

# THE RESOURCE

# HR INSIGHTS

VOL. XIII, ISSUE III

magazine

*from the eyes of industry leaders*



UNLEASHING A  
GREAT **HIDDEN**  
**LEADERSHIP SKILL**

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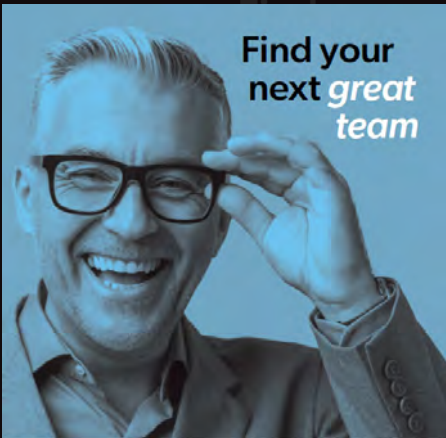
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# THE RESOURCE

## *can show you the way*

We are all searching for it — the next opportunity to learn, grow, thrive. Whether you are a company looking for your next gamechangers, eager-to-learn up-and-comers, and team players. Or you are an individual looking for the next step forward in income, career or life. We are here with a different approach that combines unique insight into the available workforce and an in-depth understanding of organizations, culture, and employee needs.

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# WHAT TO DO IF HYBRID ISN'T WORKING

BY WAYNE TURMEL



**H**ow's your team's hybrid working arrangement working out? Is it better or worse than you expected? After the pandemic, many companies settled on a hybrid way of working. Some people worked mostly remotely, while others worked in the office. Others had no definite location requirement, just a minimum number of days they had to be with their team.

Some organizations were extremely methodical about how they created this new arrangement. Most weren't, and it shows. Too many organizations saw this new way of functioning as a compromise at best and a lose-lose at worst. "If we don't let them work from home sometimes, they'll quit!" Neither party is happy, and they all feel trapped.

## COMMON COMPLAINTS

Among the common complaints organizations and their employees have are:

- » Communication snags.
- » Productivity challenges.
- » Unfairness (or perceived unfairness) in how people are treated by the manager.
- » A lack of engagement and team cohesion.



## SO, WHAT DO WE DO?

Before making radical changes to the working environment, I want you to recognize two critical factors:

**1. Forgive yourself.** Few, if any, companies have done this before and, everyone's figuring it out as they go along. Pandemic-induced diaspora recovery required nearly every organization to make assumptions about what would work and what wouldn't. Employees' lives and attitudes had changed in 18 months or more and they were working in new ways. Not unexpectedly, some of those assumptions were correct and others were way off. Some people missed the old way of working, others didn't. Afterward, the stress of commuting seemed so much worse. And people realized there was some quiet, focused work that's easier done away from the team. Forgive yourself for not getting it 100% right the first time.

**2. As best you can, define exactly what isn't working.**

It's not enough to say, "Everybody's unhappy, so we need to change again." If you don't know exactly what you're trying to fix, you're no better off than you were at the beginning. For example, a specific, identifiable problem may be that not enough good collaboration is happening. But just demanding everyone come into the office all the time may or may not be the right answer. Getting it wrong will be stressful, expensive, and just plain uncomfortable for everyone.

Most organizations did the best they could in an unfamiliar situation. But just because you created a policy doesn't mean you have to stick with it if it's not working. It also doesn't mean you necessarily need to make sweeping, dramatic changes either. Don't just blow it all up and say, "Everyone back in the office." Odds are what you need to do is make small, incremental adjustments to the processes and work agreements.

## CAN HYBRID WORK BE SALVAGED?

Here are some ways to make the necessary changes that may still make hybrid work successful:

**Choose one problem at a time.**

Let's say the challenge is that people aren't getting the answers they need quickly in order to be productive. Would everyone being in the same place at the same time solve that problem? Would it create other unintended consequences? What if you looked at solutions like using asynchronous tools (Skype, Microsoft Teams) more effectively? That's a training and technology solution, not a workplace location issue. Maybe the team isn't effectively communicating their work status and availability on a given day. Ratcheting up how you use shared calendars and being vigilant about availability notifications can help. It may be possible to fix a challenge if you have the right data.

**Work as a team to find the best solutions.**

Most companies that are successful with hybrid work don't dictate policy from the top down. Different functions, geographical regions, and teams have unique circumstances. What works great for one group may not be as successful for another. Shared purpose and goals inspire people to find effective, viable solutions to adversity. Candid, sometimes difficult conversations are often the best way to find the answers that work best.

**If you're a leader, use your one-on-ones to ask the tough questions.**

Too often, leaders are blind to what's going on around them. That's not a judgment—it's true of all humans. Proximity bias, for example, is a natural phenomenon that can be overcome if you're aware it's happening. When you have one-on-one conversations with team members, make sure you're not just handling the items on your "to-do" list. Ask probing questions about their productivity and engagement. What's working well? What can be better? Do they have any ideas for improvements? You might not be thrilled with the answers, but it's best to kill dragons in the egg rather than fight them later.

**Get (and interpret) data consistently.**

Most of the problems that lead to crises were a long time coming. If individuals are experiencing communication challenges, don't just assume they're alone. Check in with the rest of the team early and often. If productivity is a challenge, use data to identify the source of the problem. Then make small tweaks rather than dramatic, sweeping changes.

**Think "pilot before policy."**

When doing something you've never done before, it's a great idea to pick small projects. Think of this first try as a pilot that will be reexamined and tweaked. This is different than creating a policy. Policies tend to go wide, get written into procedure, and then become difficult to adjust as needed.

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE UP

Hybrid work is a relatively new phenomenon. The odds of getting all the answers right the first time aren't (and weren't) great. Don't beat yourself up. Also, don't assume that this experiment will never work just because pieces of it aren't living up to your expectations. Small, incremental changes are less dramatic and traumatic than ditching the whole idea of a hybrid workplace. ■

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# HERE'S HOW TO SPEED UP YOUR HIRING PROCESS

BY HAILEY TIELKEMEIER

## W

hen you're looking to fill a role, chances are you have a critical need for that role. Maybe this person will be the key to reaching your yearly business goals. Perhaps they'll unlock a new process to help your team work faster and smarter. Whatever the reason for opening the role, you want to get that new hire in the door as quickly as possible so they can hit the ground running.

But the hiring process should also ensure you get the right person in the door—one who has the chops to tackle the job responsibilities, embodies your company culture, and will push your organization forward on its mission. On the other hand, hiring the wrong people can hurt your team's morale and bottom line since employers spend between \$7,500 and \$28,000 in hard costs<sup>1</sup> to find and onboard each new employee.

So, where's the balance between a quick hiring process and an effective hiring process? It's important to move quickly, but speed will do you no good if a bad hire costs your company more time and money than the hiring process itself.

By implementing a few key strategies and hiring tools into your recruiting efforts, you can speed up your hiring process timeline without missing out on the best person for the job.

### HOW LONG DOES THE HIRING PROCESS TAKE?

According to a report from The Josh Bersin Company, the average time-to-hire (the number of days from when the job was listed to when the candidate accepted the offer) has risen to 44 days<sup>2</sup>. Of course, this can vary depending on the role you're hiring. An executive-level role will likely take more time to fill than an entry-level position will.

Other external factors may also play a part in the hiring process timeline. Candidates may not be actively looking for new roles during the winter holiday season or the busy summer months. And depending on the state of the economy, you may be

flooded with candidates to choose from or have to roll out the red carpet to make a great impression.

While 44 days serves as a solid baseline, it's essential to set realistic hiring timeline goals based on all known factors, including the urgency of hiring for the specific role.

### WHAT HIRING PROCESS STEPS WILL SPEED UP THE TIMELINE? (AND ATTRACT QUALITY CANDIDATES)

An effective recruitment process uses many strategies to reel in top-quality candidates. Below, we outline some hiring process steps to implement as you work toward a faster hiring timeline while maintaining a pipeline of qualified candidates.

#### 1. Write a Job Description That Attracts Top Talent

The best way to change your hiring process is to start at the beginning: how you're talking about the open position. How to write a job description is one of the first things any HR pro learns, but many times, a job description isn't fully leveraged as the powerful candidate-attraction tool it can be.

When a position needs filling, hiring managers are often too stressed about finding a candidate to slow down and think about what kind of candidate they really want and need. In the interest of time, they may not spend enough time developing an effective job description, and the result is either a flood of unqualified candidates or a trickle of candidates who can meet super-specific demands.

**Here are three tactics to consider as you generate a job description:**

- ▶ **List five core skills:** While you should be clear about the critical expertise needed for the job, don't get overly specific, or you could risk people not applying because they perceive themselves to be underqualified.

*Not-so-fun fact:* Men will apply for a job when they meet just 60% of qualifications, whereas women need to be closer to 100% to feel confident enough to apply<sup>3</sup>.

- ▶ **Provide a breakdown:** Explain what this person will spend most of their time doing, which teams they'll be working closely with, and what their general day-to-day will look like.
- ▶ **Discuss markers of success:** What does a job well done look like? What types of metrics will this person need to track? What will they report on?

By creating a job description that accurately reflects the position, along with preferred and critical qualifications, you cut out a massive amount of time you might otherwise spend screening. On the other hand, omitting qualifications that aren't critical can open your talent pool to non-traditional candidates or candidates that could grow into the position.

#### 2. Eliminate Unnecessary Steps in Your Hiring Process Timeline

Not only will cutting out unnecessary steps speed things up for your hiring team, but you'll also be less likely to lose candidates along the way. According to SHRM, 92% of job seekers abandon online applications because of their length and complexity<sup>4</sup>. That 92% doesn't account for candidates who may drop off because of slow communication, extensive interview processes, or having to jump through too many hoops.

When evaluating the steps of your hiring process, consider these questions:

- ▶ What does each step accomplish?
- ▶ Which steps take the longest?
- ▶ Which steps lead to bottlenecks in the hiring process?
- ▶ Where do candidates typically choose to exit the process?

By carefully auditing your process, you can determine which phases are moving you forward and which are holding you—and potential candidates—back.

