

Exploring the realm of possibilities: What 2023's trends tell us about the future of work

Hiring experts reveal the biggest workplace trends of the year, as well as what job seekers can expect in 2024.

El Dorado is a mythical city that has long been researched by a plethora of explorers. But after too many unsuccessful missions, researches have now stopped.

Lost in the jungle, plagued by tropical illnesses, hostile tribes, and dangerous animals, many have lost themselves and their lives in the unforgiving Amazonian jungle.

A job seeker's journey is, in some respects, rather similar. Braving through the application jungle, losing themselves in tons of CVs, cover letter, browsing in uncharted territories, facing the endless "Thank you for your application. Unfortunately...", plagued by despair, job seekers are the new explorers looking for their dream jobs, also called Eldorado.

Jobseeker, the comprehensive toolbox that empowers candidates to navigate the employment market through innovative solutions, draws a map to guide both employers and candidates on their job-hunting journey. Gathering data and learning from the 2023 trends, Jobseeker helps us understand what the future is made of.

Job market trends of 2023

AI's Domination

Artificial intelligence (AI) has had the most significant impact on the employment landscape in 2023, with searches surging for 'AI jobs' and 'AI skills'.

Initially, the rapid advancement of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT brought fears of industry-spanning job losses. However, as this early panic somewhat subsided, job seekers began to consider the possibilities offered by AI; whether through exploring AI-related careers or upskilling by learning how to leverage the technology.

On a quest for better work-life balance

Many countries have experimented with 'compressed workweeks' in recent years, and search trends indicate a growing desire to move to a 4-day working week from the traditional Monday-to-Friday 9-to-5. Some experts predict that by 2025, up to 80% of global companies will adopt a 4-day working schedule.

Concepts such as hybrid and asynchronous work also remain significant in 2023, indicating that flexibility and work-life balance are high priorities for job seekers. As the working landscape evolves, these factors are increasingly viewed not as benefits but as expectations.

A step towards equality: Skills over background

In 2023, recruiters and hiring managers were increasingly turning to skills-based hiring, a recruitment approach that focuses primarily on a candidate's skills and abilities rather than on traditional credentials like academic qualifications or related work experience.

2023 search trends showed a progression of interest in skills-based hiring between January and December, indicating that both employers and candidates were becoming acutely aware of the merits of this particular method of recruiting talent — where suitability is determined solely by proficiency rather than formal education or career background.

Employees are 'managing up'

By understanding the needs and objectives of their direct line manager, an

employee who 'manages up' is effectively helping their employer to do their job more effectively, ensuring a productive, mutually beneficial relationship.

This approach becomes more important in dynamic work environments or remote work settings, where proactive communication and collaboration are paramount. To showcase their proactivity, job seekers should highlight their strong communication skills, initiative and leadership qualities during the hiring process to complement this workplace trend.

Workplaces are continuing to go global

Search trends across 2023 have also illustrated the increasing globalisation of workforces, with employers progressively dipping into a global talent pool. Remote and asynchronous working practices have made this a possibility for businesses of all sizes, enabling them to access a wider range of skills and experiences from different cultural backgrounds.

Of course, this global approach to hiring may have many advantages for employers — reduced costs, increased time-zone coverage, and access to specialist market knowledge, for instance — but will also offer more opportunities for job seekers, with the promise of working for an overseas employer without the wrench of relocation.

Gen Z workplace trends, according to TikTok

With TikTok being a platform that mainly attracts younger generations, measuring interest in career-related keywords and hashtags provides a good indication of the job market trends that mattered most to Gen Z in 2023. Analysing the most-viewed topics on TikTok in 2023 uncovered a revealing mix of priorities for young workers and job seekers. For example, the hashtag #QuietQuitting, reached 1 billion views this year. The young generation clearly asks for novelty and meaning in the workplace, and is looking for more for more exciting jobs, as shown by the hashtags #BoreOut, #BareMinimumMondays or #LazyGirlJob. To solve these issues, the youth is not in lack on ideas, and even has many claims and propositions. For example, some of the most trending hashtags were #4DayWeek, #HybridWorking, #AIJobs, #WorkplaceWellness, #ManagingUp.

