

# The Age of Adaptability:

Leading a Modern, Sustainable Workforce

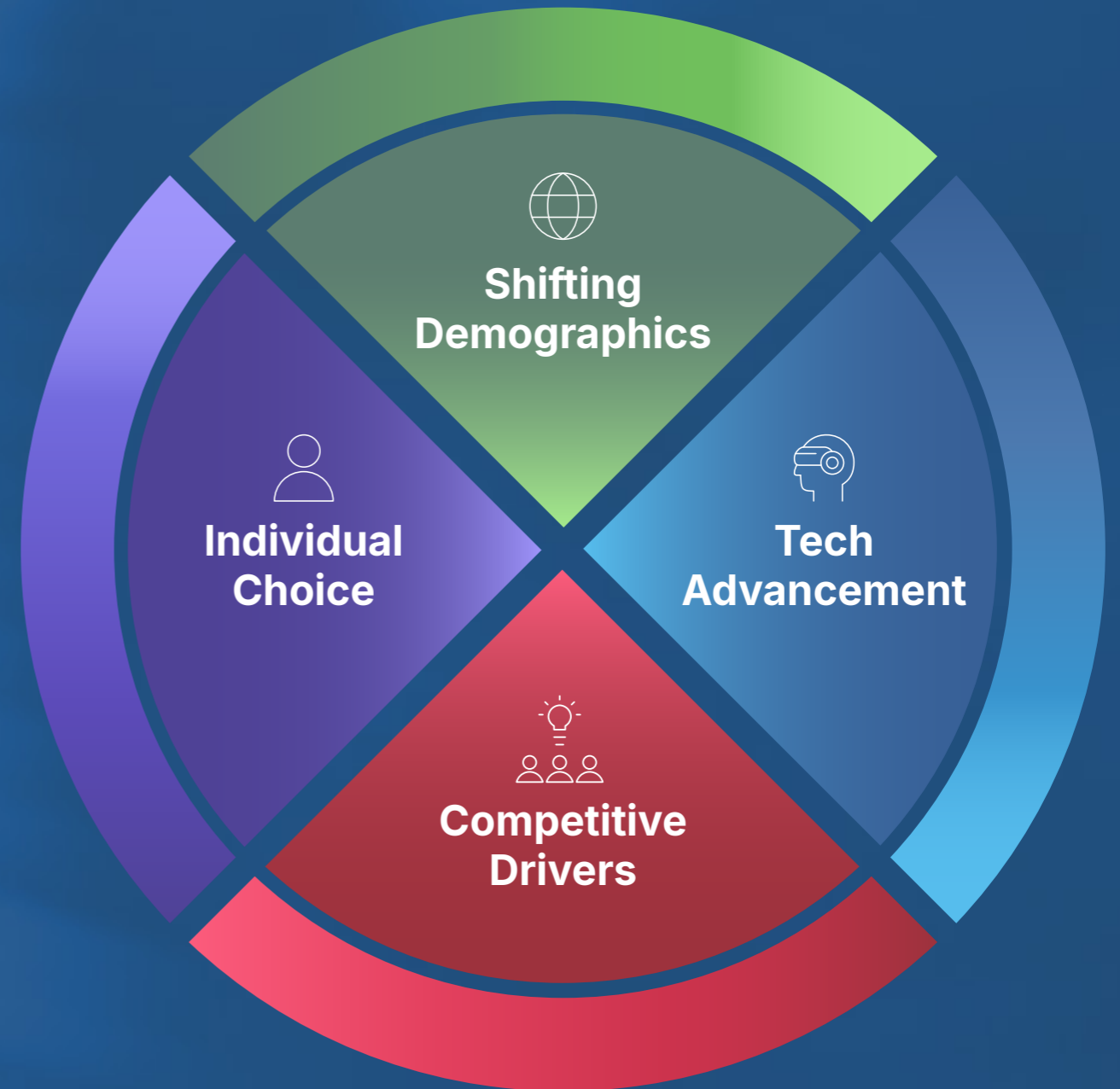
The 2024 Workforce Trends Report

# What You Will Find In This Report

For more than 10 years, we have been tracking **FOUR** key **FORCES** impacting the future of work:

- Shifting Demographics
- Tech Advancement
- Competitive Drivers
- Individual Choice

For 2024, we've identified **14** underlying **TRENDS** that provide **INSIGHTS** into both employee and employer perspectives.