### 3. Leverage Hiring Tools

Shave time off your hiring process and increase efficiency by automating key workflows. When everything is automatic, no one has to wait around to be told what's next. An applicant tracking system (ATS) can take menial tasks out of your hands so you can focus on what's really important in the hiring process: the people. An ATS can carry the load for you by providing:

- ▶ A branded, pre-built careers page.
- ▶ Automatic job postings to job sites. Candidate keyword search and filtering
- ▶ Automated workflows so your hiring team knows what to do and when to do it.
- ▶ A collaboration hub for the hiring team.
- ▶ Email and offer letter templates that auto-populate candidate and job info.

### 4. Set Hiring Timeline Goals with Your Hiring Team

At the beginning of the recruitment process, set an ideal hiring timeline with your hiring team, including the hiring manager. Create milestones and slate out due dates so everyone is on the same page about what needs to happen—and when. Consider setting timeline goals for the following hiring process steps:

- ▶ Write the job description
- ▶ Post the job description
- ▶ Schedule interviews
- ▶ Complete interviews
- ▶ Debrief as a hiring team
- ▶ Narrow down your top candidates
- ▶ Send an offer letter

### 5. Make the Interview Count

After you've screened your candidates, you'll want to narrow down the pool even further by interviewing them individually. Many organizations lose candidates during the interview process because of bad interviewing practices.

**Let's look at a few of the most common interview pitfalls here:**

#### *Too Many Cooks in the Kitchen*

It might seem important to have every department head provide input on each candidate for the graphic designer position. But think about this: are all 10 of those individuals ever going to agree? By involving too many stakeholders, you may be creating an impasse. A better way to gain group approval is to



take input from people at the beginning as you're crafting the job description, then leave a small group as the actual decision-makers.

#### **Ineffective Questions**

It might be a good icebreaker to ask a candidate what their spirit animal is, but it won't give you much insight into how well they'll perform the job. To make each interview as comprehensive and meaningful as possible, use the targeted job description as a point of reference for what to ask in the interview.

#### **No Structure**

When Manager A says she liked the first candidate the most, does she have a good reason? Effective feedback must go beyond gut feelings and hunches. And your interviews need structure if they're going to fairly evaluate different candidates and eliminate unconscious bias. Consider preparing a list of questions and scorecards for each hiring manager before the interview process begins. Each hiring manager in the interview can then rank each candidate on elements such as culture fit, skill set, and whatever else is essential. By sticking to the same questions and using a consistent rating system, you can compare apples to apples (and leave the oranges out of it).

#### **Poor Follow-Up**

It's not enough to put candidates through an interview, hand out scorecards to the managers, and hope it all comes together. To make the most of your hiring process timeline, you have to follow up with managers and candidates while the interview is still fresh in their minds. Give hiring managers a chance to make notes and debrief from the interviews and keep candidates informed on the next steps. (Reminder: an ATS can help you automate those workflows!)

### 6. Keep the Communication Channels Open

There's no faster way to drive someone away than to give them radio silence.

Schedule communication from the very start so they know:

- ▶ How long the application will take
- ▶ When you've received their application
- ▶ When they can expect to hear back
- ▶ How long each step will probably take

Transparency will make for a much better application experience and encourage candidates to stick around for the entire process, even if you can't move quite as fast as your competitors.

Along with communication, there needs to be a sense of individual attention—especially for those candidates who make it further through the process. Interviewing is stressful, but making candidates feel welcome and comfortable means they'll be more themselves during the interview. Remember: we're all humans here!

### 7. Maintain and Widen Your Talent Pool

Imagine a world where you open a job listing and already have the perfect candidate lined up. It may sound like a dream, but it can be a reality when you maintain a robust talent pipeline. How often have you told a candidate that you'd keep their resume on file but never looked at it again? You could be housing a goldmine of qualified candidates in your files—ones that would happily consider another opportunity with you if they were impressed by the recruiting process before.

Beyond providing a stellar hiring experience so that candidates want to come back, you can widen your talent pool by including internal candidates, candidates with criminal records who are re-entering the workforce, and other non-traditional workers. Consider implementing diversity recruiting tactics to ensure your company is welcoming and considerate of people with different backgrounds and needs. Doing so will lower the barrier to entry when it comes to candidates applying, which will open you up to a wide range of candidates you otherwise would have missed out on.

### PUT YOURSELF IN CANDIDATES' SHOES

When it comes to improving and speeding up your hiring and recruiting process, the best way is to experience it firsthand. If you improve your process, have your hiring managers "apply" and walk through the new steps along with you. If all of you find certain steps confusing or lengthy, chances are your candidates do, too. Identify where you can eliminate cumbersome procedures, streamline work, and improve communication.

By making changes like the ones outlined above, you'll save your organization considerable time and money while sweeping the best candidates off their feet. ■

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# ENHANCE THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE WITH YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

BY RACHEL FINDLAY



**T**he landscape for skilled talent is competitive, and it's never been more important to build an engaging experience that your candidates resonate with. But are employers hitting the mark with European candidates?

This year's European Talent Experience Report<sup>1</sup> explores the experience candidates go through as they search and apply for jobs at some of Europe's biggest corporations. As it turns out, these employers are falling short and run a risk of losing top talent for their organizations.

This research got me thinking about what candidates want, and how our learnings from the report can be applied globally. Here are a few actionable strategies you can take to enhance the experience candidates have with your employer brand and recruiting efforts.

## UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL WITH AN EFFECTIVE CAREER SITE

Your career site is a pivotal touchpoint for candidates looking to find out what it's really like to work for your organization. Across the board, we see that candidates are

more likely to apply for a role if your career site is easy to use and provides candidates with the information they are looking for. But the data shows that only 21% of job descriptions even mention if a job is remote, hybrid or in the office.

Candidates want to know what they are in for before applying to a company. Without providing simple details about the type of work, it's hard to expect them to engage. Highlighting key details of a role creates a transparent and inviting platform for candidates to engage with your opportunities.



Your career site is a pivotal touchpoint for candidates looking to find out **what it's really like** to work for your organization.

### EMBRACING SIMPLICITY AND AUTHENTICITY WITH VIDEO CONTENT

To keep candidates interested, offer them a glimpse into your company culture. Often, a simple video from an employee walking through their day-to-day is exactly what they want to see. Yet only 4% of companies are currently using videos on their career site.

With video, candidates get to see the person they will be working with and a better sense of who they will be working for, and employers can get content that resonates with talent in front of them in a fast and engaging way. It's a win-win.

### BRIDGING THE GENDER PAY GAP THROUGH SALARY TRANSPARENCY

This year, new EU regulations are coming into play, and employers will legally be required to share salary ranges for their open roles.

Salary transparency helps level the playing field for all candidates and makes for a fair pay structure. Embracing salary transparency not only upholds equity but it streamlines the recruitment process, demonstrating a commitment to fairness and inclusivity. It also sets expectations between the employer and candidate, saving both parties time in case their expectations do not align. Applying for jobs is time-consuming and candidates have to know that it's worth their while.

To achieve true gender equality

in the workplace, it is crucial that employers are transparent when it comes to the salary, and this year's report showed that corporations are falling short – only 9% currently share the salary in the job posting.

### USING TECHNOLOGY TO REMOVE BARRIERS TO APPLY

It can be hard for candidates to juggle looking for a new role alongside the responsibilities of everyday life, and lengthy application processes don't help. Our U.S. data<sup>2</sup> shows that candidates want tools that minimize the time it takes them to search and apply for a role. Forty-four percent of candidates in the U.S. appreciate getting recommendations for relevant open positions, and 43% even said they would provide their CV to a potential employer to get relevant job recommendations based on their skills and experience. Making things easier for candidates is key in driving them to apply for your roles.

### FOSTERING CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION FOR LASTING IMPACT

According to this year's report, nearly 60% of companies fail to follow up with candidates after they apply for a role, and of the corporations that do send feedback, the average time it takes is 8.7 days.

Often being faced with large quantities of applicants, it's no surprise that many recruiters and HR leaders like myself struggle to find the time to send personal feedback to candidates. But, it is also understandable for candidates to expect a level of communication from companies they have applied to. I cannot emphasize the importance of

creating customized rejection email templates that you send on a weekly basis.

And even better if you can automate this. Using automation platforms, recruiters can set up their criteria as well as automated email templates for candidates explaining why they may not have been the right fit for the role. Whether it's lack of experience or a difference in salary expectation, candidates want real feedback that can help them in their job search, even if your company is not the one for them.

Since implementing an automation system, I have had candidates thank me for taking the time to say "no." Making candidates feel supported throughout the recruiting journey, even if they've been unsuccessful, does make a huge difference. You never know, your silver medal candidate now may be your gold medalist for your next position, so make sure to keep communicating with talent before, during and after they've applied.

### BUILDING A LASTING IMPRESSION OF YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

In today's digital landscape, your recruiting process often serves as the first point of contact for candidates interacting with your employer brand. So, making it a positive experience is essential in shaping a lasting impression that resonates beyond the application process. ■

*Rachel Findlay is a content creator for iCIMS, a leading provider of innovative Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) talent-acquisition solutions that help businesses win the war for top talent. To learn more about how iCIMS can help your organization, visit [www.icims.com](http://www.icims.com).*

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# IT'S TIME TO UNLEASH THIS GREAT HIDDEN LEADERSHIP SKILL

BY TERRI KLASS

**R**ecently, I launched a leadership development program for a non profit I have worked with for many years. Everybody arrived looking excited to be invited to the session and looking forward to what it was all about. You could feel the electricity and hear the buzz. So much hope for what was about to come. Each participant was given an opportunity to sit where they wanted, and I watched as each person made their way to their perfect space. It was fascinating to see how each new leader chose the spot that called to them. Several of the participants simply scurried to the seat that they connected with while others meandered a bit as they spent some time chatting up people along the way.

I began to notice the leaders that were having conversations with each other. They seemed comfortable with themselves and open to hearing what others had to share. They appeared both confident as well as interested in what their classmate had to say. There was an energy and positivity that the conversationalists possessed that elevated the noise level in the room. When they reached out, they formed connections with ease. What I was experiencing was a group of leaders who had a gift that surrounded their being. It was the ability to engage others.

