



RECRUITMENT TRENDS 2024

Citrus Connect Recruitment



OVERVIEW



In 2024, the recruitment landscape is increasingly candidate-driven, with top talent having more options than ever before. Slow or impersonal hiring processes risk losing skilled professionals to faster, more decisive competitors. To attract the best, companies must focus on speed, personal engagement, and crafting compelling employer brands that highlight why candidates should choose them.

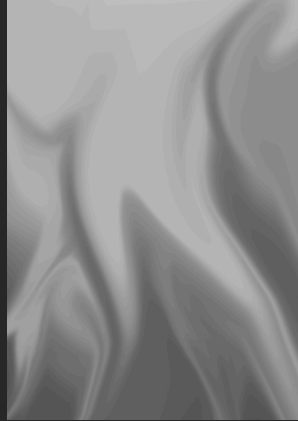


FURTHER INFORMATION

Additionally, traditional CV-based hiring is being replaced by a skills-based approach that prioritises adaptability, problem-solving, and potential. By focusing on skills rather than experience, companies can widen their talent pool and find hidden gems. However, as AI tools become more common in recruitment, businesses must ensure their ethical use, avoiding bias and enhancing transparency to maintain trust with candidates.

Beyond hiring, employee experience and flexibility are key to retaining top talent. A supportive, engaging work environment, coupled with remote and flexible working options, has become essential. Additionally, a genuine commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) is no longer just a nice-to-have but a business imperative that drives better decision-making, innovation, and long-term success.

CANDIDATE - CENTRIC MARKET



Problem: Top candidates have choices in 2024. Slow, impersonal hiring processes mean those stars will sign elsewhere while you're still debating between resumes.

The REC's Overcoming Shortages report found that a 10% surge in demand for staff across the economy, and the labour market restricted by shortages, could lead to a 1.2% fall in expected GDP and productivity by 2027 – costing the economy anywhere between £30 billion and £39 billion every year.

Two-thirds of large employers (67%) and more than half medium-sized employers reported shortages of candidates. But the problem is most acute among small businesses (fewer than 50 employees) with more than three quarters (81%) experiencing difficulties recruiting.- The Recruitment and Employment Confederation

Speed Sells: Forget making candidates jump through hoops. Can you get them to a first interview within 48 hours of a promising application? That kind of responsiveness gets you noticed! Top talent isn't passively waiting around – other companies are courting them aggressively. In 2024, being decisive means getting the best people. When you move quickly, you set yourself apart from hesitant competitors. You might just land the candidate everyone else is dragging their feet on.

Upgrade Your Audition: Your website and job postings are a sales pitch for your company. Do they convey the energy and values that make top talent WANT to work there? Not just benefits, but why your team is different.

Talented candidates aren't just considering salary, they crave a great workplace. In 2024, companies with a dull employer brand will be ignored. In a tight market, being the company everyone WANTS to work for gives you a massive edge in recruiting the top performers.

Respect is a Two-Way Street: Ghosting candidates is a sure way to get a bad reputation in competitive markets. Even with rejections, timely, kind communication builds your employer's brand for the future. Skilled candidates talk, and forums like Glassdoor exist for a reason. In 2024, your reputation as an employer precedes you, making it easy (or impossible!) to find your next hire. Treat even unsuccessful candidates well, and you might have a future star (or referrer). It's about playing the long game.

SKILLS-BASED APPROACH



Problem: Sticking to the "perfect resume" in 2024 means missing out on stellar candidates who don't fit the traditional mold. Skills are the true predictors of success, especially with the rapid pace of change across industries. Stats:


HR Daily Advisor Writes:

"Early adopters of skill-based hiring in 2023 saw significant returns in KPIs such as reduced time to fill open positions, cost per hire, and an increase in diversity. The future of talent acquisition will likely see many teams carry skills-based hiring into 2024."