# Trends Driving the Age of Adaptability

## Shifting Demographics



- **Trend 1:** Bridging the Generation Divide Through Strategic Reskilling and Upskilling
- **Trend 2:** Why the Present — and Future — Workforce will be Female-fueled
- **Trend 3:** DEIB: Catalyst for Innovation and Creativity
- **Trend 4:** Untapped and Underestimated: Immigrant Talent as a Critical Pipeline

## Tech Adoption



- **Trend 5:** Putting People at the ❤️ of AI
- **Trend 6:** AI Will Create More Jobs Than It Destroys
- **Trend 7:** The Productivity Paradox: Navigating Human Potential and Advanced Technology

## Competitive Drivers



- **Trend 8:** A People-Powered Green Transition
- **Trend 9:** The Manager Mandate: Mastering Continuous Transformation
- **Trend 10:** Onshore vs. Nearshore vs. Offshore
- **Trend 11:** Striking the Right Balance on Wages

## Individual Choice



- **Trend 12:** The Me Economy
- **Trend 13:** Gen Z Shapes Future of Workplace Culture
- **Trend 14:** Getting Personal: Shaping the Employee Experience Around Individual Need



In the dynamic landscape of the modern workplace, seismic shifts are reshaping the foundations of how we define work. The convergence of technological breakthroughs, global connectivity, and a rapidly evolving socio-economic fabric has unearthed a wave of transformative forces, creating a nexus where innovation and adaptation collide.

A **“New Employer-Employee Compact”** is emerging as traditional roles are rebalancing and being reinvented in the face of unprecedented change and opportunities. Creativity, collaboration, and flexibility are central to a thriving future and workplace as sustainability, digitization, and automation reshape the way we work.





# Leveraging Untapped Talent Pools

Fostering workforce continuity



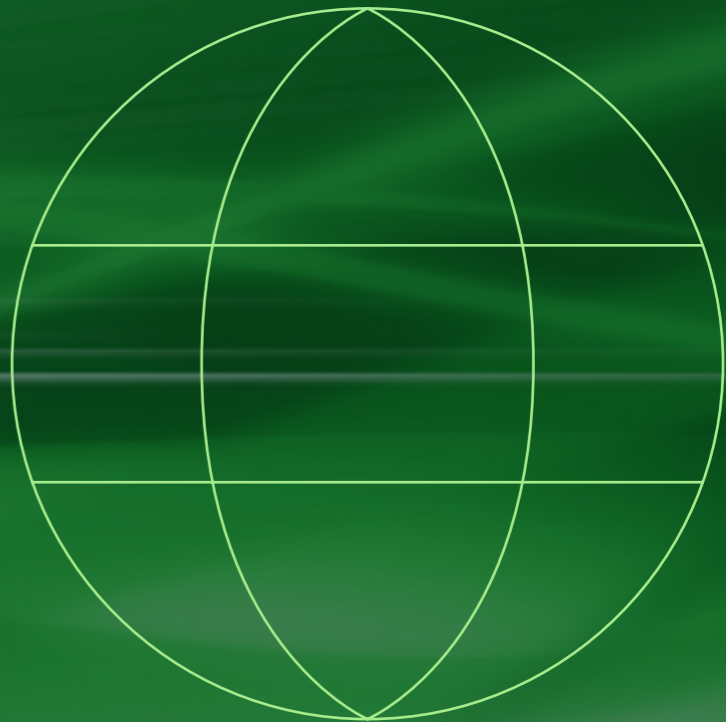
## Shifting Demographics

Despite influxes of Gen Z workers, workforces globally continue to age. Developed nations face widening talent shortages as more experienced employees retire.

To fill gaps, organizations must leverage untapped talent pools, including:

- **Seasoned Employees:** Offer reskilling and flexible schedules to retain and re-engage mature workers
- **Returners/Career Changers:** Enable transition reskilling through rapid upskilling programs
- **Employees with Less Traditional Experience:** Consider candidates with high potential and transferable soft skills

Reskilling existing and new employees from diverse backgrounds fosters workforce continuity. Retaining institutional knowledge also aids with ongoing multi-generational management.





