



JOB MARKET OVERVIEW AND SALARY SURVEY

EDITION WITHOUT SALARY TABLES

To receive the full version of the report,
including salary tables, please complete the
questionnaire [via the link](#)

TAKE A PART

RUSSIA

ANTAL TALENT

2026–2027

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OUR SERVICES



ABOUT ANTAL TALENT



Antal Talent entered the Russian market in 1994, opening an office in Moscow.

In 2015, the new **Antal Business Solutions** brand was launched, providing outsourcing, IT outsourcing and volume recruitment services.

Our consultants' professionalism and commitment to their clients ensure a high standard of service at every stage of our work together.

Our clients operate in virtually every sector of the economy, including **FMCG, retail, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, IT, financial services and banking, mechanical engineering, natural resources, consulting and legal services, logistics and transport, agriculture** and many others.

We help candidates find roles in areas such as finance and accounting, sales, marketing and PR, information technology, supply chain management, e-commerce and many others.

OUR SERVICES

- Executive search
- Middle management recruitment
- Specialist recruitment
- Mass recruitment
- Outsourcing and outstaffing
- RPO (recruitment process outsourcing)
- Customized Labour Market Surveys
- IT outsourcing
- HR consulting
- Employee training
- Candidate assessment
- Outplacement
- Career consulting (B2B and B2C)



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EMPLOYER PULSE SURVEY

COMPANIES' PLANS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR AND EARLY 2027

The Labour market and salary survey 2026–2027 includes additional data from the employer pulse survey Companies' plans for the remainder of the year and early 2027.

The survey was conducted from **28 July to 31 August 2026**.
The survey involved **415 companies** operating in Russia.

ANTAL TALENT EMPLOYER SURVEYS IN 2026:

Q1 2026 pulse survey

Employee turnover
in 2025

Q2 2026 pulse survey

Companies' plans for the
remainder of 2026

Q3 2026 pulse survey

Review of the first half of 2026
and companies' plans
for early 2027

Q4 2026 pulse survey

Companies' plans for 2027
(release in late December 2026)



Request the employer surveys via the link*

* The survey is sent to a corporate email address

INTRODUCTION



Konstantin Bryauzov

General Manager
Antal Talent



Vladimir Telyatnikov

General Manager
Antal Business Solutions

Dear colleagues and partners,

We are pleased to present Antal Talent's new annual "Job market overview and salary survey 2026–2027".

2026 has shown that the Russian labour market is becoming increasingly varied. According to our employer pulse survey*, 35% of companies still describe the situation as a candidate-driven market, 33% consider supply and demand to be balanced, and 32% now see it as an employer-driven market. From candidates' perspective, however, the situation is challenging: 52% of respondents believe that finding a new job is currently difficult, while a further 12% consider it almost impossible.

This is creating a new reality for HR and business: there are fewer universally applicable solutions, while reliable analysis and an understanding of each specific market segment are becoming increasingly important. For the past 10 years, Antal has conducted [customized labour market surveys](#) to help you determine how much to pay, which roles to make redundant and how to optimise remuneration packages.

Key labour market trends we see today include:

1. Companies are becoming more cautious about headcount. In 2027**, 61% of employers primarily plan to replace departing employees, while only 24% intend to expand their workforce; 9% plan to freeze recruitment and 6% to reduce headcount.
2. HR's focus is shifting from simply finding people to improving performance. Companies identify their main people priorities as employee training and development (52%), HR process automation (51%), AI implementation (49%) and improving employee performance – 37%.
3. Skills shortages persist but are becoming more concentrated. Employers face the greatest difficulties when recruiting specialists and blue-collar workers, at 41% and 40% respectively. By function, sales, production and engineering vacancies are the hardest to fill. This makes [professional advice](#) particularly important when developing a workforce strategy.



INTRODUCTION

4. Salary growth is slowing and becoming more selective. For 2027, 42% of employers plan to increase salaries for all employees, while a further 39% intend to award selective increases; the most common range of planned increases is 4–9%.

A particular focus of this edition is the changing relationship between employers, candidates and technology. Flexible working remains important: for 81% of respondents, the availability of remote or hybrid working makes an employer more attractive. Recruitment automation, however, requires particular care: automated screening reduces the motivation to apply for vacancies among 35% of candidates.

For us, these figures are more than statistics. They relate directly to the challenges that companies bring to us every day. Antal Talent helps businesses [recruit executives, managers and specialists](#) across key functions and industries. Antal Business Solutions delivers [outsourcing](#) and [volume recruitment projects](#). A separate area of our work is [customized labour market surveys](#), [salaries and remuneration packages](#), helping businesses benchmark their employment offering, plan payroll budgets and make decisions based on current data.

More than 30 years of operating in Russia give us a long-term perspective on the labour market. Today, it is particularly clear that companies have to address several priorities at once: introducing technology, improving performance and controlling costs, while continuing to attract and retain strong talent.

We would like to thank all survey participants, our clients, partners and experts for helping us build an objective picture of the labour market. We hope the findings will help you better understand the current situation, plan recruitment and remuneration, and make more confident decisions when developing your HR strategy for 2027.

Yours sincerely,
Konstantin Bryauzov – konstantin.bryauzov@antaltalent.com
General Manager, Antal Talent

Vladimir Telyatnikov – vladimir.telyatnikov@antaltalent.com
General Manager, Antal Business Solutions

*[Antal Talent pulse survey Companies' plans for the remainder of 2026, 2026](#)

** [Antal Talent pulse survey Companies' plans for the remainder of the year and early 2027, 2026](#)

DEMOGRAPHICS

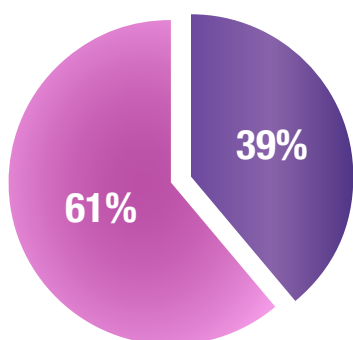
GENDER



MEN



WOMEN



AGE

< 25



5%

25-30



9%

31-45



57%

46-60



28%

> 60



1%

SENIORITY LEVEL

14%



Senior executives

53%



Managers

33%



Specialists

Top management (Managing Director, company head or business owner)

Middle manager / line manager (with direct reports)

Specialist / technical specialist (without direct reports)

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED FOR YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?

20%



< 1 year

38%



1-3 years

14%



4-5 years

16%



6-10 years

7%



11-15 years

5%



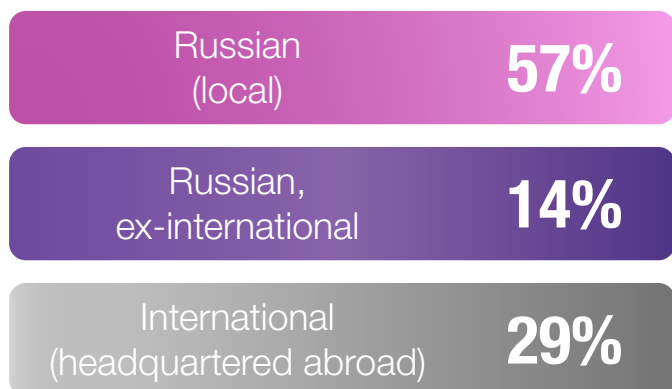
> 15 years

DEMOGRAPHICS

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE COMPANY IN RUSSIA

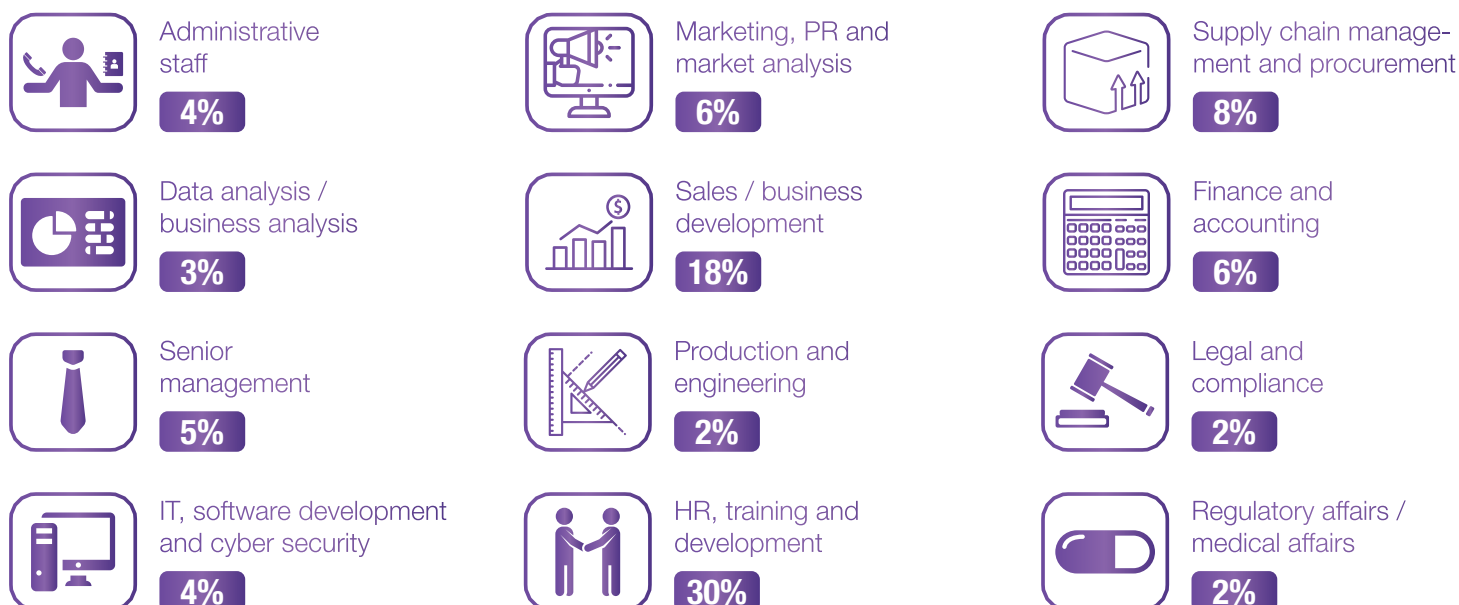


COMPANY TYPE



SPECIALIZATION*

* 10% selected 'Other'



DEMOGRAPHICS

COMPANY INDUSTRY. PART 1

22%



Healthcare

Pharmaceutical market (manufacture and sale of medicines)

73%

Medical devices and laboratory diagnostics market

14%

Healthcare services (private and public)

5%

Clinical research (commercial services)

3%

Pharmaceutical distributors and distributors of equipment and consumables

3%

Services for the pharmaceutical industry (analytics and market research)

1%

Veterinary medicine

1%

Request recruitment services
antaltalent.ru

9%



Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)

Food

39%

Beverages

7%

Household cleaning products

5%

Cosmetics

11%

Homeware

6%

Alcohol

4%

Tobacco

4%

Children's products

3%

Electronics (including small and large household appliances)

11%

Other fast-moving consumer goods

10%

7%



Professional services

Business services (consulting, certification, audit and business advisory services)

