

Evolution of recruitment trends in 2023 - and what to expect in 2024

By [Maggie Mbonsammy](#)

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The pandemic years created an undeniable wave of shifts not only in the world of work but in the way people and companies recruit too. Very shortly after most of the world adjusted to remote work, workplace trends like 'The Great Resignation' and 'quiet quitting' started to come into play - and recruiters had to adjust accordingly.



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2023 has seen a level of stability come back into the way companies recruit, with a number of defined trends leading the charge. Things like understanding applicants' desires for hybrid work structures, more flexibility and adaptability from employers, as well as an emphasis on healthier workplaces that offer less stressful environments, mental health benefits or programmes, have all become front and centre considerations for recruiters. And one thing that has been an overarching theme for the year is empathy – it can and does play a big role in good recruiting.

Building on the foundations that this year has paved for recruitment and the way in which companies connect and interact with candidates, 2024 is set to be a very interesting year, with many new trends expected to come into play.

Here are three stand-out trends that I believe will serve to not only reshape recruitment in the new year but for many years to come.

1. Engaging candidates proactively

For most businesses, recruitment is a reactive job. In general, recruiters go looking for talent after a position has become available.

Proactive recruitment sees searches happen before the position is needed and it has strong focuses on sourcing, engaging and attracting the right candidates. This allows recruiters to establish contact with candidates and build relationships with them before the panic of having to fill the position immediately sets in.

Although this kind of recruiting is already happening in South Africa, particularly on platforms like LinkedIn, I do believe that we will see more of this in 2024, particularly in the digital and marketing talent realms.

I also think that local recruiters will start broadening their social horizons and begin working on other platforms like Instagram and Twitter to find high calibre talent – international tech companies are already doing this very successfully.



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2. Recruiting for Gen Z

2024 will undoubtedly see more Generation Z candidates entering the workforce, and when it comes to this group of individuals, no old rules apply. What recruiters need to come to terms with up front is that Gen Zs aren't anything like the generations of workers before them, they work to live, not the other way around.

In order to attract and retain them, companies and recruiters alike need to be open to collaborating with them – instead of going in with instructions and hard and fast rules around a job, it may be worth asking for feedback and having an honest conversation.

Salaries and benefits can only get you so far with Gen Zs. This group of new workers have other priorities, including mental and physical well-being, personal and social fulfilment, and a drive for a more conscious employer that carefully considers not only its people but inclusivity and the environment too.

Recruiters in 2024 are going to have to change gears to catch the eye of this new generation, and I'm excited to see how this comes to life next year.

3. Don't forget the gig economy

For those who aren't already aware, the gig economy refers to a network of temporary positions offered by small businesses or big organisations to independent or contract workers who fill varying positions for short terms.

Gig economy workers are usually high-skilled, high-earning freelancers looking for more independence, freedom and higher pay or lower-skilled, lower-wage workers looking to set their own schedule and live a more flexible life.

So, what exactly does the gig economy have to offer businesses and recruiters in 2024?

Gig economy workers are a perfect solution for adding expertise to a team for a short stint or making a short-term

project successful, without having to hire any permanent hands.

Ultimately, businesses operate differently now, budgets have often been cut and some clients are only willing to sign up for short periods, so it's crucial that recruiters change focus in 2024 to see the value of gig economy workers.

But recruiters must acknowledge that gig economy workers aren't attracted to the same things that permanent candidates are. They aren't drawn to traditional perks; they are unconventional and aren't always interested in a company's culture. What attracts them is an interesting project, a new piece of tech or a chance to work on a meaningful campaign.

The great thing about gig economy workers is that they are always candidates, no matter how much work they have on their plate. They tend to always be open to another opportunity or the next step in their journey. This sets them apart for conventional candidates and opens up a whole range of opportunities for recruiters to leverage in the new year and for years to come.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maggie Moonsammy, sales manager at Strider Digital.

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