## | Trend 1 |

# Bridging the Generation Divide Through Strategic Reskilling and Upskilling

Globally, organizations face a growing imbalance between rapidly rising Gen Z workers entering the workforce and more experienced employees leaving. By 2030, Gen Z will compose 58% of the labor pool; at the same time, [broader demographic trends reveal rapidly aging workforces in developed markets](#).

This widening demographic gap produces multifaceted talent challenges: generational knowledge loss from retiring baby boomers, Gen Z seeking updated skills blending technical and interpersonal, and mid-career workers needing to reskill for new roles.

Targeted reskilling and mentorship help bridge talent gaps across generations. Cross-training programs can enable Gen Z and seasoned employees to transfer institutional knowledge. Offering mentorships, stretch assignments, and new learning opportunities help retain mature workers. Enabling mid-career talent to reskill for adjacent roles sustains organizational productivity.



- In Europe, [the share of the population ages 65 and up is increasing](#) in every European Union (EU) member state.
- [Roughly one-in-five Americans ages 65 and older \(19%\) were employed in 2023](#) – nearly double the share of those who were working 35 years ago.

By 2050,  
**1 in 4 people**  
in Asia and  
the Pacific will  
be over 60.



Source: Source: [UNFPA Asia and the Pacific](#)

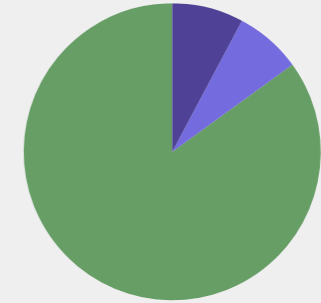


## | Trend 2 |

# Why the Present — and Future — Workforce will be Female-fueled

When the pandemic hit, millions of women left the workforce, which many feared would take decades to recover from. However, in just three years, employment levels for women are back to where they were pre-pandemic. Women are leading the post-pandemic recovery. Globally, [the workforce participation rate for women is just over 50%](#).

Specifically, among 25-54-year-old women, the labor force participation rate has hit record highs. This age bracket has jumpstarted brand new careers, advocated for better pay and benefits, and taken advantage of remote opportunities. Despite these gains, there is an urgency to ensure women are thoroughly represented in candidate pools for growth jobs.



- 8% of women want to work **fully remotely**
- 7% of women want to work **fully in the workplace**
- 85% of women want **autonomy to choose** what works best for them

Source: ManpowerGroup - [What Women Want \(At Work\)](#)

- Women are half of the world's total working population, [yet hold less than one third of managerial and leadership positions](#).
- Despite a Tech Talent shortage, [women make up less than a third of the world's workforce in technology-related fields](#).





## | Trend 3 |

# DEIB: Catalyst for Innovation and Creativity

Fostering diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) has developed from a moral imperative into a core business strategy. Companies embracing DEIB are realizing two key advantages:

- **Innovation Upswing:** Diverse teams bring broader perspectives, unlocking creativity. Organizations that champion inclusion better reflect customer diversity, increasing market relevance.
- **Talent Magnetism:** Today's top talent increasingly prioritizes workplace inclusion when choosing roles. Companies perceived as having diverse and equitable work cultures have a competitive edge in attracting skilled employees. Equity and belonging boost retention, saving turnover costs.

The data shows work cultures that maintain diversity, ensure equity, promote inclusion, and cultivate belonging are better positioned to tackle new challenges in the modern era.



Companies with high levels of diversity were **39% more likely** to outperform their peers with lower diversity representation.

Source: [Diversity Matters Even More - McKinsey](#)

- There is a perception gap. [While 68% of leaders say their business provides an inclusive environment, only 36% of their employees agree.](#)



## | Trend 4 |

# Untapped and Underestimated: Immigrant Talent as a Critical Pipeline

Employers today face high labor demand with insufficient domestic talent supply. This accelerating skills gap compels innovative recruiting approaches and wider talent pipelines. Many now recognize the promise within global migrant and immigrant talent pools.