43%

Education and training. HR services. Translation

30%

Consumer services

8%

Legal

7%

Event management. Exhibitions

6%

Marketing services. Research

6%

3%



Natural Resources

Oil and gas extraction

20%

Oil and gas processing and petrochemicals

23%

Mining

40%

Energy. Power generation companies

17%

DEMOGRAPHICS

COMPANY INDUSTRY. PART 2



Logistics and transport

10%



Industrial equipment and components

2%



IT, telecoms and internet

9%



Mechanical engineering

2%



Retail and wholesale

7%



Tourism and HoReCa

1%



Other

6%



Agriculture

1%



Banking and financial services

5%



Ingredients and equipment for the food industry

1%



Construction and real estate

4%



Packaging and paper

1%



Chemical industry

3%



Metallurgy

1%



Automotive and specialist vehicles

2%



Public sector

1%



Media and entertainment

2%



Forestry and forest products

1%



JOB MARKET OVERVIEW AND SALARY SURVEY

JOB CHANGES & SEARCH

RUSSIA

ANTAL TALENT

2026–2027

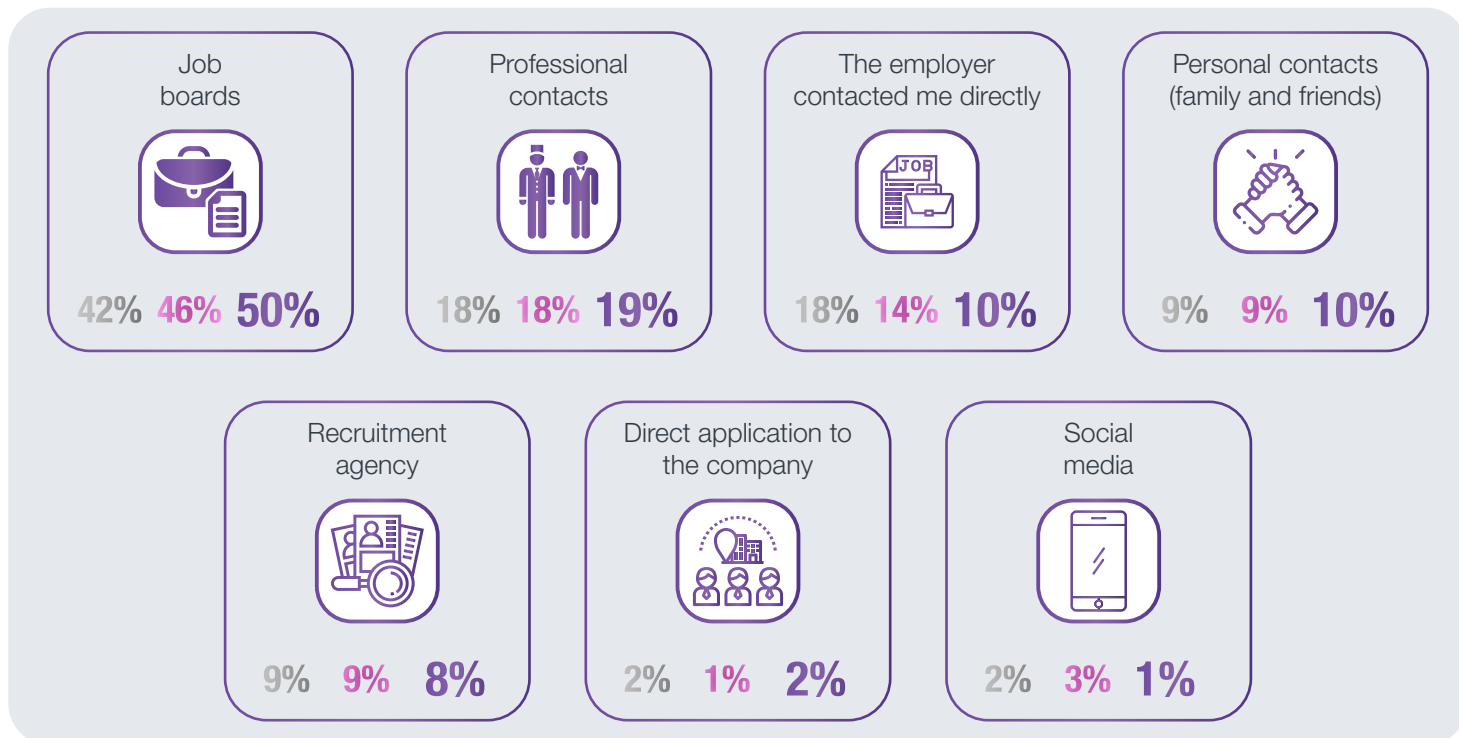


JOB CHANGES

2024
2025
2026*

HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR CURRENT JOB?

* Responses from people who looked for a job in the past 12 months (from May 2025 to August 2026)



HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR CURRENT JOB?

BY SENIORITY LEVEL

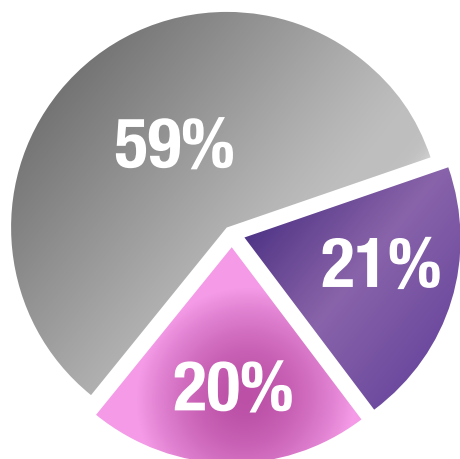
	Top managers	Manager	Specialist
Job boards	27%	50%	55%
Professional contacts	29%	18%	16%
The employer contacted me directly	24%	12%	6%
Personal contacts (family and friends)	7%	9%	12%
Recruitment agency	11%	9%	8%
Direct application to the company	2%	1%	2%
Social media	0%	1%	1%

EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES FROM THE QUARTERLY PULSE SURVEY

Employers' responses

RECRUITMENT

HOW HAVE YOUR COMPANY'S REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATES CHANGED **OVER THE PAST YEAR?**



- No significant change
- Become **stricter**
- Become more **flexible**

Why has your company **tightened** its requirements for candidates?

79%

The company needs employees who can deliver results quickly

48%

Business challenges have become more complex

45%

Managers have raised their expectations of the quality of new hires

39%

Previous negative experience of hiring unsuitable employees

24%

More suitable candidates are now available on the market

19%

Developments in AI require more highly skilled employees

Why has your company become **more flexible** about its requirements?

65%

Shortage of candidates on the market

46%

It is difficult to fill vacancies within the required timeframe

40%

Candidates' potential matters more to us

36%

To speed up recruitment

33%

The company is willing to train employees

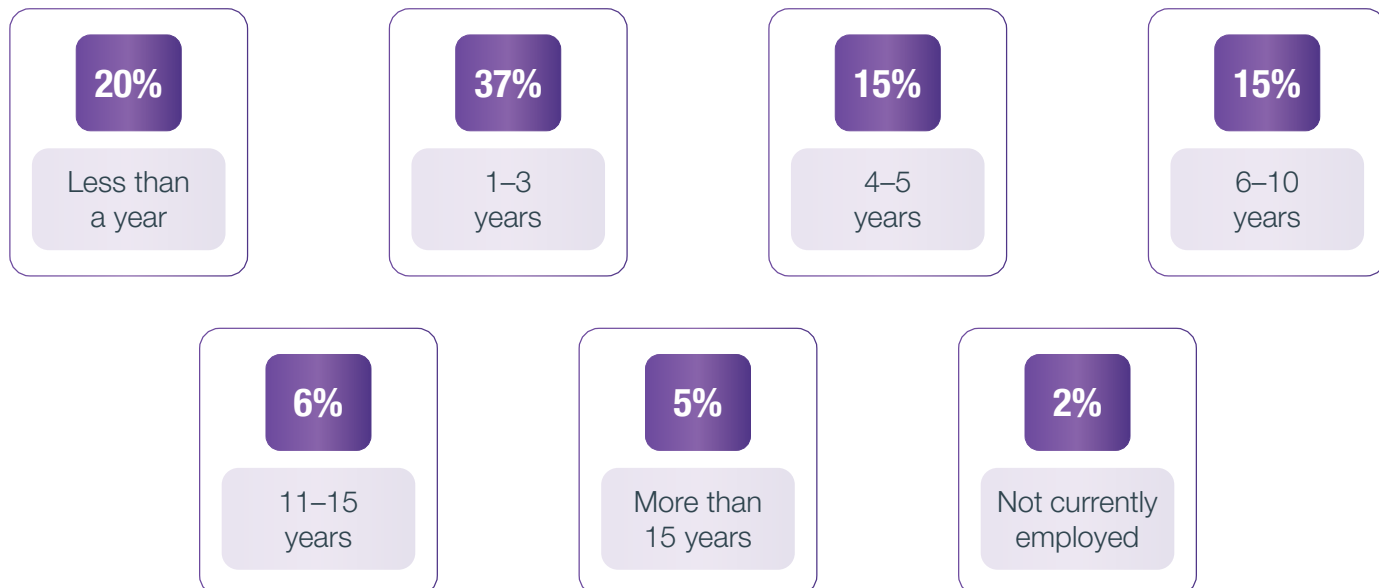
14%

Business requirements have changed



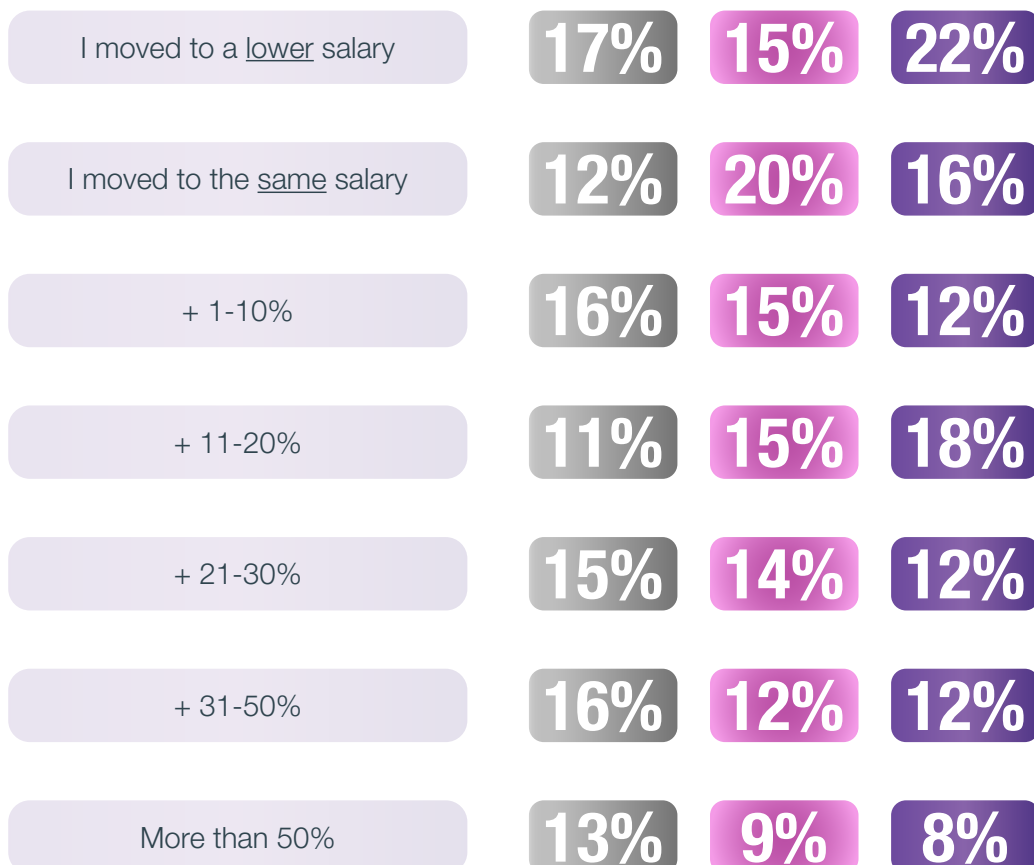
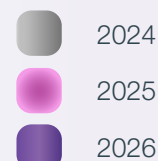
JOB CHANGES

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED FOR YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?