## FIVE ACTIONS TO UNLEASH THE HIDDEN LEADERSHIP SKILL OF ENGAGEMENT:

### 1 DEVELOP A CURIOUS MINDSET

Engagement can only happen if leaders are genuinely curious what other people have to share. When we lead from a place of wanting to know how the people we meet are feeling, we are able to create a connection. Here are some ways to build your curiosity muscles:

Think of a time someone engaged you in a conversation that felt so impactful. How did that make you feel?

Identify the things that you are curious about and how you explore them to learn more.

When we were children, everything seemed new and interesting. Become a child again and let go of knowing the answers.







## **2 BELIEVE YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE**

To engage with others, leaders first have to believe that they have valuable conversation points to exchange. Each of us has important ideas to offer colleagues and new friends. However, if we have the self-limiting belief that we have nothing to add to a conversation, we won't even begin the chit-chat. This is not self-promotion or boasting, but rather honoring your worth.

## **3 HAVE A SET OF EMPOWERING QUESTIONS IN YOUR TOOLBOX**

Here's a little trick that has helped me and many other leaders foster confidence in engaging others. Create your own set of empowering questions that are authentically you and will help open a conversation. Use language that you are comfortable speaking. And don't be a know-it-all! Meet people where they are and not above or below them. For example, some questions may be:

- What excites you most about being here?
- How are you feeling about our new work situation?
- I love your perspective on that. Could you tell me more about that?
- How else are you spending your time outside of this?

## **4 STAY PRESENT WITH THOUGHTS AND BODY LANGUAGE**

This action is probably the one that trips leaders up when they are having difficulty engaging others. We need to be in a conversation completely for people to feel that they are being heard. You can sense when someone is only half-listening to you. When that happens, we often just check out. Try to tune out the noise around you and focus your body and attention completely on the other person. Respond appropriately to what they are saying and don't look away as they are speaking. Be in the moment with them.

## **5 HAVE FUN**

Finally, the skill of engagement is all about having fun and enjoying a conversation. Go into the chit-chat with the assumption you will learn more about what someone's thinking or feeling and that ultimately builds connection and trust. Bring your smile and sense of humor, and let your inquisitiveness flow. You will be happy you did. ■

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# 6 WORKPLACE CULTURE TRENDS

## for 2024 Every Company Should Watch

BY TED KITTERMAN

For companies trying to build great workplace cultures, 2024 promises a complex challenge. Artificial intelligence (AI) is upending the workplace, and employees are clamoring for training and tools to stay ahead of a rapidly changing business environment. Politics and a U.S. presidential election threaten to divide us at the exact moment when companies need to come together to solve big problems. Environmental concerns are rising, and the efforts to remake the industries of the world will impact every company.

And the social issues that took center stage after the murder of George Floyd are still with us. Chief diversity officers and diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging (DEI&B) leaders have seen their roles change and diminish in the face of recession fears. Mental health issues haven't disappeared along with the daily pandemic headlines.

With each of these challenges, business leaders have an unmatched opportunity. New data from Boston Consulting Group<sup>1</sup> shows more than a quarter of employees globally are ready to leave their current jobs.

The best way to keep your talent? Become a great workplace where every employee has a consistently positive experience.

It's the company, not the industry, that determines how employees feel at work. It's not the size of your company, either. The key ingredient is employee trust, where leaders build deep relationships with employees in all job types and role levels, where workers are proud of the work they do and feel a sense of belonging to the people they work with.

**Here's what that will require in 2024:**

### 1 **Make trust the most important asset for your business.**

Trust has never been more valuable, and the year ahead will only make trust harder to earn. The rise of artificial intelligence, a raucous presidential election cycle, and ongoing transformation of digital information systems will force consumers to ask more questions.

"We're entering an era where trust will mean 10 times what it meant in 2023," says Michael C. Bush, CEO of Great Place To Work. Companies will have to prove they are doing things to make the planet better, that they are adopting and launching new technology in a responsible and ethical manner, and that they can be trusted to wield their growing influence transparently and ethically.

Not only will trust matter in the current moment, but people will question if they can trust companies for the coming decade as new technology drives a radical transformation of life. "It's going to be a commitment," Bush says.

To understand what companies they trust, Bush believes consumers will look to the employees of the company. "You

can trust a company in terms of how they're using artificial intelligence when you know their employees trust them," he says.

### 2 **Find more ways to support and improve mental health for every employee.**

According to a 2023 market survey of more than 4,400 U.S. employees by Great Place To Work, mental health hasn't improved for employees at typical U.S. workplaces.

However, Great Place To Work Certified™ workplaces outperform this benchmark, with 83% of employees reporting psychological and emotionally health work environments. Only 55% of employees said the same at typical U.S. workplaces.

The biggest differences between great workplaces and the U.S. average? Fairness.

Employees at great workplaces were more likely to report receiving a fair share of company profits, a fair shot at a promotion, and fair treatment from their manager.



Companies that want to improve mental health for all employees will have to investigate the structural causes of burnout and fatigue across the organization and turn employee feedback into clearly communicated action.

### **3 Make space for a tumultuous presidential election cycle.**

A 2022 report from the Society of Human Resources Managers found that 45% of U.S. workers report personally experiencing political disagreements in the workplace<sup>2</sup>. Only 8% of organizations have communicated guidelines to employees about political discussions at work, according to the study.

What's the cost of declining civility in the workplace? Lost productivity.

Great workplaces will have to make space for the world events that impact their people, and create programming in partnership with their people to address acute needs. Tony Bond, chief diversity and innovation officer at Great Place To Work, makes a strong case for robust employee listening programs.

"You have to survey employees, but you also have to find a systematic, measurable way to surface the voice of the people—to continuously take their pulse," he says. "The last thing you want to do is create a large program when people aren't in a place to participate."

### **4 Increase your focus on retention, upskilling, and talent development.**

As finding talent with the right skills becomes more difficult, employers will have to invest more in developing the talent they need internally. Even when companies are reducing headcount, they need skilled workers to continue operating the business.

A focus on recruitment shifts to a focus on developing and reskilling the workers you already have.

While the macroeconomic picture in the U.S. appears to be avoiding the recession that was prophesized in early 2023, business leaders will remain cautious. Yet, a skills gap remains a top concern, with 26% of CEOs ranking a talent shortage as the top "damaging factor" to their business outlook, per Gartner<sup>3</sup>.

This might be the year to launch your internal talent marketplace, or revolutionize your learning and development tools with AI and new technology.

### **5 Make sure all DEI&B programs are aligned with business goals.**

Despite some prominent business leaders rallying against diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging initiatives, data shows that those voices are outliers.

According to The Conference Board, three-quarters (75.8%) of S&P 500 companies incorporate ESG performance into CEO compensation<sup>4</sup>. Nine in 10 of the S&P 500 use at least one metric related to human capital management to calculate executive compensation.



How does this data square with the decline of DEI leadership roles at companies across the U.S.? In short, DEI&B programs that aren't connected to clear business outcomes and revenue are disappearing.

As companies approach the five-year mark for the commitments made after the murder of George Floyd, what will have permanence will be programs that contribute to company performance.

### **6 Double down on developing the best leaders in the world for your company.**

Workplace culture starts with leadership, and the best workplaces are committing large resources to developing their people to lead with empathy and courage.

As the business landscape has changed, what it means to be a leader has also changed. Employees expectations of their leader have shifted: Inspiring visionaries are giving way to coaches and mentors who can both lead the way and empower their people to lead in their own right. ■

*Ted Kitterman is a content manager at Great Place To Work, the global authority on workplace culture. Powered by its proprietary platform and methodology, Great Place To Work offers unparalleled data and benchmarking, the most respected workplace certification and lists, and industry-leading research and insights, all supported by a wealth of resources and a thriving community. To learn more, follow Great Place To Work on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram or visit [greatplacetowork.com](https://greatplacetowork.com) and subscribe to their culture newsletter.*

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# THE BENEFITS OF AI FOR HR WITH Lean Teams

BY ELLIN MCHARG

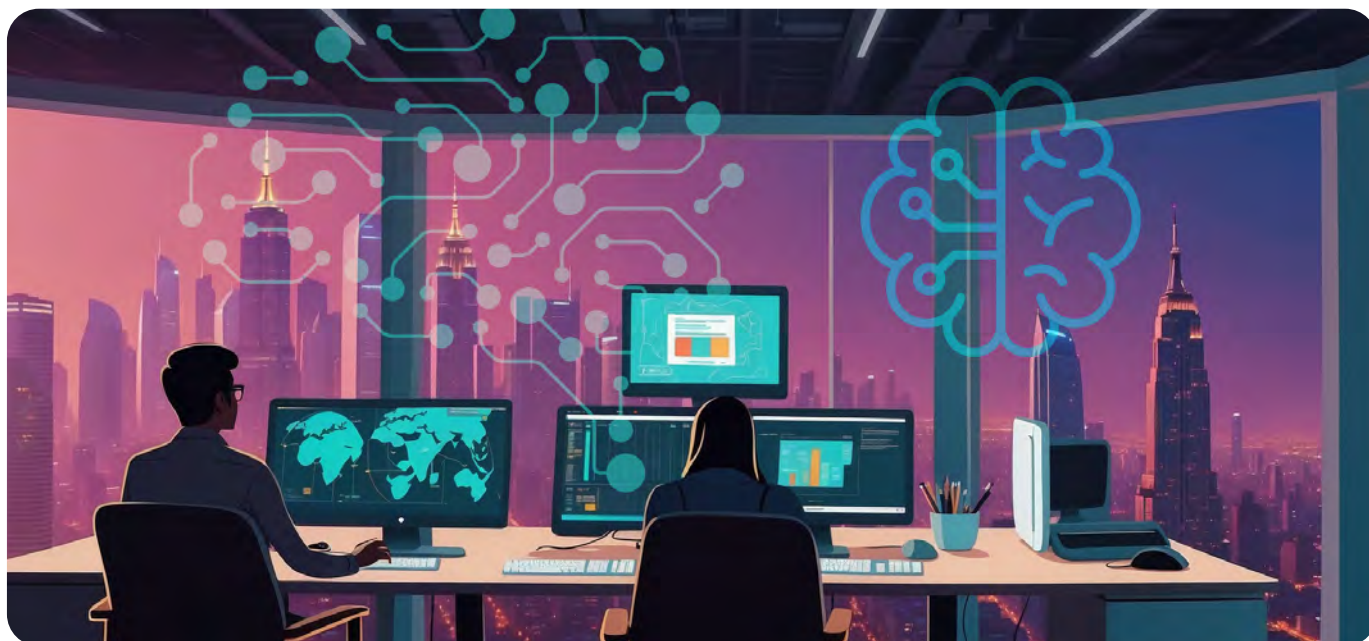
**A**rtificial intelligence (AI) is everywhere today, and for many of us, it can all seem a bit overwhelming—especially when it comes to leveraging it for your business and reaping the benefits of AI for HR. But once you've got all the facts, it's easy to see how AI can make day-to-day work for you and your HR team more efficient and impactful than ever.