It is crucial for any employer that wants to attract the young generation to also make changes in the way they approach business.

What does 2024 hold for job seekers?

Analysing the workplace trends defining 2023 enables us to paint a picture of what the job market might look like in 2024. Here's what employees and job seekers can expect from the year ahead:

More AI skills please

With AI and machine learning technologies revolutionising the working world in 2023, AI skills will inevitably become more and more desirable in the workplace. That said, the importance of human skills that AI can't yet replicate — critical thinking, creativity, or analytical skills, for example — will also be emphasised.

For many roles, some knowledge of AI applications may become a prerequisite, and it will be increasingly important to stay up to date with advancements and display your technical proficiency in applications. But it may be just as essential to highlight the soft skills that can complement the use of AI in the workplace — such as your ability to build relationships.

Flexibility as a top priority

Many of 2023's key workplace trends centred around flexibility, whether in terms of working location (with hybrid work remaining an important concept) or hours — the idea of a 4-day working week is proving increasingly popular, while asynchronous work is also a key consideration for job seekers, with an increasing number of employers looking to provide a non-restrictive working environment.

This is particularly positive for job seekers looking for global, remote, or flexible work opportunities. If you're searching for a new role in 2024, look for an employer that offers adaptable working practices, and highlights your ability to work independently, communicate asynchronously, and manage your own time during the application and interview process.

Prioritising Wellbeing is Prioritising Productivity

Both Google Trends and TikTok data indicated an increase in the perceived importance of workplace wellness. Strong interest in a shorter working week also highlights the continuing drive for a healthy work-life balance, with employers striving for productivity and efficiency without risking burnout among their workforces.

For those seeking new opportunities in 2024, it will be important to seek out companies and hiring managers who are transparent with their wellbeing packages. Don't be afraid to make a point of this in your interview, either — ask about their benefits and wellness support programs, and stress your ability to work efficiently.

Employers must prioritise engagement

Particularly among the younger members of the workforce, 2023 trends revealed a strong focus on doing less, which might hint at growing disengagement in the workplace — the quiet quitting trend was huge on TikTok, while the idea of the *lazy girl job* (coined earlier this year by Gabrielle Judge, aka antiworkgirlboss on Instagram) also took off in 2023.

With employees also experiencing '*boreout*', it will become more important than ever for employers to ensure their employees are engaged in their work; whether that means prioritising their development or leveraging automation to remove mundane tasks.

As a job seeker in 2024, you should carefully consider whether your skills, values, and characteristics align with any role you're applying for, as a job that's a poor 'fit' will likely lead to you becoming disengaged. As an employee, raise any concerns you have with your employer — they may not realise you're feeling detached or unchallenged.

Ability over background

With interest in skills-based hiring growing in 2023, expect many employers to prioritise your skills over your academic achievements or previous experience in 2024. Aptitude tests may become commonplace as part of a job application or interview, as hiring managers seek a more direct match between a job's requirements and an employee's skills.

For anyone applying for a new role in 2024, it will be important to tailor your *resume* and *cover letter* to highlight specific skills and competencies that align with the job description, using concrete examples and achievements to illustrate your capabilities.

You should also be prepared to showcase these skills in practical assessments or interviews, while continuously developing your skills and staying up to date with industry trends and technologies may give you a significant advantage over other candidates.

The job market in 2024 is set to be shaped by a diverse set of trends, carrying both risk and opportunity for job seekers. From the growing demand for AI skills

to the drive for greater efficiency, job seekers should be prepared to demonstrate not only their technical proficiency and adaptability but also their commitment to personal and professional development. By staying attuned to these trends and adapting accordingly, job seekers can position themselves strongly in a dynamic and ever-changing employment market.

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