WHAT INCREASE IN BASE SALARY DID YOU RECEIVE WHEN YOU JOINED YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?*

* Responses from people who changed jobs in the past 12 months



[Request a salary survey](#)



JOB CHANGES

HOW MANY COMPANIES DID YOU INTERVIEW WITH BEFORE JOINING YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?*

* Responses from people who changed jobs in the past 12 months

17%

1
company

13%

2
companies

19%

3
companies

19%

4-5
companies

32%

More than 5
companies

WHAT DIFFICULTIES DID YOU ENCOUNTER WHEN LOOKING FOR A JOB?

56%



Applications are
viewed, but I am
not invited to
interview

53%



Few suitable
vacancies

52%



The remuneration
offered does
not meet my
expectations

42%



Frequent rejections
of my applications

39%



Companies provide no
feedback or take a long
time to respond

32%



Employers' use of AI in
the recruitment process

15%



I lack the experience
and knowledge required
for the roles I want

29%



No difficulties / the
company contacted
me directly

WHAT IS IT?

A one-to-one meeting, online or in person, with experts from Antal Talent. Career consulting is invaluable if you are:

- considering a move into a new or related industry;
- looking to return to work after a long career break;
- planning to change employer;
- seeking to progress within your current company.

WE HELP YOU WITH:

Identifying your key skills and competencies

Identifying the industry and role in which you can best fulfil your potential

Learning how to choose the right employers

Reviewing and refining your CV

Developing your self-presentation skills

Learning how to define and communicate your preferences

TYPES OF CONSULTATION

Career consulting

Interview preparation and verbal presentation skills

Revising, updating or improving your CV



Find out more about the service and submit an enquiry on our website

Survey participants receive a **10% discount.**

Promo code: **Антал26**

Enter the promo code in the 'Comments' field when submitting an enquiry through the Antal website and when paying for the service via Robokassa. **The offer is valid until the end of 2026.**



JOB CHANGES

DO YOU CHECK COMPANY REVIEWS BEFORE APPLYING?

46%

I check before applying

37%

I check before an interview

8%

I check after receiving an offer

9%

I do not check

WHAT ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION WITH AN EMPLOYER MAKE YOU WITHDRAW FROM A RECRUITMENT PROCESS?

69%

Negative reviews of the company confirmed during the recruitment process

59%

Disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour by interviewers

56%

Inconsistencies in the terms described at different stages

20%

An unclear recruitment process / excessively slow decision-making

20%

An unclear or contradictory job description

19%

Pressure from the employer, such as a demand for a quick decision

14%

Frequent changes to the role requirements during the selection process

12%

Formal or impersonal communication

11%

No feedback or delayed feedback



JOB CHANGES

WHICH SOURCES HAVE THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR OPINION OF AN EMPLOYER?

79%



Personal experience
of interacting with
the company

74%



Recommendations
from acquaintances
and colleagues

53%



Online reviews

24%



Recruiter /
agency

12%



Media
coverage

10%



The company's
social media

WOULD YOU CHOOSE A COMPANY WITH A STRONGER REPUTATION (EMPLOYER BRAND), EVEN IF SOME OF ITS TERMS, SUCH AS SALARY, WORKING HOURS OR REMUNERATION PACKAGE, WERE LESS ATTRACTIVE?

36%

Yes

32%

Unsure

32%

No

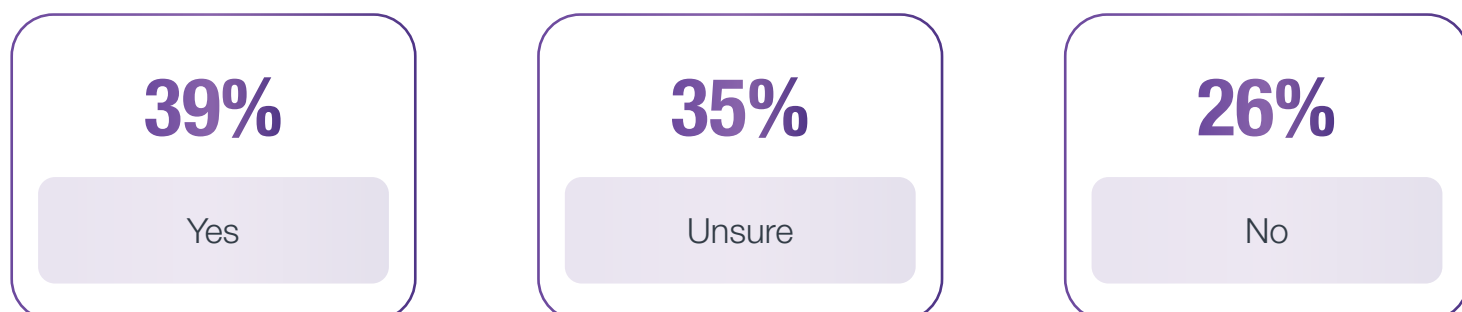


JOB CHANGES

WHAT WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO COMPROMISE ON TO WORK FOR A COMPANY WITH A STRONGER REPUTATION?



WOULD YOU CHOOSE AN EMPLOYER WITH A MIXED REPUTATION (A WEAK EMPLOYER BRAND) IF ITS TERMS, SUCH AS SALARY, WORKING HOURS AND REMUNERATION PACKAGE, WERE ATTRACTIVE TO YOU?





RELOCATION

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED RELOCATING WITHIN RUSSIA IN THE PAST TWO YEARS?

8%

Yes, I relocated

20%

Yes, I considered it but did not move

20%

No, I declined straight away

52%

No, I was not offered the option

WHY DID YOU DECIDE AGAINST RELOCATING?

50%

Family circumstances

23%

The financial terms were unsuitable

22%

The region / location was unsuitable

18%

The company did not offer a relocation package

13%

Other

13%

The working conditions were unsuitable (workload, hours or work-life balance)

9%

Lack of career prospects in the new location

6%

The job responsibilities were unsuitable



- I received a better offer in my current region;
- another candidate was selected;
- I did not want to relocate;
- the employer changed its mind;
- etc.



Vacancies with Antal Talent's clients



RELOCATION

UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS WOULD YOU CONSIDER RELOCATING WITHIN RUSSIA?

62%



Attractive financial terms

46%



An attractive region / city

41%



An interesting project / responsibilities

39%



A good relocation package

37%



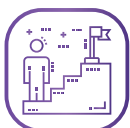
A more senior role / greater responsibility

30%



I would not relocate within Russia, regardless of the terms

27%



Career prospects

18%



Work-life balance

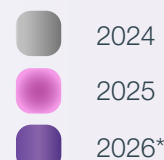
19%



Good working conditions

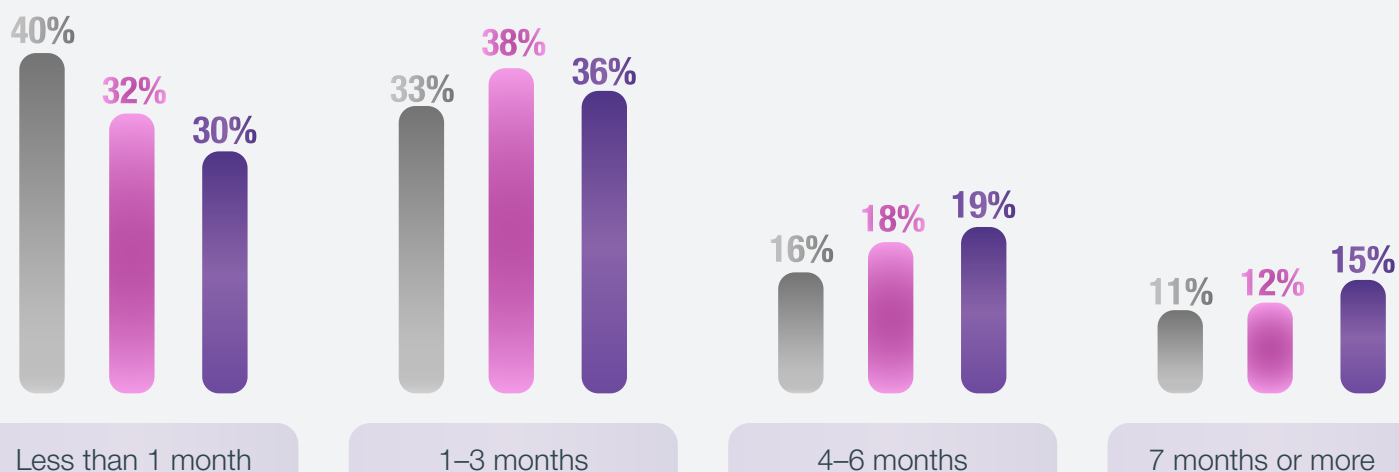


JOB CHANGES



HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO FIND YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT JOB?

* Responses from people who looked for a job in the past 12 months (from May 2025 to August 2026)



ARE YOU PLANNING TO CHANGE JOB THIS YEAR?

I am looking for a new job



19% 22% 23%

I plan to look for a new job



11% 11% 11%

I am not looking, but would consider an interesting offer



44% 44% 43%

I am not considering a job change



26% 23% 23%

Vacancies with Antal Talent's clients





JOB CHANGES

ARE YOU PLANNING TO CHANGE JOBS THIS YEAR?

DEPENDING ON **SPECIALIZATION**



Sales / business
development

27%

I am looking for a
new job

12%

I plan to look for a
new job

44%

I am not looking,
but would consider
an interesting offer

17%

I am not
considering a job
change



Marketing and PR

28%

I am looking for a
new job

11%

I plan to look for a
new job

43%

I am not looking,
but would consider
an interesting offer

18%

I am not
considering a job
change



Human
resources

13%

I am looking for a
new job

9%

I plan to look for a
new job

44%

I am not looking,
but would consider
an interesting offer

34%

I am not
considering a job
change



IT and software
development

31%

I am looking for a
new job

8%

I plan to look for a
new job

45%

I am not looking,
but would consider
an interesting offer

16%

I am not
considering a job
change



Finance and
accounting

31%

I am looking for a
new job

12%

I plan to look for a
new job

36%

I am not looking,
but would consider
an interesting offer

21%

I am not
considering a job
change



Supply chain
management and
procurement

36%

I am looking for a
new job

12%

I plan to look for a
new job

37%

I am not looking,
but would consider
an interesting offer

15%

I am not
considering a job
change

EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES FROM THE QUARTERLY PULSE SURVEY

Employers' responses

YOUR WORKFORCE PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

COMPANIES' **RECRUITMENT** PLANS FOR **2027**

Increasing headcount



24%

Replacing departing employees



61%

Recruitment freeze



9%

Reducing headcount



6%

WHO COMPANIES PLAN TO RECRUIT IN 2027

45%



Sales

34%



Production

28%



Mass staff

25%



Engineers

18%



Marketing

18%



IT

16%



Logistics

10%



Finance and accounting

9%



Top management

6%



Admin staff

5%



Human resources

3%



Medical staff

RECRUITMENT PROCESS OUTSOURCING (RPO)



WHAT IS IT?

Recruitment process outsourcing involves transferring some or all of the candidate sourcing and recruitment process to a specialist provider.

WHEN YOU NEED THIS SERVICE

Recruitment process outsourcing is particularly relevant when a company enters a new market, launches a new product or project, or expands its business.

If you want to reduce costs and optimise your recruitment process, for example during a temporary increase in hiring volumes due to seasonal demand or a new project launch, outsourcing is an ideal solution that allows you to focus on higher-priority internal matters.

BENEFITS

Cost savings

RPO is more cost-effective than standard recruitment agency services. It also removes the need to recruit, train or retain a dedicated team of recruiters for the project.

Transparent, measurable results

Work follows an agreed process with clear KPIs.