Generative artificial intelligence, or GenAI, is a subset of AI with algorithms that can be used to create new content, such as text, images, video or code. Maybe you've experimented with Chat GPT or DALL-E chatbots to see what they can do. But as much fun as it is to see how you might look as a superhero, AI and GenAI tools have many

valuable business applications that are revolutionizing the ways we work today.

If your organization uses a human capital management (HCM) platform, you've probably already seen AI in the form of automated administrative tasks, personalized learning or virtual assistants. But what does all the recent buzz about AI and GenAI mean for HR teams—especially those in smaller to mid-sized businesses?

To separate fact from fiction, here are four common misconceptions and the actual benefits of AI for HR to show how it can transform the way your HR team manages your organization's people and can meet its business challenges.



## MISCONCEPTION

The benefits of AI for HR only apply to large enterprise and/or high-tech organizations.

It's not surprising that many people think AI isn't for smaller organizations because sophisticated technology can seem overly complicated and out of reach. But the truth is, AI simplifies work for HR teams of all sizes by automating repetitive tasks while helping them make better data-driven decisions and focus on more strategic business initiatives.

Most HCM technology solutions that manage HR, payroll, talent and time include AI that streamlines such tasks as recruiting and hiring, onboarding, performance management, compliance and benefits administration.

## ACTUAL BENEFIT

AI makes work easier and more efficient for all organizations and HR teams.

More recently, GenAI capabilities have been added to these solutions to guide employees, people managers and HR leaders with insights, actions and best practices that can help their organizations become great places to work for all. These GenAI "sidekicks" provide meaningful, personalized information in the moment and recommend next steps so users always stay ahead.



### MISCONCEPTION

AI will replace human workers.

Although AI makes day-to-day work processes easier and more efficient, as an HR professional, you've likely heard employees express fear about losing their jobs "to a machine."

The reality is that, rather than replacing us, AI can be used to enhance the emotional intelligence that makes us human. After all, businesses are created and run by people, for people, so human emotions such as feeling empowered and connected, having empathy for others and taking pride in a job well done are always going to play a major role in business success—and something AI can't remotely replicate.

Of course, AI's efficiency improvements for your organization will almost certainly cause changes to the roles within your workforce that could require upskilling or reskilling efforts. In the meantime, AI could help smooth that path forward by helping you create flexible scheduling options to accommodate employee life issues, spot concerning trends to address burnout and streamline collaboration and reporting for more purposeful work.

### ACTUAL BENEFIT

AI enhances human capabilities such as creativity and reasoning.

### MISCONCEPTION

AI is expensive and time-consuming to execute.

Implementing AI for your small to medium-sized business may seem daunting, but resisting this technology could end up costing you more than you might realize in terms of lagging productivity and market competitiveness.

The organizational efficiencies gained through AI can greatly offset the cost of implementation. And while it may take a while to get everyone up to speed on the new technology, making that time investment will greatly boost business growth in the long run.

### ACTUAL BENEFIT

The long-term ROI of implementing AI outweighs short-term disruptions.

For HR teams specifically, AI tools can help enhance the entire HR lifecycle, from identifying talent needs to finding the most effective ways to attract new talent while keeping existing talent engaged and satisfied. AI can also help your team become more knowledgeable and efficient, resulting in better decision-making and improved business outcomes.

### MISCONCEPTION

Using AI is risky for HR.

As with any new technology, accuracy, data privacy and security are going to be top-of-mind issues for any organization deploying AI tools—and for HR teams, that will mean prioritizing the safety of sensitive employee and company information.

Establishing strong cybersecurity guidelines is critical to ensuring employee confidence and preventing potentially disastrous data breaches. Actions can include implementing cybersecurity measures such as encryption and access controls to protect data, along with employee security awareness training and threat intelligence to help protect against adversarial AI manipulation.

In addition, some organizations are committing to the ethical and responsible use of AI by partnering with organizations such as the Future of Privacy Forum (FPF), a global nonprofit organization focused on exploring the challenges posed by technological innovation, including AI, and developing privacy protections, ethical norms, and workable business practices.

### ACTUAL BENEFIT

AI's full potential can be safely leveraged with the right data security and privacy safeguards.



## THE BENEFITS OF AI IN HR FOR LEANER TEAMS ARE **WITHIN YOUR REACH**

For small to medium-sized businesses, deploying AI and GenAI can be a challenge, but there's no doubt these powerful tools are changing business and HR functions at lightning speed—and doing nothing is no longer an option. Future business success will rely on HR's embrace of this new technology to boost productivity and efficiency, deliver an excellent employee experience, and manage data securely and ethically in the years ahead. ■

*Ellin McHarg is a product marketing manager and member of the UKG Ready team, where she focuses on creating engaging and informative content that provides SMBs with a better understanding of how the Ready suite can deliver value for their leaner organizations.*

# THE TOP 5 HANDBOOK POLICIES TO INCLUDE THIS YEAR

BY STRATEGIC HR

It's important to review your handbook at least once a year to ensure that your policies are up to date, inclusive, and reflective of the environment in which your organization operates. Especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, many companies found the need to update their handbook policies to reflect multiple changes that occurred in their work and surrounding landscape. Some of the top policies that organizations may need to include are:

## #1: REMOTE WORK POLICY

Today, many employees are looking for a remote or hybrid work situation. In order to meet the needs and desires of potential candidates, this may be an opportunity to do a complete audit of your job descriptions to see which can be remote, partially remote, or if a schedule can be created to allow for a hybrid opportunity. As you create new positions, consider creating roles that can be done entirely remotely in order to open up your talent pool beyond your geographical region.

## #2: EEO POLICIES

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies make it clear that you are an inclusive and welcoming workplace. These policies identify forms of discrimination, such as against a person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or genetic information, that the federal government will not tolerate. Most employers with 15 employees or more will

be legally held to these requirements, so it's important to ensure that your handbook reflects this legal requirement.

Handbooks may call these policies different things, but at the end of the day, these are essential policies to include to ensure an inclusive workplace. Beyond the legal obligation, ensuring that your organization promotes a positive work environment that doesn't tolerate discrimination is important to weave into the fabric of your organizational culture. It is also a critical component in talent attraction and retention.

## #3: ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Similar to including an EEO policy, it's important to include an anti-harassment policy to define and maintain a safe environment. Creating a work environment that is physically and emotionally safe for all employees goes beyond detailing what individuals should or should not do. Although it is important to identify unacceptable conduct and behaviors, it is also critical to provide employees with a clear and protected path to raising concerns about their safety or physical/emotional comfort.

Anti-harassment policies clearly outline the definition of harassment, the process for reporting incidents under this umbrella, and the steps that may be taken after reporting the incidents. Additionally, these policies should strictly prohibit any form of retaliation to ensure individuals feel

protected and encouraged to bring concerns forward for the betterment of themselves and your workplace.

#### #4: EMPLOYEE REFERRAL POLICIES

In a tight and candidate-driven market, employers are pursuing any and all avenues to find the talent they need to meet business objectives. One way to do so is by implementing an Employee Referral policy to encourage current employees to refer individuals who they think may be a fit for the organization. Utilizing employee referrals can be among the most successful strategies for recruiting culture-aligned, qualified, long-lasting talent for your organization. Referral fees can range from \$500 to \$30,000 (or more), depending on the industry, the level of the role, and the cost that the organization may expect to spend recruiting candidates through their recruiting team or an outsourced solution.

A successful policy will be sure to detail the referral fees, the process in which employees should refer candidates, and the timeline associated with any potential referral fees or retention bonuses.

#### #5: INCLUSIVE POLICIES FOR WOMEN

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, women left the workforce in droves. As the economy and the workforce landscape continue to recover, women are slowly returning, although not at the rate at which they left.

Between the need for talent and the goal of an inclusive workplace, this is a key opportunity to review your handbook to ensure that there are inclusive policies built in to create a welcoming environment for all individuals, including women. Key policies to include in this case would be:

- Flexible scheduling (which would be attractive to all candidates from all walks of life)
- Lactation policies, such as the set up of a lactation room, privacy, duration of accommodations, and more
- Maternity and/or paternity leave policies
- Dependent care HSA funds to allow individuals to contribute funds toward daycare costs

#### A FINAL WORD

Regularly updating your employee handbook is crucial to ensuring your policies reflect the evolving needs of your workforce and the changing landscape of the business environment. By incorporating policies like these, you not only meet legal obligations but also foster a culture of inclusion, safety, and support, ultimately contributing to talent attraction, retention, and organizational success. ■

*Strategic HR Inc.'s mission is to be a strategic partner providing custom human resources business solutions to help our clients attract, support, develop, and retain a competitive workforce and achieve their business objectives. For more information, visit [strategichrinc.com](https://strategichrinc.com).*





# Goodbye, Great Resignation: What's Next for the World of Work

BY JAMES MOUL

**Remember the Great Resignation?** That tumultuous period, not so long ago, that had HR departments across the globe sweating bullets and executives reaching for the antacids? It was the era where employees, emboldened by newfound flexibility and a reevaluation of priorities during the pandemic, bid adieu to their old nine-to-five grind in droves, leaving employers scrambling to fill the gaps.

Well, now it's all over. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Great Resignation has officially ended. Quit rates have dropped to their lowest point since the pandemic started, signaling a shift in the employment landscape.

So, what's next for the workplace?