Forward-looking multinationals lead in sourcing skills globally, implementing best practices for inclusion that welcome international applicants. Their integrated workforces better represent diverse customer values and outlooks, driving superior innovation.

While global hiring alone cannot fully address immediate talent deficits, it allows employers to access skills where demographics and job preferences align. Successful integration of these multicultural teams creates sustainable advantages, delivering talent shortage relief now while reaping additional longer-term benefits.

“Automation, migration, and changes in the working-age population are reshaping labor markets in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. There is no shortage of opportunity — depending on what you need and where you look.”

- **Marceline Beijer**

Global Brand Leader RPO Talent Solutions & Senior Vice President, EMEA



- [The top 5 markets for finding skilled talent](#) are the United States, Australia, Israel, Singapore, and the United Kingdom.
- 51% of European consumers say [they are more likely to buy from a company that is actively hiring refugees](#).



# Tech Advancement

Technology is a powerful ally



## Tech Advancement

As generative AI evolves at a rapid pace, experience tells us that technology has proven to be a powerful ally, augmenting rather than replacing human capabilities. Harnessing the potential of AI to drive growth and productivity gains will require companies to prioritize people.

As we embark on new ways of working, there is a dual challenge - workplaces must be digitized, but also humanized. The goal should be to enable people to connect with others, build meaningful relationships, and innovate/deliver in creative and ethical ways, even as technology permeates their work.





## | Trend 5 |

# Putting People at the ♥ of AI

The rise of AI is already reshaping the workplace. In response, leading companies and governments are at the forefront, pioneering innovative methods that place people at the heart of designing and implementing AI systems – approaches that directly incorporate workers’ needs, abilities, skills, and well-being.

The pivotal role of people to responsibly shape AI is now clear. And policy frameworks must evolve to support this central tenet: workers themselves can and must help steer the trajectory of AI transformation.



About six-in-ten Americans believe **AI will have a major impact on workers generally**, but only 28% believe it will have a major effect on them personally.

Source: [AI in Hiring and Evaluating Workers: What Americans Think](#) – Pew Research Center

- Businesses anticipate a [23% churn in jobs over the next five years](#) between the creation of new roles and the reduction of others.



## | Trend 6 |

# AI Will Create More Jobs Than It Destroys

Technological advancements create opportunities for people to do more meaningful work, provided they have the right skills.

As businesses learn to adapt and change along with AI, humans will power the future of work, as they upskill and learn how to work with, not against, modern technologies. People must shift their perspectives to view AI as a chance to augment their technical knowledge and professional capabilities.



## Organizations Identify **Top Three Challenges** When Considering Jobs Requiring AI Skills:

1. Training our staff to leverage AI in their roles 
2. Finding qualified workers 
3. Defining roles which can take advantage of AI 

Source: [Q1 2024 ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey](#)

- Nearly 3 in 4 of organizations (71%) [are currently or actively planning to use conversational AI in their recruiting process.](#)
- A majority of employers (58%) [believe AI & VR will have a positive impact on their organization's headcount in the next two years.](#)



## | Trend 7 |

# The Productivity Paradox: Navigating Human Potential and Advanced Technology

Companies seeking to unlock latent productivity must first focus on finding the right blend of people and technology, enhancing workplace culture, and developing leadership. The rise in remote work — and subsequent spike in productivity — seemed to be the answer.

More recently, the growth of AI is touted as the new top driver of productivity. However, its impact will largely depend on society's reaction to and adoption of new AI technology. As it stands, the more technologically advanced we've become as a society, the more productivity has declined.