Clear budget and time planning

You know the project cost, with no variable recruitment charges.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
THE SERVICE AND
SUBMIT AN ENQUIRY
ON OUR WEBSITE

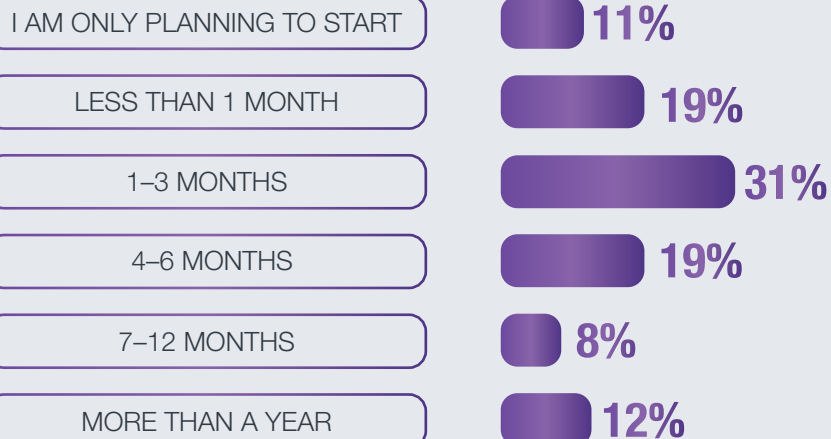
The service **is priced individually**, based on the following factors:

- Urgency of hiring
- Number of employees required
- Salary levels



LENGTH OF JOB SEARCH

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING FOR A JOB?*



HAVE OTHER COMPANIES OR RECRUITMENT AGENCIES APPROACHED YOU ABOUT VACANCIES IN THE PAST YEAR?

8%

Yes, and I joined another company

46%

Yes, but I stayed with my current employer

46%

No, I have not been approached



WHY DID YOU DECLINE THE OFFER?

43%

The offer came at the wrong time

35%

The salary offered was unsuitable

24%

The responsibilities were unsuitable

24%

The company as a whole was unsuitable

12%

I did not like the manager

10%

The bonus scheme was unsuitable

7%

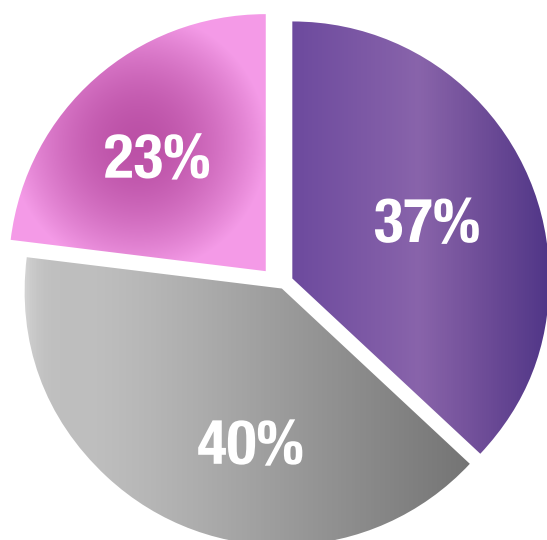
Other

* Responses from those who selected 'I am looking for a new job' when asked 'Are you planning to change jobs this year?'

EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES FROM THE QUARTERLY PULSE SURVEY

Employers' responses

HOW HAS YOUR TIME TO FILL VACANCIES CHANGED THIS YEAR?



-  Unchanged
-  **Decreased**, we fill vacancies more quickly
-  **Increased**, we take longer to fill vacancies

YOUR COMPANY'S CURRENT AVERAGE TIME TO FILL A VACANCY

	Up to 2 weeks	Up to 1 month	1–3 months	4–6 months	More than 6 months
Top managers	3%	6%	34%	36%	21%
Middle management	1%	16%	56%	21%	6%
Specialists	5%	33%	50%	9%	3%
Mass staff	28%	44%	24%	3%	1%

WHAT IS IT?

An in-depth analysis of the labour market that gives employers a detailed map of the candidates available for specific roles. Through this research, Antal Talent experts identify potential candidates, assess their professional capabilities and develop an engagement strategy.

WHEN YOU NEED THIS SERVICE

Talent mapping is particularly important when a company is planning major changes, such as entering new markets, launching projects or restructuring.

The service supports workforce planning, the search for scarce specialists and preparation for senior appointments. For example, a client needs to fill a senior executive role, but there are no active jobseekers on the external market. Talent mapping helps identify strong candidates, analyse their career paths and develop a recruitment strategy.

WHAT YOU RECEIVE

The client receives a structured report containing:

A list of suitable candidates and their professional profiles

Analysis of competition and market trends

Recommendations for adapting the recruitment approach



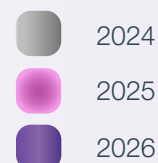
FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
THE SERVICE AND
SUBMIT AN ENQUIRY ON
OUR WEBSITE

The service **is priced individually**, based on the following factors:

- Complexity of the brief
- Scope of work
- Urgency



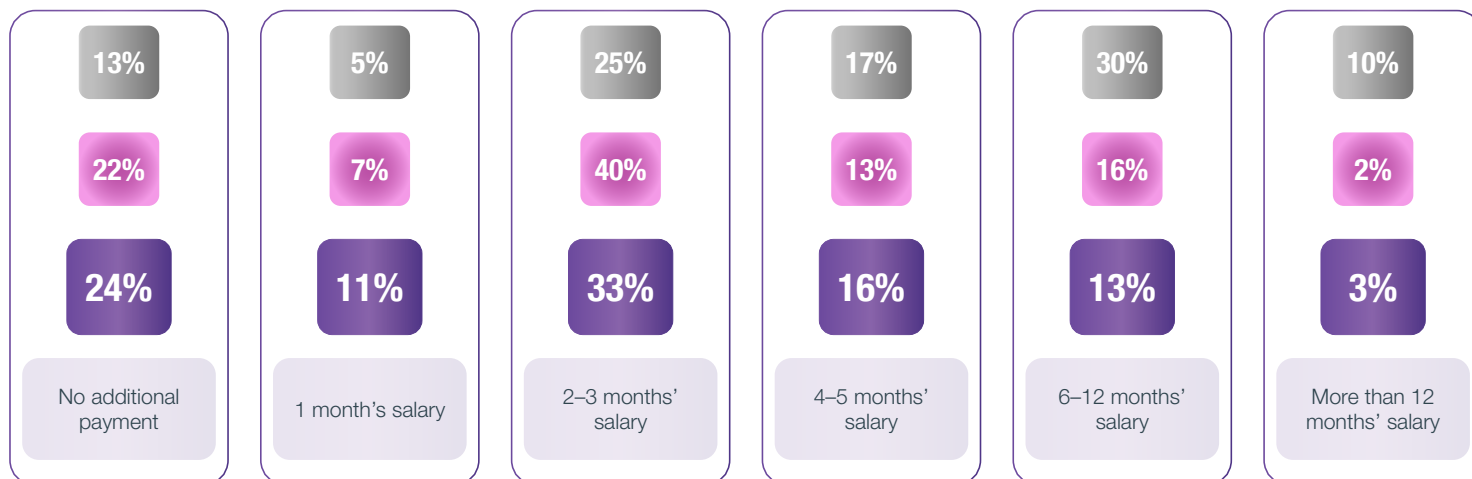
REDUCTIONS



HAVE YOU BEEN MADE REDUNDANT IN THE PAST YEAR?



HOW MANY MONTHS' BASE SALARY DID YOU RECEIVE AS A REDUNDANCY PAYMENT?



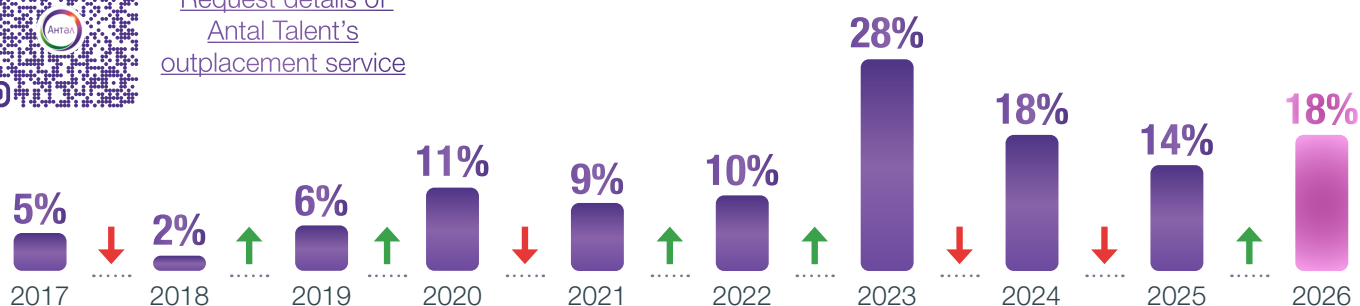
DID YOUR EMPLOYER OFFER YOU OUTPLACEMENT SUPPORT WHEN YOU WERE MADE REDUNDANT?*

Outplacement is employer-funded support with finding a new job / career consulting.

* The chart shows the percentage of respondents who were offered outplacement support by their employer when made redundant



[Request details of Antal Talent's outplacement service](#)



EMPLOYEE OUTPLACEMENT



WHAT IS IT?

Job-search support for departing employees, including those affected by workforce reductions and the closure of business units.

This is more than a dismissal process: it supports employees' transition to a new job, helping to minimise risks for both employer and employee.

During the consultation, our team of experts develops an individual job-search strategy tailored to the candidate's function and seniority level.

BENEFITS OF OUTPLACEMENT

Cost savings

The service helps you reach an agreement with an employee and reduce the costs and payments associated with termination.

Maintaining relationships and employee loyalty

Helping an employee find a new role allows you to maintain your relationship. Other employees will value the support the company provides, even in difficult circumstances.

A strong reputation

A well-managed approach to workforce reductions can establish you as an employer that cares about its people and generate positive feedback even from departing employees.



**FIND OUT MORE AND
REQUEST THE SERVICE
ON OUR WEBSITE**



FEEDBACK

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO YOU IN COMMUNICATION WITH A COMPANY AFTER THE INITIAL CONTACT?

52%

Speed of feedback, including after a rejection

51%

Constructive feedback after each stage

43%

Clarity about the selection stages

40%

Personalised communication rather than template responses

30%

The opportunity to ask follow-up questions and receive answers

28%

Regular updates on the status of my application

19%

Flexibility in communication, including respect for my time and rescheduling

16%

Clear deadlines for each stage



COMMISSION CUSTOMIZED LABOUR
MARKET SURVEYS

EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES FROM THE QUARTERLY PULSE SURVEY

Employers' responses

WHAT DO YOU PAY MOST ATTENTION TO WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH A CANDIDATE?

57%

Interest in the role and the company

50%

Realistic expectations of the role and the employer

46%

Ability to express ideas clearly

35%

Whether salary expectations fit the company's salary range

23%

Interview preparation and knowledge of the company

22%

Keeping to agreements

17%

Politeness and a respectful tone

15%

Good spoken and written communication

9%

Willingness to ask questions

6%

Punctuality

3%

Speed of response to messages and calls

3%

Interview dress code



Request the survey via the link*

* The survey is sent to a corporate email address



JOB MARKET OVERVIEW AND SALARY SURVEY

INCOME AND SALARIES

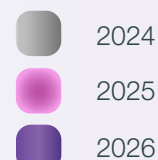
RUSSIA

ANTAL TALENT

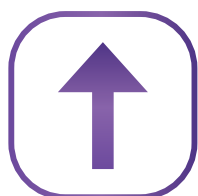
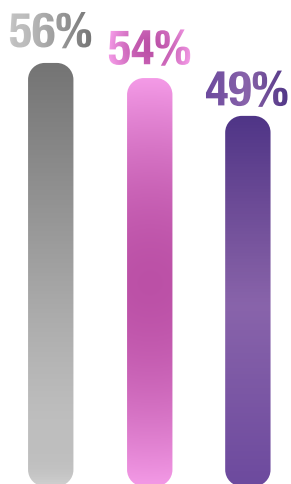
2026–2027



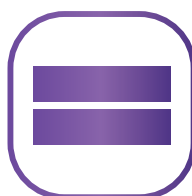
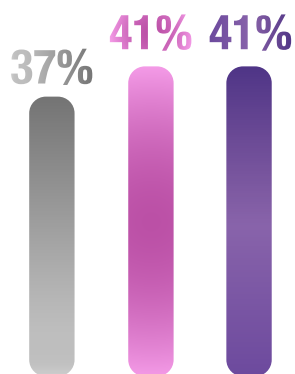
INCOME AND SALARIES



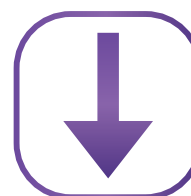
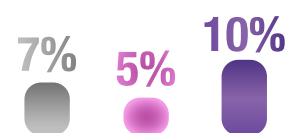
HOW HAS YOUR BASE SALARY CHANGED IN 2026 COMPARED WITH 2025?