First off, let's talk signs of stabilization. It seems the frenzy of mass exodus has abated, with recent data showing a slowdown in resignation rates and job turnover. Employers, ever adaptable, have been quick to pivot their retention strategies in response to these changing workforce dynamics. From bolstering benefits packages to offering enticing career advancement opportunities, businesses are pulling out all the stops to keep their talent firmly in the fold.

But what lessons have we gleaned from the rollercoaster ride that was the Great Resignation? It's become abundantly clear that employee well-being is no longer just a buzzword tossed around during annual performance reviews. It's a

non-negotiable cornerstone of any successful organization. Flexible work arrangements? They're here to stay. And let's not forget the importance of investing in career development initiatives that nurture and empower employees to reach their full potential.

Now, hybrid work models, reskilling initiatives, and evolving employee expectations loom large on the horizon. The workplace as we know it is undergoing a seismic shift, and HR professionals would do well to stay proactive and adaptable in navigating these (mostly) uncharted waters.

As we say "so long" to the era of the Great Resignation, let's concentrate on the lessons learned, the challenges overcome, and the exciting possibilities that lie ahead in this brave new world of work. Cheers to the end of an era—and to whatever the future may hold. ■

*James Moul is a copywriter with Haley Marketing Group and the editor in chief of HR Insights. He can be reached at [jmoul@haleymarketing.com](mailto:jmoul@haleymarketing.com).*



## RECIPE

# Quick and Crunchy Baked Chicken Tenders

These baked chicken tenders are a breeze to make and incredibly satisfying. With just a handful of ingredients and minimal prep, you'll have a delicious meal or snack ready in no time!

**YIELD:** 4 servings **TIME:** 25 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

- ▶ 1 lb chicken tenders
- ▶ 1 cup breadcrumbs
- ▶ 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ▶ 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ▶ 1/2 teaspoon each dried oregano and thyme
- ▶ Salt and pepper to taste
- ▶ Cooking spray or olive oil for greasing

### DIRECTIONS:

- ▶ Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Grease a baking sheet with cooking spray or olive oil.
- ▶ Mix breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, minced garlic, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper in a shallow dish.
- ▶ Season chicken tenders with salt and pepper.
- ▶ Coat each tender in the breadcrumb mixture and place on the prepared baking sheet.
- ▶ Lightly spray tenders with cooking spray or drizzle with olive oil.
- ▶ Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown and cooked through.
- ▶ Serve hot with your favorite dipping sauces or alongside a salad or vegetables.

### TIPS:

- Customize seasoning with herbs like rosemary or basil
- Leftovers can be refrigerated and reheated in the oven.





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# WHAT TO DO IF HYBRID ISN'T WORKING

BY WAYNE TURMEL



**H**ow's your team's hybrid working arrangement working out? Is it better or worse than you expected? After the pandemic, many companies settled on a hybrid way of working. Some people worked mostly remotely, while others worked in the office. Others had no definite location requirement, just a minimum number of days they had to be with their team.

Some organizations were extremely methodical about how they created this new arrangement. Most weren't, and it shows. Too many organizations saw this new way of functioning as a compromise at best and a lose-lose at worst. "If we don't let them work from home sometimes, they'll quit!" Neither party is happy, and they all feel trapped.

## COMMON COMPLAINTS

Among the common complaints organizations and their employees have are:

- » Communication snags.
- » Productivity challenges.
- » Unfairness (or perceived unfairness) in how people are treated by the manager.
- » A lack of engagement and team cohesion.



## SO, WHAT DO WE DO?

Before making radical changes to the working environment, I want you to recognize two critical factors:

**1. Forgive yourself.** Few, if any, companies have done this before and, everyone's figuring it out as they go along. Pandemic-induced diaspora recovery required nearly every organization to make assumptions about what would work and what wouldn't. Employees' lives and attitudes had changed in 18 months or more and they were working in new ways. Not unexpectedly, some of those assumptions were correct and others were way off. Some people missed the old way of working, others didn't. Afterward, the stress of commuting seemed so much worse. And people realized there was some quiet, focused work that's easier done away from the team. Forgive yourself for not getting it 100% right the first time.

**2. As best you can, define exactly what isn't working.**

It's not enough to say, "Everybody's unhappy, so we need to change again." If you don't know exactly what you're trying to fix, you're no better off than you were at the beginning. For example, a specific, identifiable problem may be that not enough good collaboration is happening. But just demanding everyone come into the office all the time may or may not be the right answer. Getting it wrong will be stressful, expensive, and just plain uncomfortable for everyone.

Most organizations did the best they could in an unfamiliar situation. But just because you created a policy doesn't mean you have to stick with it if it's not working. It also doesn't mean you necessarily need to make sweeping, dramatic changes either. Don't just blow it all up and say, "Everyone back in the office." Odds are what you need to do is make small, incremental adjustments to the processes and work agreements.

## CAN HYBRID WORK BE SALVAGED?

Here are some ways to make the necessary changes that may still make hybrid work successful:

**Choose one problem at a time.**

Let's say the challenge is that people aren't getting the answers they need quickly in order to be productive. Would everyone being in the same place at the same time solve that problem? Would it create other unintended consequences? What if you looked at solutions like using asynchronous tools (Skype, Microsoft Teams) more effectively? That's a training and technology solution, not a workplace location issue. Maybe the team isn't effectively communicating their work status and availability on a given day. Ratcheting up how you use shared calendars and being vigilant about availability notifications can help. It may be possible to fix a challenge if you have the right data.

**Work as a team to find the best solutions.**

Most companies that are successful with hybrid work don't dictate policy from the top down. Different functions, geographical regions, and teams have unique circumstances. What works great for one group may not be as successful for another. Shared purpose and goals inspire people to find effective, viable solutions to adversity. Candid, sometimes difficult conversations are often the best way to find the answers that work best.

**If you're a leader, use your one-on-ones to ask the tough questions.**

Too often, leaders are blind to what's going on around them. That's not a judgment—it's true of all humans. Proximity bias, for example, is a natural phenomenon that can be overcome if you're aware it's happening. When you have one-on-one conversations with team members, make sure you're not just handling the items on your "to-do" list. Ask probing questions about their productivity and engagement. What's working well? What can be better? Do they have any ideas for improvements? You might not be thrilled with the answers, but it's best to kill dragons in the egg rather than fight them later.

**Get (and interpret) data consistently.**

Most of the problems that lead to crises were a long time coming. If individuals are experiencing communication challenges, don't just assume they're alone. Check in with the rest of the team early and often. If productivity is a challenge, use data to identify the source of the problem. Then make small tweaks rather than dramatic, sweeping changes.

**Think "pilot before policy."**

When doing something you've never done before, it's a great idea to pick small projects. Think of this first try as a pilot that will be reexamined and tweaked. This is different than creating a policy. Policies tend to go wide, get written into procedure, and then become difficult to adjust as needed.

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE UP

Hybrid work is a relatively new phenomenon. The odds of getting all the answers right the first time aren't (and weren't) great. Don't beat yourself up. Also, don't assume that this experiment will never work just because pieces of it aren't living up to your expectations. Small, incremental changes are less dramatic and traumatic than ditching the whole idea of a hybrid workplace. ■

*Wayne Turmel has been writing about how to develop communication and leadership skills for almost 26 years. He has taught and consulted at Fortune 500 companies and startups around the world and, for the last 18 years, has focused on the growing need to communicate effectively in remote and virtual environments. He can be reached at [wayneturmel.com](http://wayneturmel.com).*



# HERE'S HOW TO SPEED UP YOUR HIRING PROCESS

BY HAILEY TIELKEMEIER

## W

hen you're looking to fill a role, chances are you have a critical need for that role. Maybe this person will be the key to reaching your yearly business goals. Perhaps they'll unlock a new process to help your team work faster and smarter. Whatever the reason for opening the role, you want to get that new hire in the door as quickly as possible so they can hit the ground running.

But the hiring process should also ensure you get the right person in the door—one who has the chops to tackle the job responsibilities, embodies your company culture, and will push your organization forward on its mission. On the other hand, hiring the wrong people can hurt your team's morale and bottom line since employers spend between \$7,500 and \$28,000 in hard costs<sup>1</sup> to find and onboard each new employee.

So, where's the balance between a quick hiring process and an effective hiring process? It's important to move quickly, but speed will do you no good if a bad hire costs your company more time and money than the hiring process itself.

By implementing a few key strategies and hiring tools into your recruiting efforts, you can speed up your hiring process timeline without missing out on the best person for the job.

### HOW LONG DOES THE HIRING PROCESS TAKE?

According to a report from The Josh Bersin Company, the average time-to-hire (the number of days from when the job was listed to when the candidate accepted the offer) has risen to 44 days<sup>2</sup>. Of course, this can vary depending on the role you're hiring. An executive-level role will likely take more time to fill than an entry-level position will.

Other external factors may also play a part in the hiring process timeline. Candidates may not be actively looking for new roles during the winter holiday season or the busy summer months. And depending on the state of the economy, you may be

flooded with candidates to choose from or have to roll out the red carpet to make a great impression.

While 44 days serves as a solid baseline, it's essential to set realistic hiring timeline goals based on all known factors, including the urgency of hiring for the specific role.

### WHAT HIRING PROCESS STEPS WILL SPEED UP THE TIMELINE? (AND ATTRACT QUALITY CANDIDATES)

An effective recruitment process uses many strategies to reel in top-quality candidates. Below, we outline some hiring process steps to implement as you work toward a faster hiring timeline while maintaining a pipeline of qualified candidates.

#### 1. Write a Job Description That Attracts Top Talent

The best way to change your hiring process is to start at the beginning: how you're talking about the open position. How to write a job description is one of the first things any HR pro learns, but many times, a job description isn't fully leveraged as the powerful candidate-attraction tool it can be.

When a position needs filling, hiring managers are often too stressed about finding a candidate to slow down and think about what kind of candidate they really want and need. In the interest of time, they may not spend enough time developing an effective job description, and the result is either a flood of unqualified candidates or a trickle of candidates who can meet super-specific demands.

**Here are three tactics to consider as you generate a job description:**

- **List five core skills:** While you should be clear about the critical expertise needed for the job, don't get overly specific, or you could risk people not applying because they perceive themselves to be underqualified.