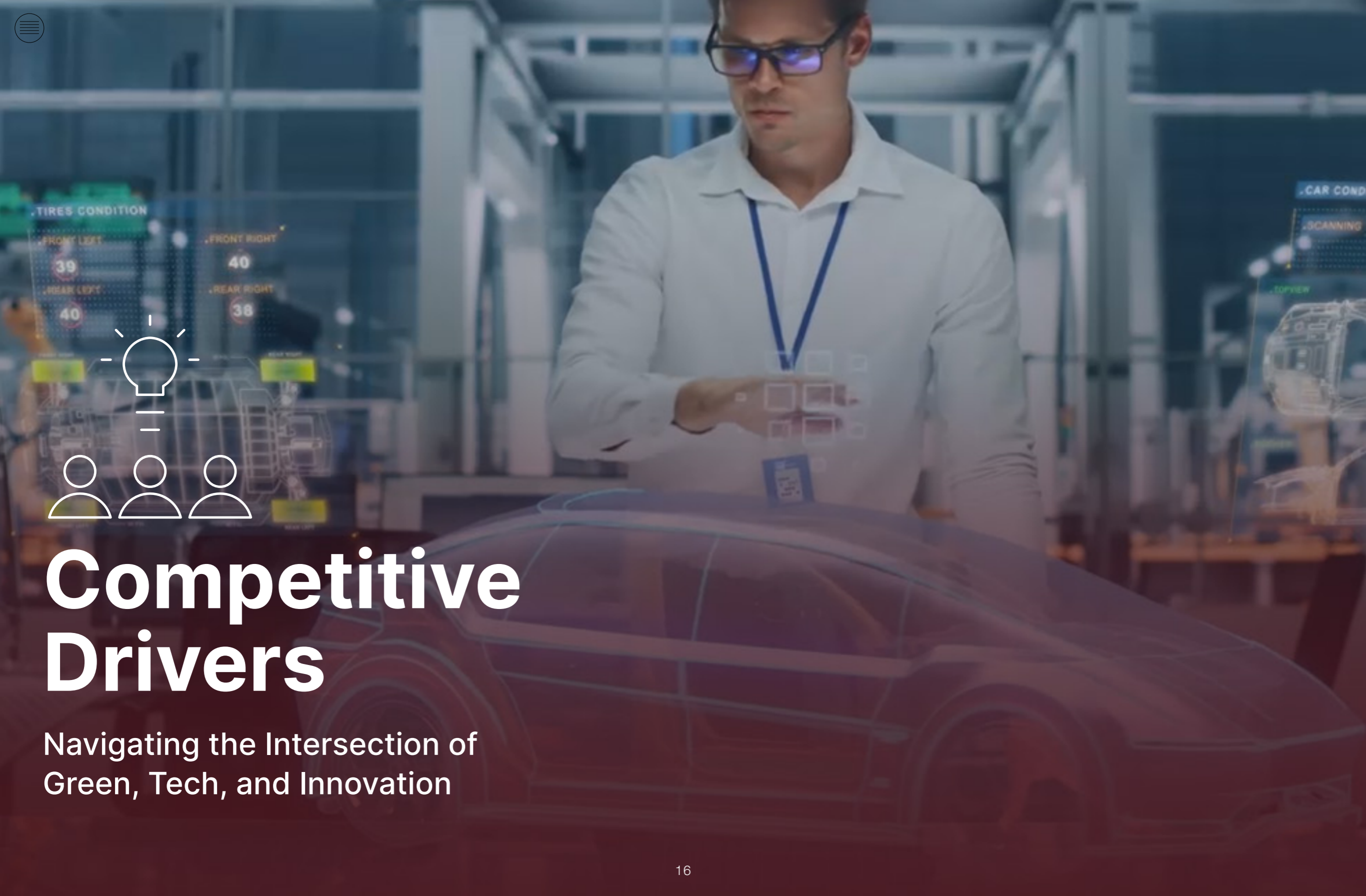


**87% of workers said they are productive at work, but only 12% of managers agreed**



Source: [Hybrid Work Is Just Work. Are We Doing It Wrong?](#) - Microsoft

- Employers around the world ranked Professional Development (40%), Clear Goals & Objectives (37%), Positive Work Culture (36%), Tech Efficiency (24%), Communication & Collaboration (22%) and Tech Adoption (20%) as more important drivers of productivity than In-Person Collaboration (19%).