Increased



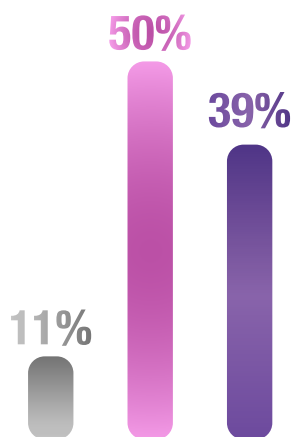
Unchanged



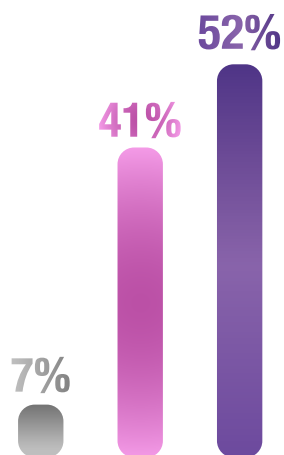
Decreased

HOW HAS YOUR BASE SALARY CHANGED IN 2026 COMPARED WITH 2025?

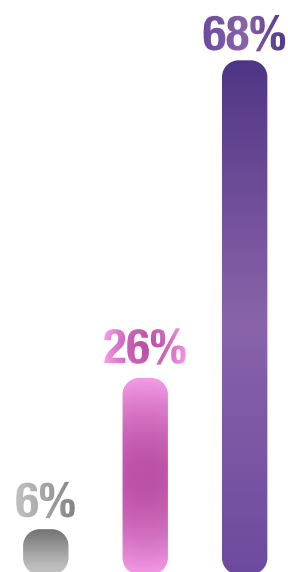
DEPENDING ON **COMPANY TYPE**



Russian
(local)



Russian,
ex-international



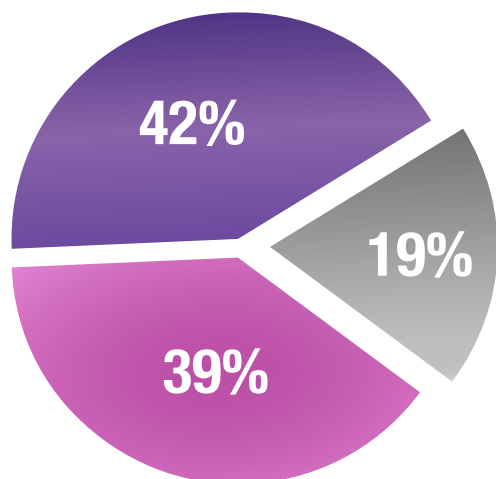
International
(headquartered abroad)



EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES FROM THE QUARTERLY PULSE SURVEY

Employers' responses

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR EMPLOYEES' SALARIES IN 2027?



-  Keep salaries unchanged
-  Award selective increases to individual employees
-  Increase salaries for all employees

PLANNED PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN BASE SALARIES FOR 2027

Up to 4%

5%

4-6%

31%

7-9%

39%

10-12%

20%

13-15%

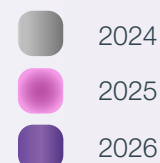
4%

16-20%

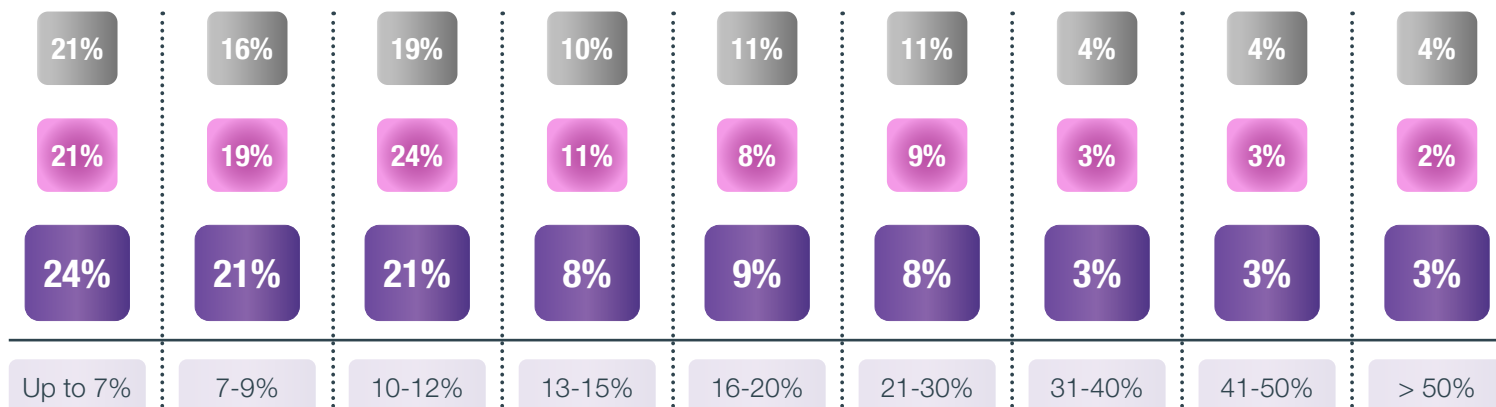
1%



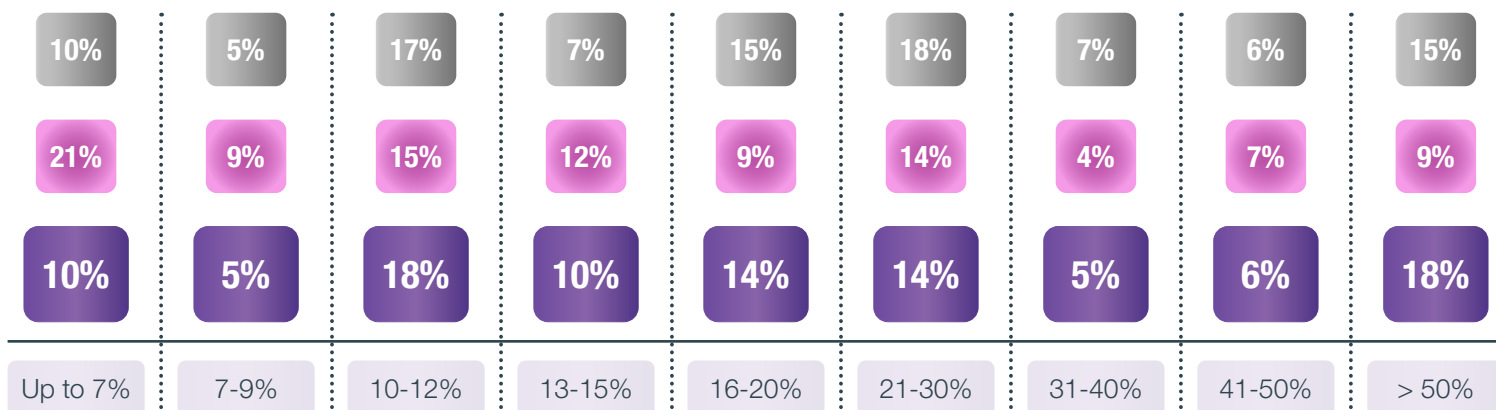
INCOME AND SALARIES



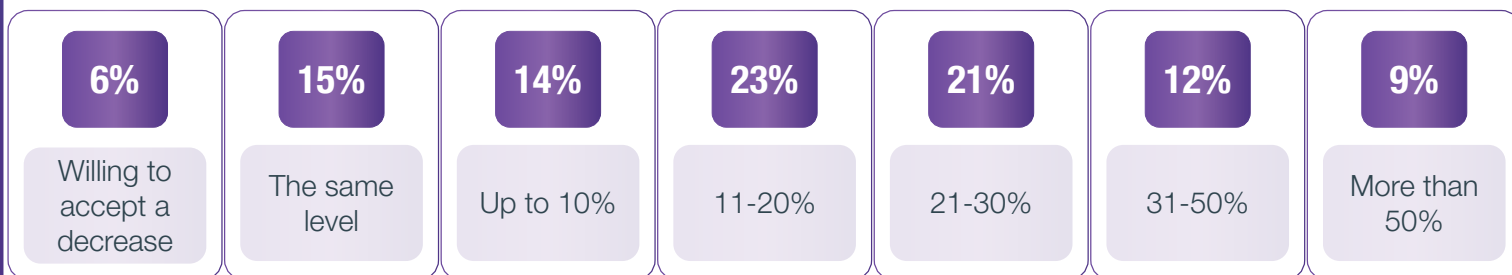
BY HOW MUCH HAS YOUR BASE SALARY INCREASED IN 2026?



BY HOW MUCH HAS YOUR BASE SALARY DECREASED IN 2026?



WHAT INCREASE IN BASE SALARY DO YOU EXPECT WHEN MOVING TO A NEW JOB?





INCOME AND SALARIES

HOW HAS YOUR TOTAL INCOME CHANGED OVER THE PAST YEAR?

48%

Increased

38%

Unchanged

14%

Decreased

BY WHAT PERCENTAGE HAS YOUR TOTAL INCOME INCREASED?

19%

18%

21%

11%

11%

10%

4%

3%

3%

1-6%

7-9%

10-12%

13-15%

16-20%

21-30%

31-40%

41-50%

>50%

REASONS FOR AN INCREASE IN TOTAL INCOME

77%

Higher base salary

29%

Higher bonus

18%

Moving to another job

7%

An additional source of income
RELATED to my professional work

4%

Investments

4%

An additional source of income
UNRELATED to my professional work

4%

Other

CUSTOMIZED LABOUR MARKET SURVEYS



WHAT IS IT?

Customized Labour Market Surveys give companies reliable data on salaries and remuneration packages in their market segment to support budgeting, planning and efforts to reduce employee turnover.

CUSTOMIZED LABOUR MARKET SURVEYS HELP YOU:

Prepare your payroll budget

Address employee turnover

Benchmark your salaries against the market

Design a benefits and remuneration package

Find new ways to motivate employees

Strengthen your employer brand

TYPES OF RESEARCH

Salary survey

An analytical report on fixed, variable and total remuneration for your selected roles in the relevant location and industry

Remuneration package survey

A report on benefits and additional payments in your chosen industry or region

Survey of business travel allowances / work schedules / KPI systems / employment arrangements

Employee turnover survey

A report on industry averages and key competitors in your chosen sector or region

A club survey based on your request

We can conduct a survey among companies in your industry covering different aspects of the labour market, such as employee turnover, car benefits and allowances, meal subsidies and other topics.

Survey participants receive a **5% discount***. Promo code: **Антал26**

The discount on Customized Labour Market Surveys is available until the end of 2026 for a minimum order value of RUB 100,000, excluding VAT.