*Not-so-fun fact:* Men will apply for a job when they meet just 60% of qualifications, whereas women need to be closer to 100% to feel confident enough to apply<sup>3</sup>.

- **Provide a breakdown:** Explain what this person will spend most of their time doing, which teams they'll be working closely with, and what their general day-to-day will look like.
- **Discuss markers of success:** What does a job well done look like? What types of metrics will this person need to track? What will they report on?

By creating a job description that accurately reflects the position, along with preferred and critical qualifications, you cut out a massive amount of time you might otherwise spend screening. On the other hand, omitting qualifications that aren't critical can open your talent pool to non-traditional candidates or candidates that could grow into the position.

#### 2. Eliminate Unnecessary Steps in Your Hiring Process Timeline

Not only will cutting out unnecessary steps speed things up for your hiring team, but you'll also be less likely to lose candidates along the way. According to SHRM, 92% of job seekers abandon online applications because of their length and complexity<sup>4</sup>. That 92% doesn't account for candidates who may drop off because of slow communication, extensive interview processes, or having to jump through too many hoops.

When evaluating the steps of your hiring process, consider these questions:

- What does each step accomplish?
- Which steps take the longest?
- Which steps lead to bottlenecks in the hiring process?
- Where do candidates typically choose to exit the process?

By carefully auditing your process, you can determine which phases are moving you forward and which are holding you—and potential candidates—back.

### 3. Leverage Hiring Tools

Shave time off your hiring process and increase efficiency by automating key workflows. When everything is automatic, no one has to wait around to be told what's next. An applicant tracking system (ATS) can take menial tasks out of your hands so you can focus on what's really important in the hiring process: the people. An ATS can carry the load for you by providing:

- ▶ A branded, pre-built careers page.
- ▶ Automatic job postings to job sites. Candidate keyword search and filtering
- ▶ Automated workflows so your hiring team knows what to do and when to do it.
- ▶ A collaboration hub for the hiring team.
- ▶ Email and offer letter templates that auto-populate candidate and job info.

### 4. Set Hiring Timeline Goals with Your Hiring Team

At the beginning of the recruitment process, set an ideal hiring timeline with your hiring team, including the hiring manager. Create milestones and slate out due dates so everyone is on the same page about what needs to happen—and when. Consider setting timeline goals for the following hiring process steps:

- ▶ Write the job description
- ▶ Post the job description
- ▶ Schedule interviews
- ▶ Complete interviews
- ▶ Debrief as a hiring team
- ▶ Narrow down your top candidates
- ▶ Send an offer letter

### 5. Make the Interview Count

After you've screened your candidates, you'll want to narrow down the pool even further by interviewing them individually. Many organizations lose candidates during the interview process because of bad interviewing practices.

**Let's look at a few of the most common interview pitfalls here:**

#### *Too Many Cooks in the Kitchen*

It might seem important to have every department head provide input on each candidate for the graphic designer position. But think about this: are all 10 of those individuals ever going to agree? By involving too many stakeholders, you may be creating an impasse. A better way to gain group approval is to



take input from people at the beginning as you're crafting the job description, then leave a small group as the actual decision-makers.

#### *Ineffective Questions*

It might be a good icebreaker to ask a candidate what their spirit animal is, but it won't give you much insight into how well they'll perform the job. To make each interview as comprehensive and meaningful as possible, use the targeted job description as a point of reference for what to ask in the interview.

#### *No Structure*

When Manager A says she liked the first candidate the most, does she have a good reason? Effective feedback must go beyond gut feelings and hunches. And your interviews need structure if they're going to fairly evaluate different candidates and eliminate unconscious bias. Consider preparing a list of questions and scorecards for each hiring manager before the interview process begins. Each hiring manager in the interview can then rank each candidate on elements such as culture fit, skill set, and whatever else is essential. By sticking to the same questions and using a consistent rating system, you can compare apples to apples (and leave the oranges out of it).

#### *Poor Follow-Up*

It's not enough to put candidates through an interview, hand out scorecards to the managers, and hope it all comes together. To make the most of your hiring process timeline, you have to follow up with managers and candidates while the interview is still fresh in their minds. Give hiring managers a chance to make notes and debrief from the interviews and keep candidates informed on the next steps. (Reminder: an ATS can help you automate those workflows!)

### 6. Keep the Communication Channels Open

There's no faster way to drive someone away than to give them radio silence.

Schedule communication from the very start so they know:

- ▶ How long the application will take
- ▶ When you've received their application
- ▶ When they can expect to hear back
- ▶ How long each step will probably take

Transparency will make for a much better application experience and encourage candidates to stick around for the entire process, even if you can't move quite as fast as your competitors.

Along with communication, there needs to be a sense of individual attention—especially for those candidates who make it further through the process. Interviewing is stressful, but making candidates feel welcome and comfortable means they'll be more themselves during the interview. Remember: we're all humans here!

### 7. Maintain and Widen Your Talent Pool

Imagine a world where you open a job listing and already have the perfect candidate lined up. It may sound like a dream, but it can be a reality when you maintain a robust talent pipeline. How often have you told a candidate that you'd keep their resume on file but never looked at it again? You could be housing a goldmine of qualified candidates in your files—ones that would happily consider another opportunity with you if they were impressed by the recruiting process before.

Beyond providing a stellar hiring experience so that candidates want to come back, you can widen your talent pool by including internal candidates, candidates with criminal records who are re-entering the workforce, and other non-traditional workers. Consider implementing diversity recruiting tactics to ensure your company is welcoming and considerate of people with different backgrounds and needs. Doing so will lower the barrier to entry when it comes to candidates applying, which will open you up to a wide range of candidates you otherwise would have missed out on.

### PUT YOURSELF IN CANDIDATES' SHOES

When it comes to improving and speeding up your hiring and recruiting process, the best way is to experience it firsthand. If you improve your process, have your hiring managers "apply" and walk through the new steps along with you. If all of you find certain steps confusing or lengthy, chances are your candidates do, too. Identify where you can eliminate cumbersome procedures, streamline work, and improve communication.

By making changes like the ones outlined above, you'll save your organization considerable time and money while sweeping the best candidates off their feet. ■

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# ENHANCE THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE WITH YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

BY RACHEL FINDLAY



**T**he landscape for skilled talent is competitive, and it's never been more important to build an engaging experience that your candidates resonate with. But are employers hitting the mark with European candidates?

This year's European Talent Experience Report<sup>1</sup> explores the experience candidates go through as they search and apply for jobs at some of Europe's biggest corporations. As it turns out, these employers are falling short and run a risk of losing top talent for their organizations.

This research got me thinking about what candidates want, and how our learnings from the report can be applied globally. Here are a few actionable strategies you can take to enhance the experience candidates have with your employer brand and recruiting efforts.

## UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL WITH AN EFFECTIVE CAREER SITE

Your career site is a pivotal touchpoint for candidates looking to find out what it's really like to work for your organization. Across the board, we see that candidates are

more likely to apply for a role if your career site is easy to use and provides candidates with the information they are looking for. But the data shows that only 21% of job descriptions even mention if a job is remote, hybrid or in the office.

Candidates want to know what they are in for before applying to a company. Without providing simple details about the type of work, it's hard to expect them to engage. Highlighting key details of a role creates a transparent and inviting platform for candidates to engage with your opportunities.



Your career site is a pivotal touchpoint for candidates looking to find out **what it's really like** to work for your organization.

### EMBRACING SIMPLICITY AND AUTHENTICITY WITH VIDEO CONTENT

To keep candidates interested, offer them a glimpse into your company culture. Often, a simple video from an employee walking through their day-to-day is exactly what they want to see. Yet only 4% of companies are currently using videos on their career site.

With video, candidates get to see the person they will be working with and a better sense of who they will be working for, and employers can get content that resonates with talent in front of them in a fast and engaging way. It's a win-win.

### BRIDGING THE GENDER PAY GAP THROUGH SALARY TRANSPARENCY

This year, new EU regulations are coming into play, and employers will legally be required to share salary ranges for their open roles.

Salary transparency helps level the playing field for all candidates and makes for a fair pay structure. Embracing salary transparency not only upholds equity but it streamlines the recruitment process, demonstrating a commitment to fairness and inclusivity. It also sets expectations between the employer and candidate, saving both parties time in case their expectations do not align. Applying for jobs is time-consuming and candidates have to know that it's worth their while.

To achieve true gender equality

in the workplace, it is crucial that employers are transparent when it comes to the salary, and this year's report showed that corporations are falling short – only 9% currently share the salary in the job posting.

### USING TECHNOLOGY TO REMOVE BARRIERS TO APPLY

It can be hard for candidates to juggle looking for a new role alongside the responsibilities of everyday life, and lengthy application processes don't help. Our U.S. data<sup>2</sup> shows that candidates want tools that minimize the time it takes them to search and apply for a role. Forty-four percent of candidates in the U.S. appreciate getting recommendations for relevant open positions, and 43% even said they would provide their CV to a potential employer to get relevant job recommendations based on their skills and experience. Making things easier for candidates is key in driving them to apply for your roles.

### FOSTERING CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION FOR LASTING IMPACT

According to this year's report, nearly 60% of companies fail to follow up with candidates after they apply for a role, and of the corporations that do send feedback, the average time it takes is 8.7 days.

Often being faced with large quantities of applicants, it's no surprise that many recruiters and HR leaders like myself struggle to find the time to send personal feedback to candidates. But, it is also understandable for candidates to expect a level of communication from companies they have applied to. I cannot emphasize the importance of

creating customized rejection email templates that you send on a weekly basis.

And even better if you can automate this. Using automation platforms, recruiters can set up their criteria as well as automated email templates for candidates explaining why they may not have been the right fit for the role. Whether it's lack of experience or a difference in salary expectation, candidates want real feedback that can help them in their job search, even if your company is not the one for them.

Since implementing an automation system, I have had candidates thank me for taking the time to say "no." Making candidates feel supported throughout the recruiting journey, even if they've been unsuccessful, does make a huge difference. You never know, your silver medal candidate now may be your gold medalist for your next position, so make sure to keep communicating with talent before, during and after they've applied.