- **Skills Sleuthing:** Before you post that job ad, make a list of the MUST-HAVE skills. Be ruthless! Are they adaptable? Data-savvy? Focus on those, not just years at a similar company. Resumes are often full of buzzwords, but skills are what get results. It's how you avoid hiring someone who's just done the same mediocre job for ten years. When you're open to hidden talent, you expand your pool exponentially. You might find the diamond in the rough your competitors with rigid requirements will miss.
- **Prove It With Assessments:** Don't just trust a resume, get some data! There are tons of online skill assessments specifically designed for sales roles. These tests uncover strengths and weaknesses quickly. They also help mitigate unconscious bias since you're evaluating everyone fairly. Data-backed hiring decisions take the guesswork out of it. You'll hire the person with the POTENTIAL to excel, not just the best "on paper" candidate.
- **Think Outside the Box:** Some of the best salespeople come from completely different fields. Highlight transferable skills like communication and problem-solving in your outreach. Adaptability is CRUCIAL in the ever-shifting 2024 market. Someone with the right foundation can learn the specific product, but you can't teach hustle. This is how you get innovative thinkers on your team. Diverse backgrounds mean better solutions to complex challenges, which drives growth.

ETHICAL AI IN RECRUITMENT

PwC research shows global GDP could be up to 14% higher in 2030 as a result of AI by 2030



Problem: AI bias is a real concern for job seekers and employers alike. In 2024, companies can't just blindly trust their tech tools to make fair and equitable hiring decisions.

"There are a number of principles that staffing companies must guarantee they are following so that they aren't exposing their business to potentially discriminatory systems or inadvertently implementing AI that doesn't follow the required functions or intentions that these tools should be used for" Tania Bowers, Global Public Policy Director at APSC

"Additionally, inherent to these technologies is a risk of digital exclusion for applicants who may not be proficient in, or have access to, technology due to age, disability, socio-economic status or religion," ['Responsible AI in Recruitment guide'](#) published by the UK government's Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

Get Proactive with Transparency: Do you use AI in your screening process? Own it! A brief statement on your website about your commitment to ethical practices builds trust with candidates. Top talent is wary of "black box" hiring. Showing you're aware of AI risks makes your company more attractive to diverse candidates. Many companies are still scrambling to figure this out in 2024. Being ahead of the curve on ethical AI makes you stand out as an employer.

Play Auditor, Not Just User: Don't just trust that your AI vendor has everything figured out. Ask tough questions about how their algorithms are designed, and regularly check your outcomes for any red flags. AI is designed by humans, and those biases can be baked in unknowingly. It's your responsibility to ensure your tools are working how they should. This protects you from hiring missteps that can impact your reputation or even open you up to legal trouble down the line.

Remember, AI is a Tool: Amazing tech can streamline the process, but don't let it replace human judgment. Use those AI insights alongside your team's skills to make the best possible hiring decisions. The best candidate might have a messy resume but ace the skills assessment. You don't want your AI accidentally filtering them out! Combining the best of tech and human expertise gives you an edge in finding those hidden gems and making truly informed decisions.

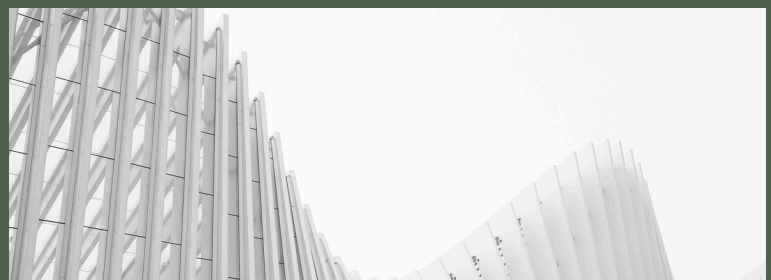
EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE



Problem: A positive employee experience isn't some HR buzzword anymore, it's table stakes for business success. In 2024, sales teams especially thrive (or fail) based on company culture and their sense of support.

In 2023, the mental health of nearly half of UK employees (47%) suffered due to financial uncertainty linked to the rising cost of living, according to [ACAS](#).

Forget surface-level "fun stuff": In 2024, a meaningful employee experience comes down to feeling valued, supported, and equipped to succeed. Whether they're in an office, in the field, or a hybrid setup, employees want to know their contributions matter. Invest in benefits that genuinely address their needs, and the "perks" will be better engagement and long-term loyalty. Your team craves stability and recognition from their employers. Benefits that help weather tough times, or even just show you understand their struggles, matter more than ever. Deskless workers are often overlooked when it comes to feeling valued, despite being the backbone of many industries. Latest research shows 51% of UK deskless employees say they feel expendable by their employer, and 32% believe they're regarded as inferior by their corporate, desk-based colleagues. Plus, only 10% feel they have access to the right technology tools to keep them connected and empowered at work. - the HR Director A strong employee experience in 2024 means actively making those in field roles feel like equal stakeholders in the company's success.