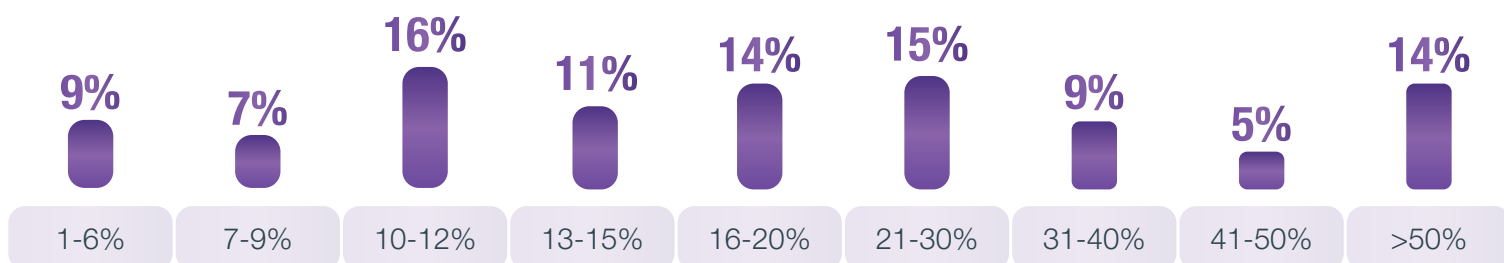
FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE SERVICE AND SUBMIT AN ENQUIRY ON OUR WEBSITE



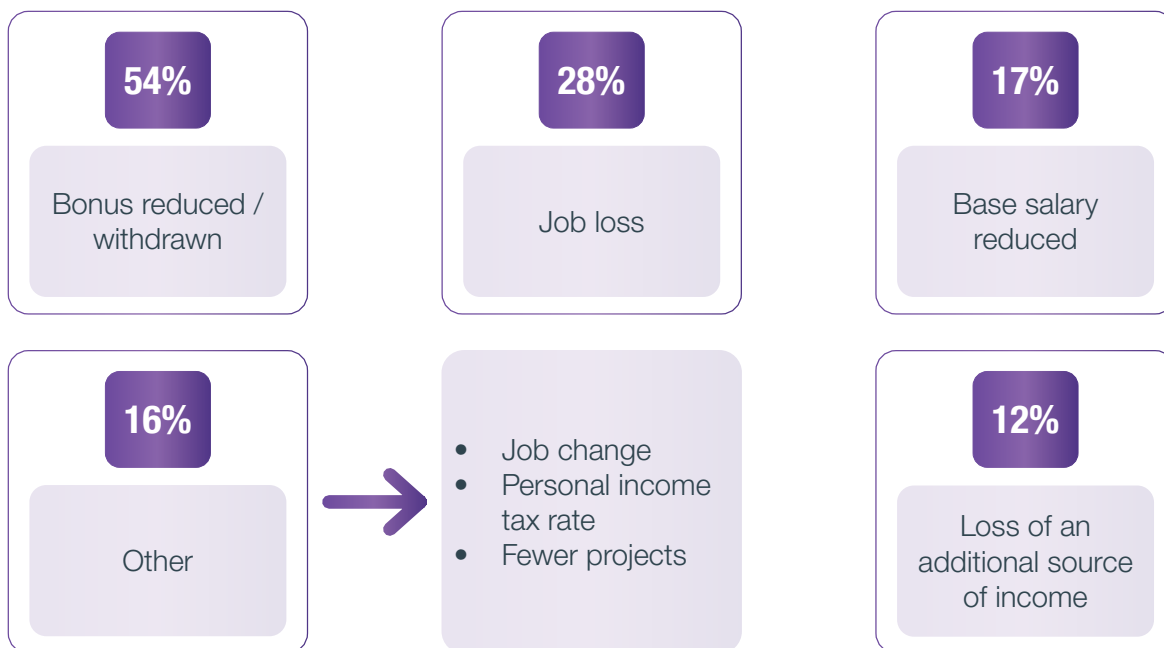


INCOME AND SALARIES

BY WHAT PERCENTAGE HAS YOUR TOTAL INCOME DECREASED?



REASONS FOR A DECREASE IN TOTAL INCOME



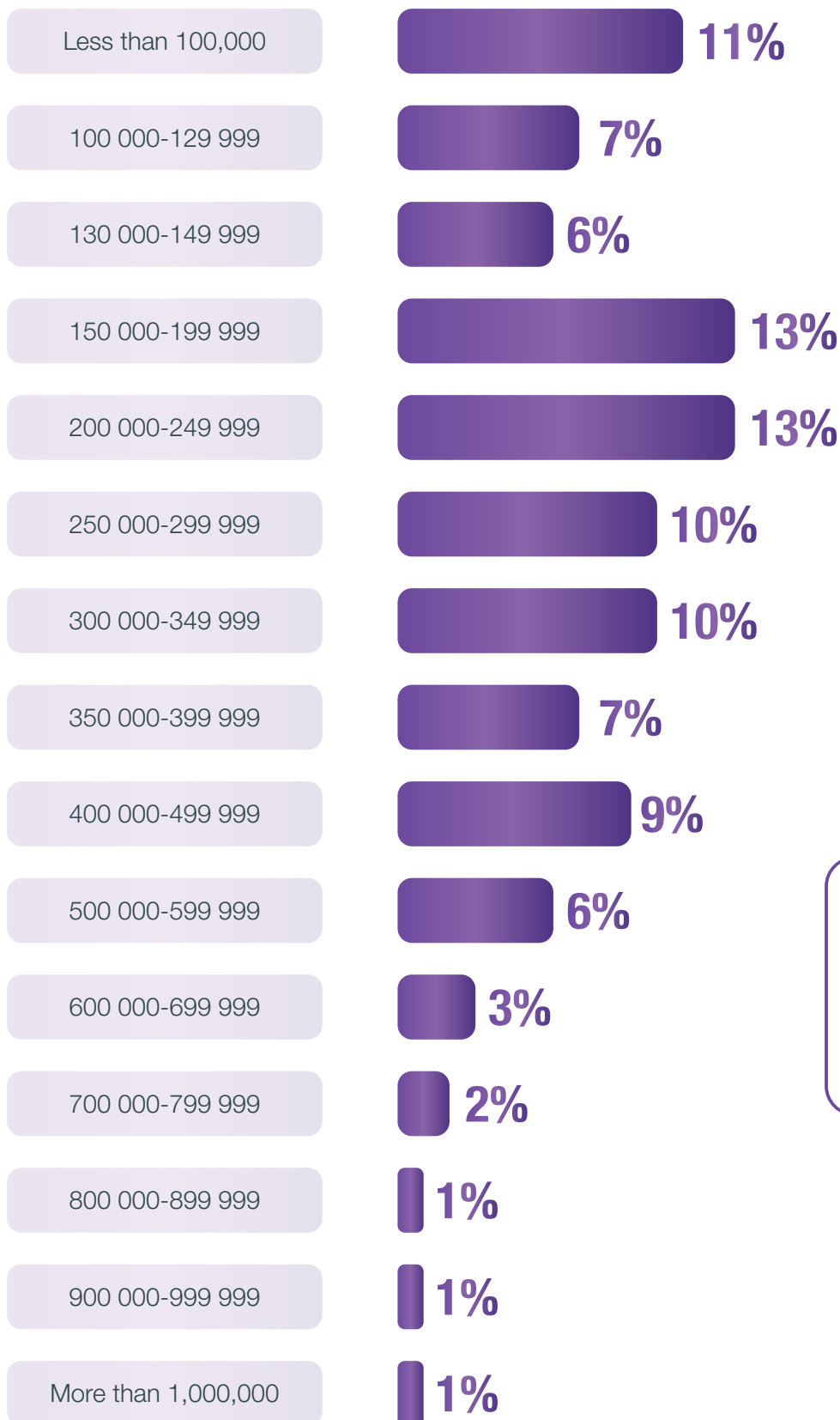
Vacancies with Antal Talent's clients





INCOME AND SALARIES

GROSS MONTHLY BASE SALARY IN RUSSIAN RUBLES



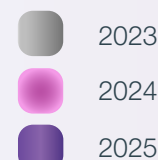
Would you like to know more
about salaries in your
industry?

[Commission a salary survey](#)

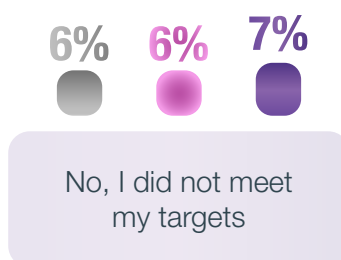
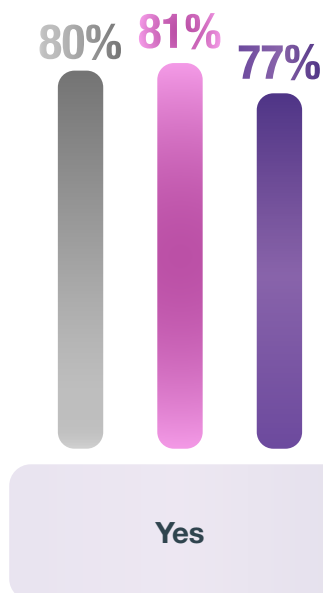




BONUSES



DID YOU RECEIVE A BONUS FOR THE PAST YEAR?



DEPENDING ON COMPANY TYPE



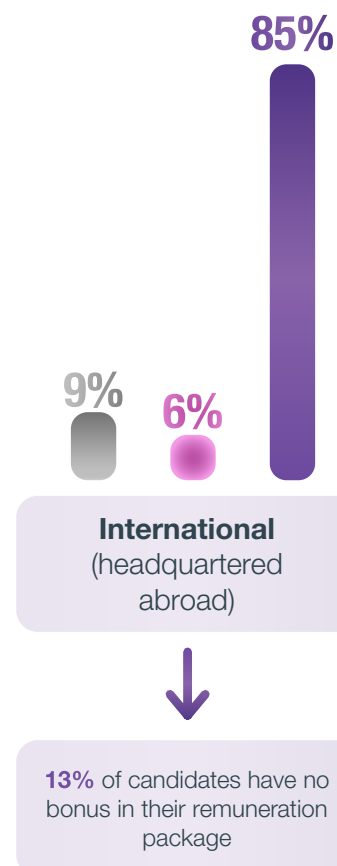
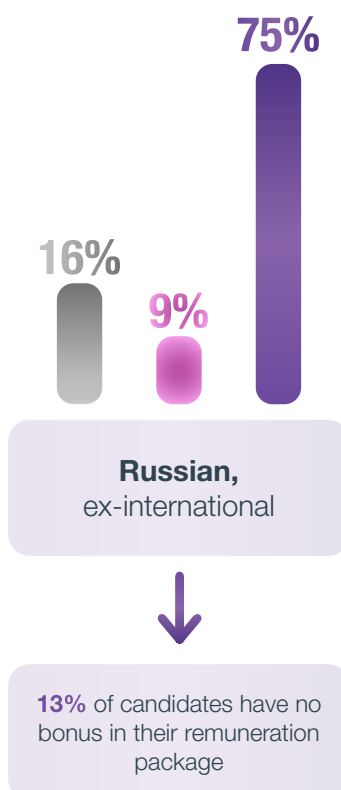
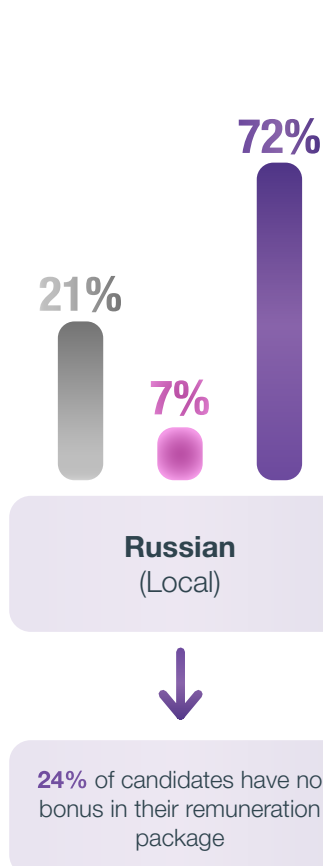
No, bonuses were cancelled



No, I did not meet my targets



Yes, I did





BONUSES

HOW MANY MONTHS' BASE SALARY DID YOUR ANNUAL BONUS AMOUNT TO?