### BUILDING A LASTING IMPRESSION OF YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

In today's digital landscape, your recruiting process often serves as the first point of contact for candidates interacting with your employer brand. So, making it a positive experience is essential in shaping a lasting impression that resonates beyond the application process. ■

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# IT'S TIME TO UNLEASH THIS GREAT HIDDEN LEADERSHIP SKILL

BY TERRI KLASS

**R**ecently, I launched a leadership development program for a non profit I have worked with for many years. Everybody arrived looking excited to be invited to the session and looking forward to what it was all about. You could feel the electricity and hear the buzz. So much hope for what was about to come. Each participant was given an opportunity to sit where they wanted, and I watched as each person made their way to their perfect space. It was fascinating to see how each new leader chose the spot that called to them. Several of the participants simply scurried to the seat that they connected with while others meandered a bit as they spent some time chatting up people along the way.

I began to notice the leaders that were having conversations with each other. They seemed comfortable with themselves and open to hearing what others had to share. They appeared both confident as well as interested in what their classmate had to say. There was an energy and positivity that the conversationalists possessed that elevated the noise level in the room. When they reached out, they formed connections with ease. What I was experiencing was a group of leaders who had a gift that surrounded their being. It was the ability to engage others.

## FIVE ACTIONS TO UNLEASH THE HIDDEN LEADERSHIP SKILL OF ENGAGEMENT:

### 1 DEVELOP A CURIOUS MINDSET

Engagement can only happen if leaders are genuinely curious what other people have to share. When we lead from a place of wanting to know how the people we meet are feeling, we are able to create a connection. Here are some ways to build your curiosity muscles:

Think of a time someone engaged you in a conversation that felt so impactful. How did that make you feel?

Identify the things that you are curious about and how you explore them to learn more.

When we were children, everything seemed new and interesting. Become a child again and let go of knowing the answers.







## **2 BELIEVE YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE**

To engage with others, leaders first have to believe that they have valuable conversation points to exchange. Each of us has important ideas to offer colleagues and new friends. However, if we have the self-limiting belief that we have nothing to add to a conversation, we won't even begin the chit-chat. This is not self-promotion or boasting, but rather honoring your worth.

## **3 HAVE A SET OF EMPOWERING QUESTIONS IN YOUR TOOLBOX**

Here's a little trick that has helped me and many other leaders foster confidence in engaging others. Create your own set of empowering questions that are authentically you and will help open a conversation. Use language that you are comfortable speaking. And don't be a know-it-all! Meet people where they are and not above or below them. For example, some questions may be:

- What excites you most about being here?
- How are you feeling about our new work situation?
- I love your perspective on that. Could you tell me more about that?
- How else are you spending your time outside of this?

## **4 STAY PRESENT WITH THOUGHTS AND BODY LANGUAGE**

This action is probably the one that trips leaders up when they are having difficulty engaging others. We need to be in a conversation completely for people to feel that they are being heard. You can sense when someone is only half-listening to you. When that happens, we often just check out. Try to tune out the noise around you and focus your body and attention completely on the other person. Respond appropriately to what they are saying and don't look away as they are speaking. Be in the moment with them.

## **5 HAVE FUN**

Finally, the skill of engagement is all about having fun and enjoying a conversation. Go into the chit-chat with the assumption you will learn more about what someone's thinking or feeling and that ultimately builds connection and trust. Bring your smile and sense of humor, and let your inquisitiveness flow. You will be happy you did. ■

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# 6 WORKPLACE CULTURE TRENDS

## for 2024 Every Company Should Watch

BY TED KITTERMAN

For companies trying to build great workplace cultures, 2024 promises a complex challenge. Artificial intelligence (AI) is upending the workplace, and employees are clamoring for training and tools to stay ahead of a rapidly changing business environment. Politics and a U.S. presidential election threaten to divide us at the exact moment when companies need to come together to solve big problems. Environmental concerns are rising, and the efforts to remake the industries of the world will impact every company.

And the social issues that took center stage after the murder of George Floyd are still with us. Chief diversity officers and diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging (DEI&B) leaders have seen their roles change and diminish in the face of recession fears. Mental health issues haven't disappeared along with the daily pandemic headlines.

With each of these challenges, business leaders have an unmatched opportunity. New data from Boston Consulting Group<sup>1</sup> shows more than a quarter of employees globally are ready to leave their current jobs.

The best way to keep your talent? Become a great workplace where every employee has a consistently positive experience.

It's the company, not the industry, that determines how employees feel at work. It's not the size of your company, either. The key ingredient is employee trust, where leaders build deep relationships with employees in all job types and role levels, where workers are proud of the work they do and feel a sense of belonging to the people they work with.

**Here's what that will require in 2024:**

### 1 **Make trust the most important asset for your business.**

Trust has never been more valuable, and the year ahead will only make trust harder to earn. The rise of artificial intelligence, a raucous presidential election cycle, and ongoing transformation of digital information systems will force consumers to ask more questions.

"We're entering an era where trust will mean 10 times what it meant in 2023," says Michael C. Bush, CEO of Great Place To Work. Companies will have to prove they are doing things to make the planet better, that they are adopting and launching new technology in a responsible and ethical manner, and that they can be trusted to wield their growing influence transparently and ethically.

Not only will trust matter in the current moment, but people will question if they can trust companies for the coming decade as new technology drives a radical transformation of life. "It's going to be a commitment," Bush says.

To understand what companies they trust, Bush believes consumers will look to the employees of the company. "You

can trust a company in terms of how they're using artificial intelligence when you know their employees trust them," he says.

### 2 **Find more ways to support and improve mental health for every employee.**

According to a 2023 market survey of more than 4,400 U.S. employees by Great Place To Work, mental health hasn't improved for employees at typical U.S. workplaces.

However, Great Place To Work Certified™ workplaces outperform this benchmark, with 83% of employees reporting psychological and emotionally health work environments. Only 55% of employees said the same at typical U.S. workplaces.

The biggest differences between great workplaces and the U.S. average? Fairness.

Employees at great workplaces were more likely to report receiving a fair share of company profits, a fair shot at a promotion, and fair treatment from their manager.



Companies that want to improve mental health for all employees will have to investigate the structural causes of burnout and fatigue across the organization and turn employee feedback into clearly communicated action.

### **3 Make space for a tumultuous presidential election cycle.**

A 2022 report from the Society of Human Resources Managers found that 45% of U.S. workers report personally experiencing political disagreements in the workplace<sup>2</sup>. Only 8% of organizations have communicated guidelines to employees about political discussions at work, according to the study.

What's the cost of declining civility in the workplace? Lost productivity.

Great workplaces will have to make space for the world events that impact their people, and create programming in partnership with their people to address acute needs. Tony Bond, chief diversity and innovation officer at Great Place To Work, makes a strong case for robust employee listening programs.

"You have to survey employees, but you also have to find a systematic, measurable way to surface the voice of the people—to continuously take their pulse," he says. "The last thing you want to do is create a large program when people aren't in a place to participate."

### **4 Increase your focus on retention, upskilling, and talent development.**

As finding talent with the right skills becomes more difficult, employers will have to invest more in developing the talent they need internally. Even when companies are reducing headcount, they need skilled workers to continue operating the business.

A focus on recruitment shifts to a focus on developing and reskilling the workers you already have.

While the macroeconomic picture in the U.S. appears to be avoiding the recession that was prophesized in early 2023, business leaders will remain cautious. Yet, a skills gap remains a top concern, with 26% of CEOs ranking a talent shortage as the top "damaging factor" to their business outlook, per Gartner<sup>3</sup>.

This might be the year to launch your internal talent marketplace, or revolutionize your learning and development tools with AI and new technology.

### **5 Make sure all DEI&B programs are aligned with business goals.**

Despite some prominent business leaders rallying against diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging initiatives, data shows that those voices are outliers.

According to The Conference Board, three-quarters (75.8%) of S&P 500 companies incorporate ESG performance into CEO compensation<sup>4</sup>. Nine in 10 of the S&P 500 use at least one metric related to human capital management to calculate executive compensation.



How does this data square with the decline of DEI leadership roles at companies across the U.S.? In short, DEI&B programs that aren't connected to clear business outcomes and revenue are disappearing.

As companies approach the five-year mark for the commitments made after the murder of George Floyd, what will have permanence will be programs that contribute to company performance.

### **6 Double down on developing the best leaders in the world for your company.**

Workplace culture starts with leadership, and the best workplaces are committing large resources to developing their people to lead with empathy and courage.

As the business landscape has changed, what it means to be a leader has also changed. Employees expectations of their leader have shifted: Inspiring visionaries are giving way to coaches and mentors who can both lead the way and empower their people to lead in their own right. ■

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# THE BENEFITS OF AI FOR HR WITH Lean Teams

BY ELLIN MCHARG

**A**rtificial intelligence (AI) is everywhere today, and for many of us, it can all seem a bit overwhelming—especially when it comes to leveraging it for your business and reaping the benefits of AI for HR. But once you've got all the facts, it's easy to see how AI can make day-to-day work for you and your HR team more efficient and impactful than ever.

Generative artificial intelligence, or GenAI, is a subset of AI with algorithms that can be used to create new content, such as text, images, video or code. Maybe you've experimented with Chat GPT or DALL-E chatbots to see what they can do. But as much fun as it is to see how you might look as a superhero, AI and GenAI tools have many

valuable business applications that are revolutionizing the ways we work today.

If your organization uses a human capital management (HCM) platform, you've probably already seen AI in the form of automated administrative tasks, personalized learning or virtual assistants. But what does all the recent buzz about AI and GenAI mean for HR teams—especially those in smaller to mid-sized businesses?

To separate fact from fiction, here are four common misconceptions and the actual benefits of AI for HR to show how it can transform the way your HR team manages your organization's people and can meet its business challenges.



## MISCONCEPTION

The benefits of AI for HR only apply to large enterprise and/or high-tech organizations.

It's not surprising that many people think AI isn't for smaller organizations because sophisticated technology can seem overly complicated and out of reach. But the truth is, AI simplifies work for HR teams of all sizes by automating repetitive tasks while helping them make better data-driven decisions and focus on more strategic business initiatives.