MANAGERS MAKE OR BREAK IT:

Even an awesome company culture can be ruined by a toxic boss. Do you invest in training managers to be effective leaders, not just taskmaster? It's a cliché for a reason: people don't leave companies, they leave bad managers. Sales teams especially need support and development for long-term success. When your top sales reps feel their manager has their back, that energy translates into results.



OPEN DOOR, OPEN MIND:

Don't wait for exit interviews to tell you what's wrong. Build regular channels for honest feedback, so you can address issues before they lead to resignations. Even the best workplaces have room to improve. Showing you're genuinely responsive to employee concerns builds trust and loyalty in any market. Companies stuck in a "we've always done it this way" mindset lose their best people. Proactive feedback shows you're committed to doing things better.

REMOTE & FLEXIBLE WORK



Problem: Companies can't pretend remote and flexible work options are just a pandemic blip. Those clinging to outdated "butts in seats" models will struggle big time.

71% of workers view a flexible working pattern as important to them when considering a new role,

71%

69% say the ability to work remotely is important.

69%

From 6th April 2024, the newly approved [Employment Rights Bill \(Flexible Working\)](#) will go through. The new regulations will mean that:

- Employees can make a flexible working request twice every 12 months (previously this was one).
- Employers need to respond to each request within two months (previously this was two).
- If employers are rejecting a request, they must discuss the reasoning behind the decision with the employee as well as the impact that their flexi-working could have on the company and how this could be limited.
- Employees will no longer be required to have at least 26 weeks' service to be entitled to make a flexible working request.

TECH FOR TRUST

Old-school managers worry that remote work means slacking off. Invest in the right tools to track progress and collaboration, so productivity isn't just about who's clocked in at the office. When you can measure results, location matters less. This lets you tap into a geographically wider talent pool for your sales team. Not everyone thrives in a traditional 9-5. Flexible options are how you attract those top performers who just won't commit to the old grind.

RE-THINK THE MANAGER MINDSET :

Managing a distributed team takes a different skill set. Are YOUR leaders equipped to build trust, communicate effectively, and evaluate success remotely? Micromanaging kills morale even faster virtually. Investing in manager training is crucial to making this work long-term. Companies with strong virtual leadership have a huge edge in finding and retaining talent – not to mention saving on office space!

BUILD COMMUNITY, DON'T LET IT HAPPEN BY CHANCE :

All those hallway chats that create team bonds disappear when people are remote. Be intentional about virtual social events and fostering collaboration. Sales thrives on camaraderie. Just because they're not together physically doesn't mean your team should feel isolated. A strong virtual culture is how you avoid people feeling like siloed freelancers. That shared sense of purpose drives results.

FOCUS ON DE&I

Problem: In 2024, DE&I isn't just about compliance or being "nice". Companies stuck in a performative mindset are missing out on the true benefits and face increasing risks.

Age diversity and multi-generational working are gaining traction because they recognise the values of diverse perspectives, experiences and skill sets that different age groups bring to the table. Tailoring benefits and support to accommodate various different stages of a person's career is a fantastic way to foster inclusion and maximise productivity. -
wmpeople.

Ditch the One-And-Done Training: DE&I is about ongoing dialogue, not checking a box. Offer opportunities for deeper learning, where teams can challenge assumptions and address underlying biases impacting their work. True change takes more than a video module. McKinsey found inclusive teams make better decisions up to 87% of the time – that's a direct profit boost. Companies known for surface-level DE&I won't attract diverse top talent. Authentic commitment builds the kind of teams that outperform.

Metrics Matter, Not Just Intentions: Track your progress at every stage of the hiring funnel. Where do candidates from certain backgrounds drop out? Data reveals where unconscious (or conscious) bias is a barrier. Without hard numbers, it's easy to fool yourself your company's doing great on DE&I. The data keeps you honest and accountable. This is how you spot the systemic issues holding you back. It's also how you demonstrate real improvement to attract top talent and critical clients.

Leadership that Reflects Your Values: Do those in charge all look the same? Actively develop leaders from diverse backgrounds. Representation isn't just symbolism, it drives everything from product design to sales success. Diverse leadership translates to a wider range of perspectives, ultimately making your company more resilient to market shifts. In 2024, companies with homogenous leadership teams will struggle to relate to an ever-evolving customer base. Get ahead of the curve.

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THANK YOU!



Get in touch with us to start your journey toward outstanding results.



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