

Top recruitment trends destined to make a *big impact* on the workplace in 2023

In the past two years, almost everything in our working lives has changed. With growing pressure on South Africa's economic recovery from increasingly tough circumstances - load shedding, the skills brain drain, quiet quitting/firing and the counteroffer cycle all wreaking havoc on the job market - employers are having to find creative ways to adjust their hiring strategies, business models and working environments to attract and retain talent in a pool that has shrunk since 2020.

 By Dalya Ketz⁹ Jan 2023



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To prepare for 2023, it is vital for business leaders and companies to stay ahead of emerging trends and put measures in place that will tip the scales, from defusing into leveraging the outcomes of such trends. With this in mind, let's take a look how some of these might shape our workplaces over the next 12 months.

1. The four-day work week: we've been having it already

On average, knowledge workers lose two to three hours of work time each day due to pointless meetings, poor technology implementations, and workplace distractions.

“ *In other words, the four-day work week goes unseen because it's masked by outdated working practices.* ”

The new four-day work week is based on the 100-80-100 model, proposed by co-founders of 4 Day Week Global. This model dictates 100% of the pay for 80% of the time in exchange for a commitment to delivering 100% of the output required. A number of South African companies are set to take part in a six-month pilot of the four-day work week in 2023.

Advice: Organisations looking to prevent employee burnout, increase talent attraction and boost employee satisfaction will consider the four-day work week, shifting the conversation from time-based output to productivity-based output.

As more companies realise that the new frontier for competitiveness hinges on quality of life, reduced hours and productivity-focused working, the four-day work week will be the differentiator that gives them the recruitment and retention edge in a formidable candidate-driven labour market.

2. Quiet quitting/quiet firing phenomenon: correcting hustle culture

The main cause of this particular workplace trend is burnout, especially with younger Gen Z professionals in their 20s and the trend of “quiet quitting” reveals how desperately we need a solution to hustle culture. The days of individuals pouring their heart and souls into their work are over. Quiet quitting is not resigning from a job - it simply entails doing exactly what is required (and no more) to meet the job description, while prioritising a work-life balance that places less emphasis on work. On the employer side of this trend is the “quiet firing” phenomenon, which involves making a job so unrewarding that the individual feels compelled to resign.

Obviously this type of employment dynamic is less than ideal, and solving it requires addressing the root of the problem - the placement of the wrong person in the job in the first place.

Advice: Hiring companies must understand the importance of culture and that the employment relationship needs to be based on more than a salary. This means they must offer potential candidates more than just money.

To make a big impact in 2023, companies must focus on:

- Employee wellness within a clear, unified company culture that provides a safe space for individuals to feel a sense of belonging and engagement.
- Rethinking brand purpose to find meaningful ways to foster individual career development while focusing on the wellness of the business as a whole.
- Finding ways to make employees feel valued, which is one of the most effective ways to guard against quiet quitting.

A culture of appreciation leads to a culture of quality output. As such, it's important for companies to create work environments of reciprocity. This is where a recruitment partner can effectively mitigate quiet quitting (and consequently the need for quiet firing) by helping client companies to find the right candidates from the outset. The individual chosen to a particular role at a company must not just tick the boxes from a job description angle, but also from a personal and company culture view.

3. Employee retention for millennials and Gen Z: From lip service to making a difference

According to the [2022 Deloitte Millennial Survey](#), the younger workforce component is disillusioned by the current political situation of the world, finding most companies disproportionately driven by greed and profit. In 2023, the desire for work with purpose will increase, and millennial and Gen Z employees will seek out work that matters.

“ To improve engagement and retention, and avoid a social media backlash, employers will need to tie the organisation's mission and values to employees' personal principles: achieving something larger and making a bigger impact than profit. ”

Advice: For businesses that want to grow, employee retention is just as important as recruitment. And having evidenced a uncompromising set of values and a willingness to move jobs, special attention must be paid to younger employees.

These generations can be more effectively retained by a company that provides a flexible approach to work, opportunity for mentorship and clear personal career development, within a strong culture of diversity and inclusion.

4. Breaking the counter-offer cycle: work is more than money

Digital skills are still fairly new, and while many individuals are in training to learn new skills, they are not yet able to meet the demand. This leads to job-hopping for skilled individuals as they are headhunted, which results in companies counter-offering with more money, when they attempt to resign. As this cycle repeats every few months, it creates an unsustainable situation in which salaries for certain skills have become over-inflated.

Advice: Companies can no longer ignore employee retention, particularly where they are aware of the fact that certain skills are difficult (if not impossible) to replace.

“ Counter-offering is not an effective retention strategy, and more effort is required to create the kind of working environment that people are not eager to leave. More emphasis needs to be placed on internal skills development opportunities, as recruitment is not the only way to acquire skills. It is an immediate solution to filling a particular vacancy and should be used in conjunction with other strategies that seek to widen the skills pool to the benefit of the company to rebalance the industry as a whole and address the counter-offer conundrum before the bubble bursts. ”

5. The rise of the side hustle: doing what it takes to make ends meet

In the face of economic uncertainty and the rapidly escalating cost of living, there is an increased need for workers to generate a second (or even third) income. The younger generations are not having their needs met by employment, and they're seeking alternatives on their own steam, instead of expecting a handout. At the core of their approach to work is a desire as old as capitalism itself – to be financially independent, which will enable them to opt out of old-fashioned ideas, such as having a boss or subscribing to the notion of full-time employment entirely.

“ Instead of asking whether these youngsters have unrealistic expectations and questioning their work ethic, it's far more productive to create a working environment that enables them to seek their financial independence in a manner that complements their job, instead of conflicting with it. ”

Advice: Companies can create a work environment that encourages entrepreneurialism, by allowing these workers the flexibility to explore their options when their work commitments have been met. Give employees the tools to prepare for the financial future - with guidance in areas such as healthcare finance, retirement planning and debt counselling.

Conclusion: Prioritising people over profits is at the root of addressing all workplace challenges

Making a BIG IMPACT in 2023 means remembering that the most important part of any workplace and any company is its people. Employees want recognition and opportunity. They want the chance to improve themselves, and they want their contribution to the success of their company to be recognised. They want to work for companies that actually care about tackling global issues like climate change, diversity, equality and world peace. Companies that provide the right conditions for people to live their best lives, both at work and out in the world, will become sought-after employment destinations with their choice of the top talent across the generational brackets.

ABOUT DALYA KETZ

Dalya Ketz is the Managing Director at Gcubed Boutique Recruitment. Dalya is the 'leader' of our Gcubed pack, and what a pack it is - a highly qualified and efficient team of experience talent acquisition specialists. Dalya has over 15 years specialist recruitment, headhunting and HR experience which is the essence of Gcubed: building strong, long-lasting client and candidate relationships.
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