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# Competitive Drivers

Navigating the Intersection of Green, Tech, and Innovation

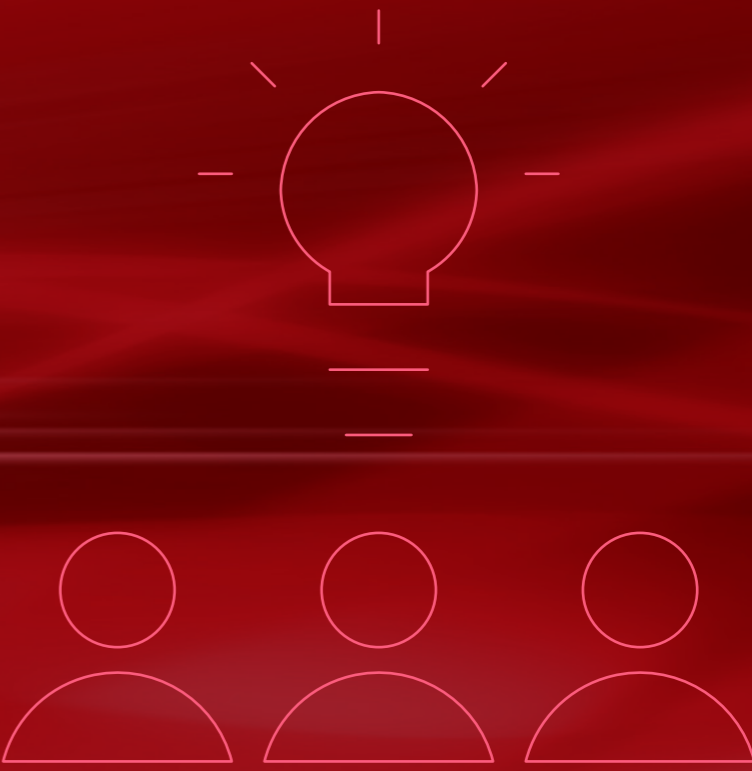




## Competitive Drivers

Amid economic uncertainty and intensifying competition for talent, organizations must take decisive actions to attract and retain top talent while advancing their sustainability commitments. Employees today are increasingly seeking purpose and meaning in their work, flexible arrangements that integrate with their lifestyles, opportunities to continuously develop new skills, fair pay for fair work, and leadership that cares about more than just profits. Today, organizations must demonstrate their stances on social, political, and environmental issues to stand out.

By investing in people and communicating their values and commitments, companies can gain a competitive edge.





## | Trend 8 |

# A People-Powered Green Transition

The advancement of the green transition continues and the impact on people, prosperity, and the bottom line is taking center stage. Investing in people is not just a choice; it's a necessity. As the [demand for green jobs surges](#), companies need workers with the skills to execute net-zero strategies across business functions.

At the same time, candidates are now heavily considering a company's environmental performance before accepting a job offer. A recent ManpowerGroup study found that 62% of workers check a company's environmental reputation. In addition, evidence of clear action on environmental issues (60%) is now a deciding factor for many when choosing between job opportunities.



60%

of workers say they want to see employers take **clear and visible action to address environmental issues.**

Source: ManpowerGroup Green Workforce Survey, October 2023

- The global green business transformation [will be the #1 job creator in the next five years.](#)
- Within the last year, [49% of global consumers opted to pay a premium for sustainable products.](#) Gen Z takes the lead in demonstrating a strong preference for sustainability, with 75% of Gen Z individuals saying when it comes to making purchases, prioritizing sustainability outweighs brand considerations.



| Trend 9 |

# The Manager Mandate: Mastering Continuous Transformation



The pandemic provided a crash course as managers pivoted to remote leadership overnight. Now as AI, automation, and sustainability reshape work, the onus falls on managers to guide a people-first transformation. As new green and digital skill requirements grow, managers must motivate their people while easing fears around displacement.