Most HCM technology solutions that manage HR, payroll, talent and time include AI that streamlines such tasks as recruiting and hiring, onboarding, performance management, compliance and benefits administration.

## ACTUAL BENEFIT

AI makes work easier and more efficient for all organizations and HR teams.

More recently, GenAI capabilities have been added to these solutions to guide employees, people managers and HR leaders with insights, actions and best practices that can help their organizations become great places to work for all. These GenAI "sidekicks" provide meaningful, personalized information in the moment and recommend next steps so users always stay ahead.

### MISCONCEPTION

AI will replace human workers.

Although AI makes day-to-day work processes easier and more efficient, as an HR professional, you've likely heard employees express fear about losing their jobs "to a machine."

The reality is that, rather than replacing us, AI can be used to enhance the emotional intelligence that makes us human. After all, businesses are created and run by people, for people, so human emotions such as feeling empowered and connected, having empathy for others and taking pride in a job well done are always going to play a major role in business success—and something AI can't remotely replicate.

Of course, AI's efficiency improvements for your organization will almost certainly cause changes to the roles within your workforce that could require upskilling or reskilling efforts. In the meantime, AI could help smooth that path forward by helping you create flexible scheduling options to accommodate employee life issues, spot concerning trends to address burnout and streamline collaboration and reporting for more purposeful work.

### ACTUAL BENEFIT

AI enhances human capabilities such as creativity and reasoning.

### MISCONCEPTION

AI is expensive and time-consuming to execute.

Implementing AI for your small to medium-sized business may seem daunting, but resisting this technology could end up costing you more than you might realize in terms of lagging productivity and market competitiveness.

The organizational efficiencies gained through AI can greatly offset the cost of implementation. And while it may take a while to get everyone up to speed on the new technology, making that time investment will greatly boost business growth in the long run.

### ACTUAL BENEFIT

The long-term ROI of implementing AI outweighs short-term disruptions.

For HR teams specifically, AI tools can help enhance the entire HR lifecycle, from identifying talent needs to finding the most effective ways to attract new talent while keeping existing talent engaged and satisfied. AI can also help your team become more knowledgeable and efficient, resulting in better decision-making and improved business outcomes.

### MISCONCEPTION

Using AI is risky for HR.

As with any new technology, accuracy, data privacy and security are going to be top-of-mind issues for any organization deploying AI tools—and for HR teams, that will mean prioritizing the safety of sensitive employee and company information.

Establishing strong cybersecurity guidelines is critical to ensuring employee confidence and preventing potentially disastrous data breaches. Actions can include implementing cybersecurity measures such as encryption and access controls to protect data, along with employee security awareness training and threat intelligence to help protect against adversarial AI manipulation.

### ACTUAL BENEFIT

AI's full potential can be safely leveraged with the right data security and privacy safeguards.

In addition, some organizations are committing to the ethical and responsible use of AI by partnering with organizations such as the Future of Privacy Forum (FPF), a global nonprofit organization focused on exploring the challenges posed by technological innovation, including AI, and developing privacy protections, ethical norms, and workable business practices.



## THE BENEFITS OF **AI** IN **HR** FOR LEANER TEAMS ARE **WITHIN YOUR REACH**

For small to medium-sized businesses, deploying AI and GenAI can be a challenge, but there's no doubt these powerful tools are changing business and HR functions at lightning speed—and doing nothing is no longer an option. Future business success will rely on HR's embrace of this new technology to boost productivity and efficiency, deliver an excellent employee experience, and manage data securely and ethically in the years ahead. ■

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# THE TOP 5 HANDBOOK POLICIES TO INCLUDE THIS YEAR

BY STRATEGIC HR

It's important to review your handbook at least once a year to ensure that your policies are up to date, inclusive, and reflective of the environment in which your organization operates. Especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, many companies found the need to update their handbook policies to reflect multiple changes that occurred in their work and surrounding landscape. Some of the top policies that organizations may need to include are:

## #1: REMOTE WORK POLICY

Today, many employees are looking for a remote or hybrid work situation. In order to meet the needs and desires of potential candidates, this may be an opportunity to do a complete audit of your job descriptions to see which can be remote, partially remote, or if a schedule can be created to allow for a hybrid opportunity. As you create new positions, consider creating roles that can be done entirely remotely in order to open up your talent pool beyond your geographical region.

## #2: EEO POLICIES

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies make it clear that you are an inclusive and welcoming workplace. These policies identify forms of discrimination, such as against a person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or genetic information, that the federal government will not tolerate. Most employers with 15 employees or more will

be legally held to these requirements, so it's important to ensure that your handbook reflects this legal requirement.

Handbooks may call these policies different things, but at the end of the day, these are essential policies to include to ensure an inclusive workplace. Beyond the legal obligation, ensuring that your organization promotes a positive work environment that doesn't tolerate discrimination is important to weave into the fabric of your organizational culture. It is also a critical component in talent attraction and retention.

## #3: ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Similar to including an EEO policy, it's important to include an anti-harassment policy to define and maintain a safe environment. Creating a work environment that is physically and emotionally safe for all employees goes beyond detailing what individuals should or should not do. Although it is important to identify unacceptable conduct and behaviors, it is also critical to provide employees with a clear and protected path to raising concerns about their safety or physical/emotional comfort.

Anti-harassment policies clearly outline the definition of harassment, the process for reporting incidents under this umbrella, and the steps that may be taken after reporting the incidents. Additionally, these policies should strictly prohibit any form of retaliation to ensure individuals feel

protected and encouraged to bring concerns forward for the betterment of themselves and your workplace.

#### #4: EMPLOYEE REFERRAL POLICIES

In a tight and candidate-driven market, employers are pursuing any and all avenues to find the talent they need to meet business objectives. One way to do so is by implementing an Employee Referral policy to encourage current employees to refer individuals who they think may be a fit for the organization. Utilizing employee referrals can be among the most successful strategies for recruiting culture-aligned, qualified, long-lasting talent for your organization. Referral fees can range from \$500 to \$30,000 (or more), depending on the industry, the level of the role, and the cost that the organization may expect to spend recruiting candidates through their recruiting team or an outsourced solution.

A successful policy will be sure to detail the referral fees, the process in which employees should refer candidates, and the timeline associated with any potential referral fees or retention bonuses.

#### #5: INCLUSIVE POLICIES FOR WOMEN

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, women left the workforce in droves. As the economy and the workforce landscape continue to recover, women are slowly returning, although not at the rate at which they left.

Between the need for talent and the goal of an inclusive workplace, this is a key opportunity to review your handbook to ensure that there are inclusive policies built in to create a welcoming environment for all individuals, including women. Key policies to include in this case would be:

- Flexible scheduling (which would be attractive to all candidates from all walks of life)
- Lactation policies, such as the set up of a lactation room, privacy, duration of accommodations, and more
- Maternity and/or paternity leave policies
- Dependent care HSA funds to allow individuals to contribute funds toward daycare costs

#### A FINAL WORD

Regularly updating your employee handbook is crucial to ensuring your policies reflect the evolving needs of your workforce and the changing landscape of the business environment. By incorporating policies like these, you not only meet legal obligations but also foster a culture of inclusion, safety, and support, ultimately contributing to talent attraction, retention, and organizational success. ■

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# Goodbye, Great Resignation: What's Next for the World of Work

BY JAMES MOUL

**Remember the Great Resignation?** That tumultuous period, not so long ago, that had HR departments across the globe sweating bullets and executives reaching for the antacids? It was the era where employees, emboldened by newfound flexibility and a reevaluation of priorities during the pandemic, bid adieu to their old nine-to-five grind in droves, leaving employers scrambling to fill the gaps.

Well, now it's all over. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Great Resignation has officially ended. Quit rates have dropped to their lowest point since the pandemic started, signaling a shift in the employment landscape.

So, what's next for the workplace?

First off, let's talk signs of stabilization. It seems the frenzy of mass exodus has abated, with recent data showing a slowdown in resignation rates and job turnover. Employers, ever adaptable, have been quick to pivot their retention strategies in response to these changing workforce dynamics. From bolstering benefits packages to offering enticing career advancement opportunities, businesses are pulling out all the stops to keep their talent firmly in the fold.

But what lessons have we gleaned from the rollercoaster ride that was the Great Resignation? It's become abundantly clear that employee well-being is no longer just a buzzword tossed around during annual performance reviews. It's a

non-negotiable cornerstone of any successful organization. Flexible work arrangements? They're here to stay. And let's not forget the importance of investing in career development initiatives that nurture and empower employees to reach their full potential.

Now, hybrid work models, reskilling initiatives, and evolving employee expectations loom large on the horizon. The workplace as we know it is undergoing a seismic shift, and HR professionals would do well to stay proactive and adaptable in navigating these (mostly) uncharted waters.

As we say "so long" to the era of the Great Resignation, let's concentrate on the lessons learned, the challenges overcome, and the exciting possibilities that lie ahead in this brave new world of work. Cheers to the end of an era—and to whatever the future may hold. ■

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## RECIPE

# Quick and Crunchy Baked Chicken Tenders

These baked chicken tenders are a breeze to make and incredibly satisfying. With just a handful of ingredients and minimal prep, you'll have a delicious meal or snack ready in no time!

**YIELD:** 4 servings **TIME:** 25 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

- ▶ 1 lb chicken tenders
- ▶ 1 cup breadcrumbs
- ▶ 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ▶ 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ▶ 1/2 teaspoon each dried oregano and thyme
- ▶ Salt and pepper to taste
- ▶ Cooking spray or olive oil for greasing

### DIRECTIONS:

- ▶ Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Grease a baking sheet with cooking spray or olive oil.
- ▶ Mix breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, minced garlic, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper in a shallow dish.
- ▶ Season chicken tenders with salt and pepper.
- ▶ Coat each tender in the breadcrumb mixture and place on the prepared baking sheet.
- ▶ Lightly spray tenders with cooking spray or drizzle with olive oil.
- ▶ Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown and cooked through.
- ▶ Serve hot with your favorite dipping sauces or alongside a salad or vegetables.

### TIPS:

- Customize seasoning with herbs like rosemary or basil
- Leftovers can be refrigerated and reheated in the oven.



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