruiting assignment has two clients: the company paying the bill, and the potential candidates who will make that payment possible – if not for this immediate company, for a future client company. A couple of agencies have great recruiters (head and shoulders above the rest). Sadly, they are good because they communicate. Worse, they disappear / leave the agency, probably because they spend time working with the applicants, which is not producing immediate income for the agency.'

'What would impress me is a positive or "nice" rejection email. Something that

actually praises someone's skills (only if they deserve to be praised), and words the rejection in a way that's not too negative. Feedback on my portfolio and skills in a rejection email would also impress me. One email that impressed me was when a recruiter sent me links to companies that offer sponsorship, and links to digital jobs in that country."

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**Thank you**