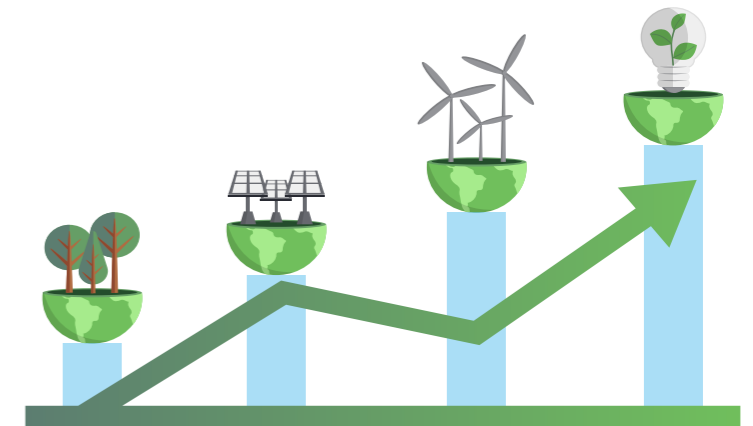
Managers also serve as the anchor steering organizational change. They must maintain engagement, inclusion, and well-being amidst shifts in work models, business needs and employee expectations.

Now managers spearhead upskilling initiatives so people at all skill levels participate in the future of work. Top managers understand change succeeds when their people succeed.

*“You need to have a long-term view of talent and a more sustainable approach to managing human potential. We’re all very focused on the short-term, and that’s the risk.”*

- Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, Chief Innovation Officer, ManpowerGroup

55% of business leaders surveyed predict investments in **green business transformation and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)** will **surpass technology** and other megatrends as the primary job creators in the next five years.



The transition is expected to create up to **30 million new green jobs globally by 2030.**

Source: [Future of Jobs Report](#) - World Economic Forum



## | Trend 10 |

# Onshore vs. Nearshore vs. Offshore

Disruptions during the height of the pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains. As the world economy continues to recover, challenges have remained, including increasing sustainability, demand volatility, shipping disruption, lack of effective data gathering, and fluctuating fuel costs.

Companies must prepare now for future disruptions by building diverse supplier networks and talent communities.

In response to growing geopolitical uncertainty and rising wages in some developing countries, **53% of manufacturers say they have near- or re-shored operations in the last 24 months.**



Source: [Why global industrial supply chains are decoupling](#) - EY

- To increase resiliency, [manufacturers are relocating some manufacturing from China to other countries in the APAC region](#) such as Vietnam, Malaysia, Bangladesh, India, and Taiwan.
- Nearly half (48%) of companies say they are under [increasing pressure to improve sustainability in the supply chain](#).



## | Trend 11 |

# Striking the Right Balance on Wages

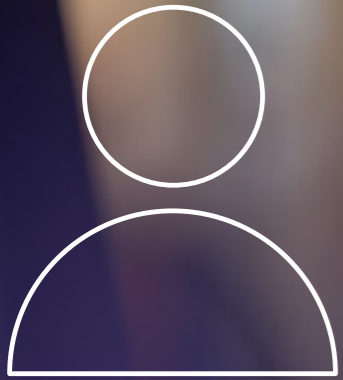
Today, economic uncertainty is preventing almost a quarter of workers (23%) from getting the job they want. People are changing jobs less frequently — forcing employers to figure out how to best strike the right balance between wages attractive enough to bring talent in while sustaining profitable growth.

With fair pay for fair work as the top productivity driver, it's no surprise that a third of all workers (31%) wish leadership would better understand the financial challenges that impact their work. In addition to increased wages, businesses must also find other ways to stay competitive and retain skilled talent by providing autonomy, flexibility, and purpose-driven work.

Wages are **15% higher** for new workers than existing workers.

ManpowerGroup Real-Time Data, U.S.





# Individual Choice

The rise of career consumerism



## Individual Choice

Centered around the “consumerization of work,” a new employer-employee relationship has emerged where people expect to “consume” work much like they do other aspects of life — on their own schedules and in ways tailored to their individual needs.

Just as consumers select products and services that suit their lifestyles, workers now want to dedicate themselves to organizations committed to their careers, well-being, and aligned with their personal values. Organizations must adapt to this workforce desiring greater flexibility, customization, and alignment with their personal priorities as people seek employment that allows them to integrate their jobs seamlessly with the rest of their lives.





## | Trend 12 |

# The Me Economy

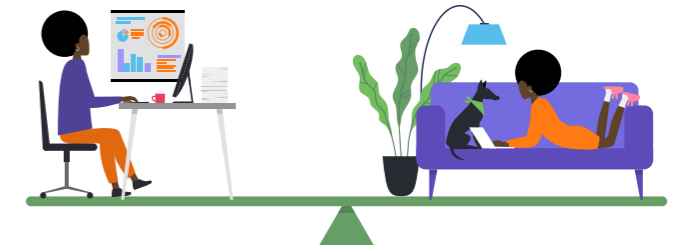
Much like consumers in the “Me Economy,” today’s workers are looking for flexibility and autonomy as they prioritize work-life balance. Candidates report the most desirable workplace benefits to be a four-day work week (64%), the ability to choose their start and end times (45%) and flexibility to work from home if needed (35%).

With many companies advocating for a return to in-person office work, there is a widening gap between employees’ expectations and employers’ desires.



- Eight in 10 chief human resources officers (CHROs) from Fortune 500 companies have no plans of decreasing remote work flexibility in the next 12 months.
- As the growth of remote work blurred the lines between home and work, an increasing number of countries are considering “Right to Disconnect” laws, which protect employees from obligations to respond to work communications outside of regular business hours.

Nearly **1 in 5** (18%) would consider less pay in exchange for more work-life balance.



Source: [What Workers Want: From Surviving to Thriving at Work](#) - ManpowerGroup





| Trend 13 |

# Gen Z Shapes Future of Workplace Culture

The future of work is changing right before our eyes, from worker expectations and ways of working to demographics. Heavily influenced by Gen Z, the current “culture revolution” and new hierarchy puts mental health at the forefront — and leaders and managers in the spotlight.

Ultimately, organizations that keep up with cultural shifts around well-being and create psychologically safe, flexible environments will have the best chance of attracting and retaining talent.



**93% of employees globally say they have been influenced by coworkers in their twenties regarding the following workplace trends:**



Source: [Edelman Trust Barometer](#)

- Just 15% of Gen Z said their current mental health or well-being is excellent.



## | Trend 14 |

# Getting Personal: Shaping the Employee Experience Around Individual Need

Consumer-grade personalization has entered the workplace. Employees now expect and demand greater customization across everything from benefits packages to AI-powered skills training to tailored career pathing and development opportunities unique to personal strengths and interests.

Forward-thinking companies are using advanced analytics and feedback processes to hyper-personalize the employee experience. From personalized onboarding programs to customized skills training modules to benefit selection algorithms providing personalized recommendations, the employee experience is getting an on-demand makeover.

Personalized learning programs tailored to narrow existing skills gaps could **boost global GDP by \$6.5 trillion by 2030.**

Source: [Generative AI and the future of work in America](#) - McKinsey

Platforms utilizing AI and machine learning can now identify specific skillsets and interests for each employee to propose individualized career advancement plans aligned to personal aptitudes while still meeting business goals. Work tasks can even be dynamically customized based on individual working style and productivity patterns, shaping the future of work in real-time.



- 60% of Gen Z employees [expect their employers to provide personalized career development paths](#) with regular guidance, trained mentors, and transparent progression plans tailored to personal goals.



# Looking Ahead: The Future of Work

**The world of work is changing more rapidly than ever before. Shifting Demographics, Tech Advancement, Competitive Drivers, and Individual Choice create both challenges and opportunities for employers. One constant, however, remains — megatrends, such as generative AI, automation, nearshoring, and green business transformation, will continue to accelerate.**



## About Us

ManpowerGroup® (NYSE: MAN), the leading global workforce solutions company, helps organizations transform in a fast-changing world of work by sourcing, assessing, developing, and managing the talent that enables them to win. We develop innovative solutions for hundreds of thousands of organizations every year, providing them with skilled talent while finding meaningful, sustainable employment for millions of people across a wide range of industries and skills. Our expert family of brands – Manpower, Experis, and Talent Solutions – creates substantially more value for candidates and clients across more than 70 countries and territories and has done so for 75 years. We are recognized consistently for our diversity – as a best place to work for Women, Inclusion, Equality, and Disability, and in 2023 ManpowerGroup was named one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies for the 14th time – all confirming our position as the brand of choice for in-demand talent.



To learn more, visit [manpowergroup.com](https://www.manpowergroup.com)