15%

Less than
1 month's
salary

26%

1 month's
salary

24%

2 months'
salary

14%

3 months'
salary

8%

4 months'
salary

4%

5 months'
salary

9%

More than
5 months'
salary

ON AVERAGE, HOW MANY MONTHS' BASE SALARY DOES YOUR QUARTERLY BONUS AMOUNT TO?

41%

Less than
1 month's
salary

33%

1 month's
salary

12%

2 months'
salary

8%

3 months'
salary

3%

4 months'
salary

1%

5 months'
salary

2%

More than
5 months'
salary

WHAT IS IT?

Outstaffing is a service through which employees are supplied to work at the client's premises while remaining employed by an intermediary staffing provider.

Outstaffing can involve transferring your existing employees to the provider's payroll or engaging new specialists through the provider. Employees therefore work for one company in practice, while their legal employer is another company — the staffing provider.

WHEN YOU NEED THIS SERVICE

- No need to create an in-house position;
- Extending the probationary period;
- Seasonal fluctuations in staffing levels;
- Expansion into new markets and regions.

WHICH AREAS DO WE COVER?

Back office

IT

Sales

HR

Administrative
staff

Field staff: medical / sales
representatives

Call centres and
user support



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
THE SERVICE AND
SUBMIT AN ENQUIRY
ON OUR WEBSITE

The service **is priced individually**, based on the following factors:

- Number of employees
- Employees' salaries
- Timescale for transferring employees to the provider's payroll



BONUSES

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR MONTHLY BASE SALARY DOES YOUR AVERAGE MONTHLY BONUS REPRESENT?

16%

Up to 10%

21%

11-20%

21%

21-30%

17%

31-50%

8%

51-75%

8%

76-100%

9%

More than
100%

DO YOU RECEIVE ANY OTHER TYPE OF BONUS APART FROM ANNUAL, QUARTERLY AND MONTHLY BONUSES?

YES

11%

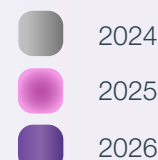
89%

NO

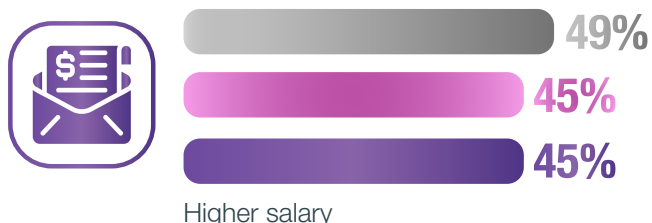


- Seasonal
- Half-yearly
- Project-based
- Performance-related
- Long-service

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER? (PART 1)*



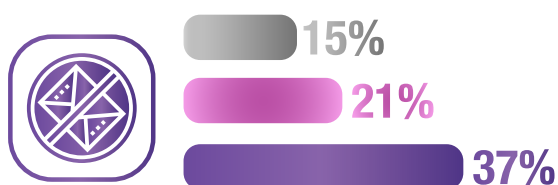
* Responses from people who looked for a job in the past 12 months (from May 2025 to August 2026)



Higher salary



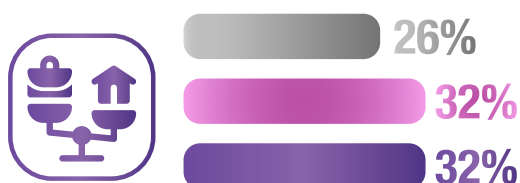
The option to work remotely, fully or partly



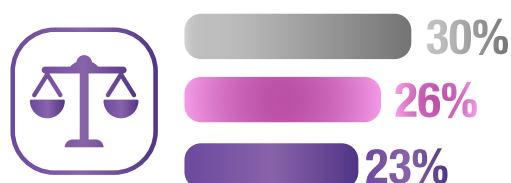
No other more attractive offers



An attractive employer brand



Work-life balance



A stable company



Broader responsibilities / new challenges



A new field / specialization / industry

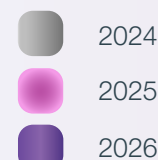


A good team

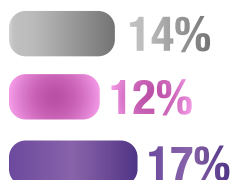


Better career prospects

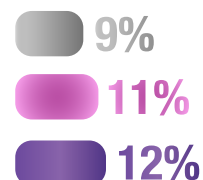
WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER? (PART 2)*



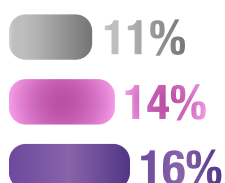
* Responses from people who looked for a job in the past 12 months (from May 2025 to August 2026)



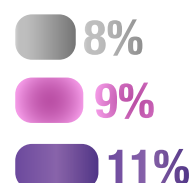
Official salary



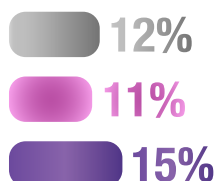
A convenient office and comfortable workspace



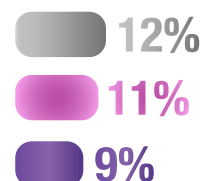
A better office location



Recommendations from acquaintances, partners or friends



An attractive company product



An attractive benefits package



**REQUEST LAST
YEAR'S SURVEY**

RECRUITMENT



RECRUITMENT FUNCTIONS

IT

Sales

Procurement

HR

Marketing and
PR

Legal and
compliance

Finance and
accounting

Production



KEY RECRUITMENT SECTORS



Logistics and
transport



FMCG
and Retail



Industrial sector



Healthcare



IT and telecom



Consulting

ROLES WE RECRUIT FOR

Top management

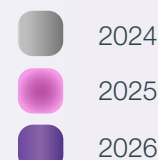
Line management

Specialists

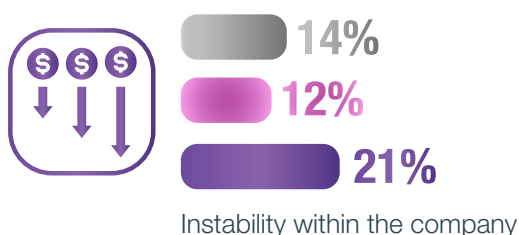
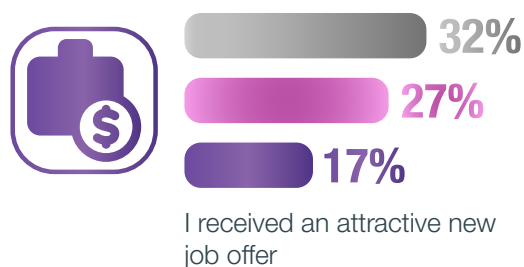
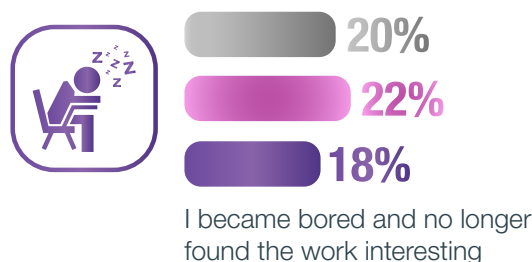
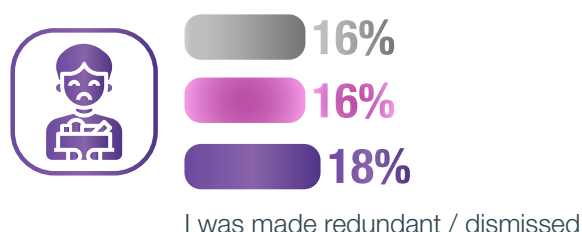
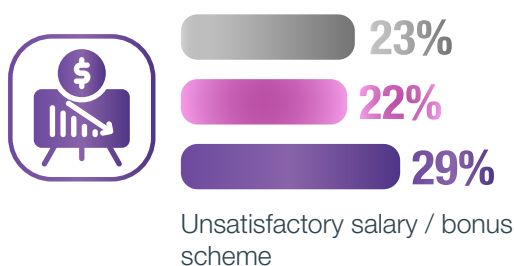
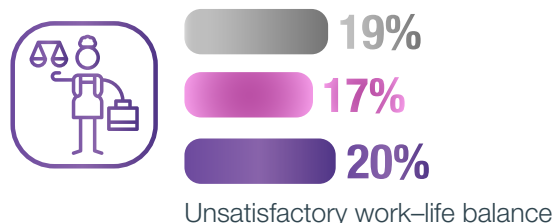
[SUBMIT A RECRUITMENT ENQUIRY ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR PREVIOUS EMPLOYER? (PART 1)*



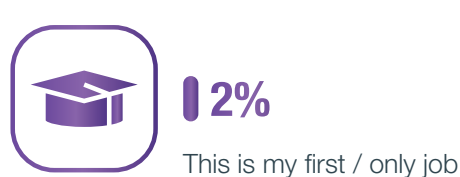
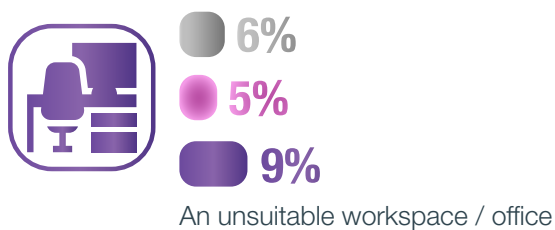
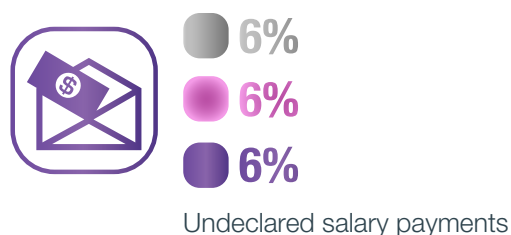
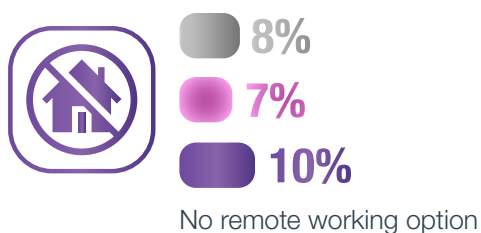
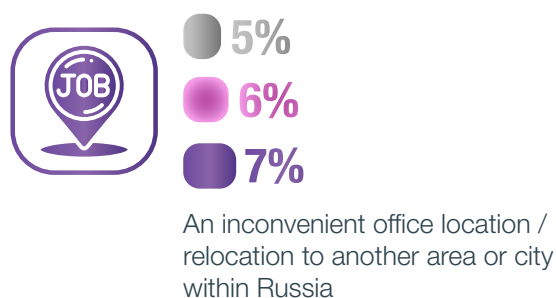
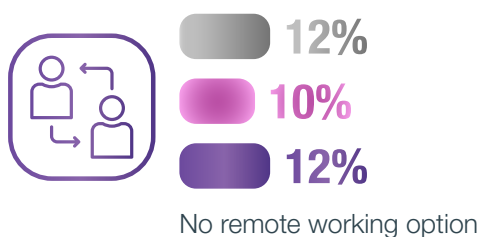
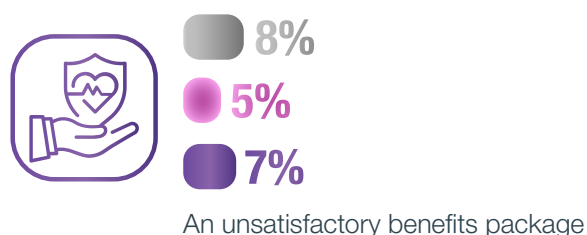
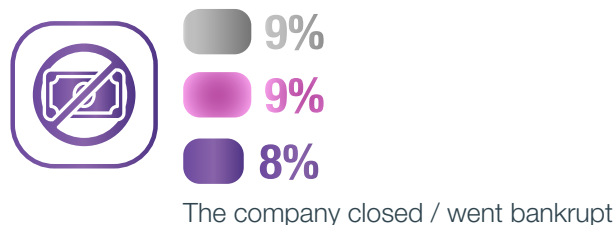
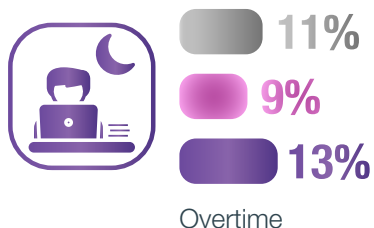
* Responses from people who looked for a job in the past 12 months (from May 2025 to August 2026)



WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR PREVIOUS EMPLOYER? (PART 2)*

2024
2025
2026

* Responses from people who looked for a job in the past 12 months (from May 2025 to August 2026)



AVAILABILITY OF BENEFITS IN REMUNERATION PACKAGES*

* Responses from participants whose remuneration packages include benefits





IMPORTANCE OF BENEFITS IN REMUNERATION PACKAGES*

80%



VHI

57%



Remote working option

39%



VHI for family members

39%



Flexible working hours

32%



Additional annual leave

22%



Enhanced sick pay

19%



Employer-funded training

18%



Company car

18%



Life insurance

17%



Parking

16%



Meal allowance

13%



Car allowance

13%



Gym membership subsidy

11%



Flexible benefits scheme

10%



Public transport allowance

9%



Mobile phone allowance

7%



Company shares / share options

6%



Company pension scheme

6%



Preferential loan terms

2%



Discounts on partner companies' products and services



WHAT ADDITIONAL FORMS OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION DOES YOUR COMPANY OFFER?

35%



A comfortable workspace

34%



An attractive office

30%



Internal competitions

26%



No additional forms of motivation

22%



Sports events

21%



Charitable projects

21%



Snack bar, fruit, healthy snacks, etc.

19%



An office relaxation room

17%



Telemedicine

17%



Talks by guest experts

16%



Psychological support programmes

14%



Individual public recognition/an employee honours board

12%



Games areas

10%



Financial and legal advice for employees

7%



An on-site gym

4%



A massage room

QUESTIONS DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PONIMAU

WHICH OF YOUR COMPANY'S WELLBEING PROGRAMMES DO YOU ACTUALLY USE?*

* 39% of respondents said that they do not use any wellbeing programmes or that their companies do not offer any

51%



Physical wellbeing

(e.g. private medical insurance and company sports events)

19%



Professional wellbeing

((e.g. new employee onboarding programmes and career consulting)

17%



Social wellbeing

(e.g. team-building activities and interest groups)

16%



Financial wellbeing

(e.g. employee discount schemes)

9%



Mental wellbeing

(e.g. consultations with a psychologist)

6%



Community wellbeing

(e.g. volunteering and charitable projects)

HOW USEFUL ARE YOUR COMPANY'S WELLBEING PROGRAMMES TO YOU PERSONALLY?

14%



Very useful

45%



Somewhat useful

30%



Neutral

6%



Not very useful

5%



Not at all useful



WHICH SOFT SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

53%



Communication skills

51%



Adaptability to changing circumstances

45%



Critical thinking

45%



Negotiation skills

38%



Strategic perspective (helicopter view)

32%



Complex problem-solving

31%



Initiative

28%



People management

28%



Time management and meeting deadlines

25%



Teamwork

21%



Emotional intelligence

19%



Giving and receiving feedback

17%



Creativity

16%



Public speaking

14%



Judgement and decision-making

8%



Ethical conduct at work



JOB MARKET OVERVIEW AND SALARY SURVEY

REMOTE WORKING

RUSSIA

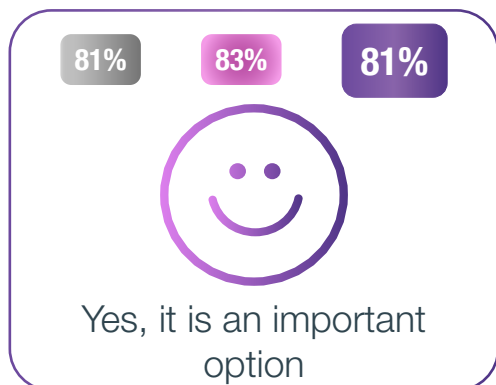
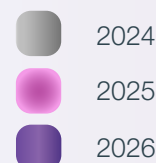
ANTAL TALENT

2026–2027





DOES THE AVAILABILITY OF REMOTE OR HYBRID WORKING MAKE AN EMPLOYER MORE ATTRACTIVE TO YOU?



DEPENDING ON GENERATION

Generation definitions

Generation Z
1999-2014

Generation Y
1983-1998

Generation X
1966-1982

Generation Z

Generation Y

Generation X

Yes, it is an important option

81%

85%

72%

No, it does not matter to me

19%

15%

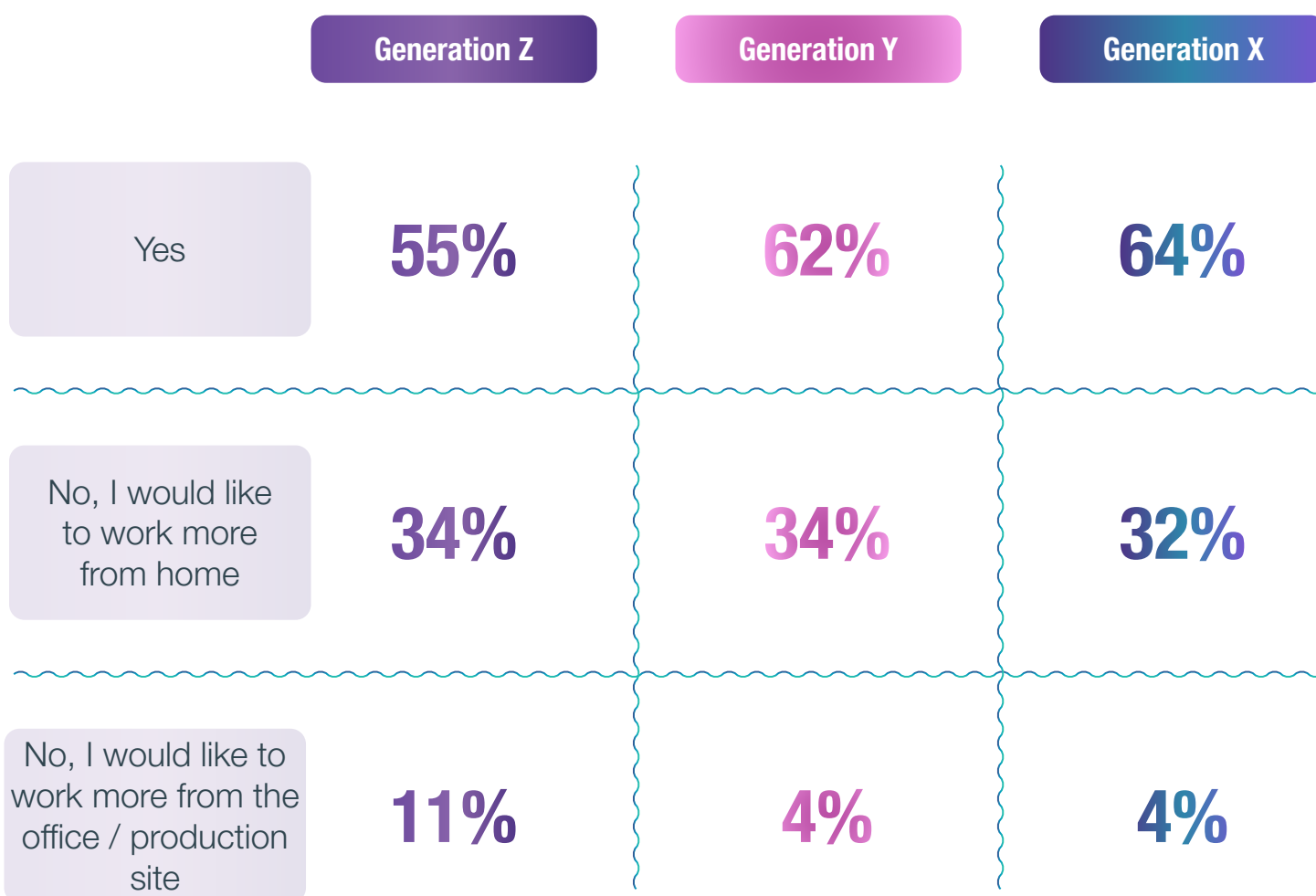
28%



ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH YOUR CURRENT REMOTE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS?



DEPENDING ON **GENERATION**





WHAT IS YOUR USUAL WORKING ARRANGEMENT?



Office



Home

5 days in the office / on site / in a field-based role



45%

4 days in the office, 1 at home



14%

3 days in the office, 2 at home



18%

2 days in the office, 3 at home



9%

1 day in the office, 4 at home



5%

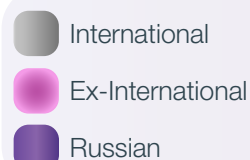
5 days at home



9%

В КАКОМ ФОРМАТЕ ВЫ ЧАЩЕ ВСЕГО РАБОТАЕТЕ?

DEPENDENDING ON COMPANY TYPE



5 days in the office / on site / in a field-based role



31%
39%
53%

4 days in the office, 1 at home



16%
14%
13%

3 days in the office, 2 at home



27%
23%
13%

2 days in the office, 3 at home



13%
9%
6%

1 day in the office, 4 at home



5%
8%
4%

5 days at home



8%
7%
11%



JOB MARKET OVERVIEW AND SALARY SURVEY

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

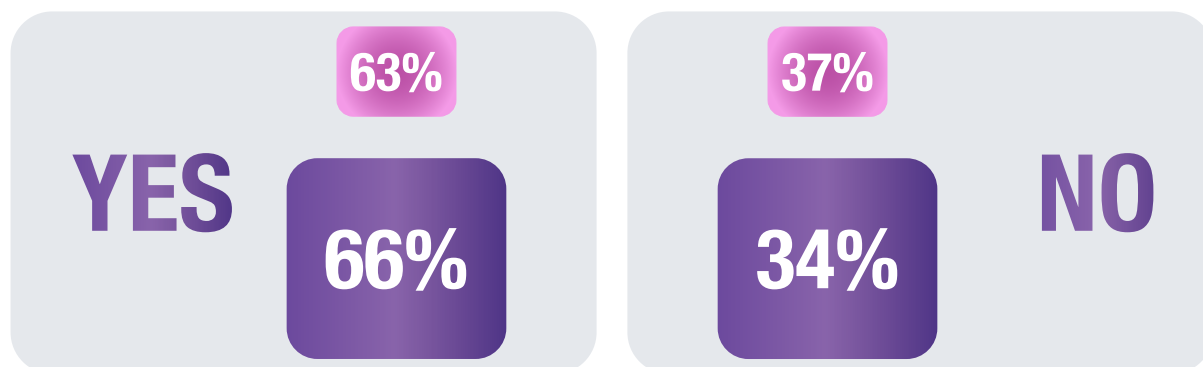
RUSSIA

ANTAL TALENT

2026–2027

DO YOU USE AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE) TOOLS, NEURAL NETWORKS OR SIMILAR TECHNOLOGIES IN YOUR WORK?

2025
2026

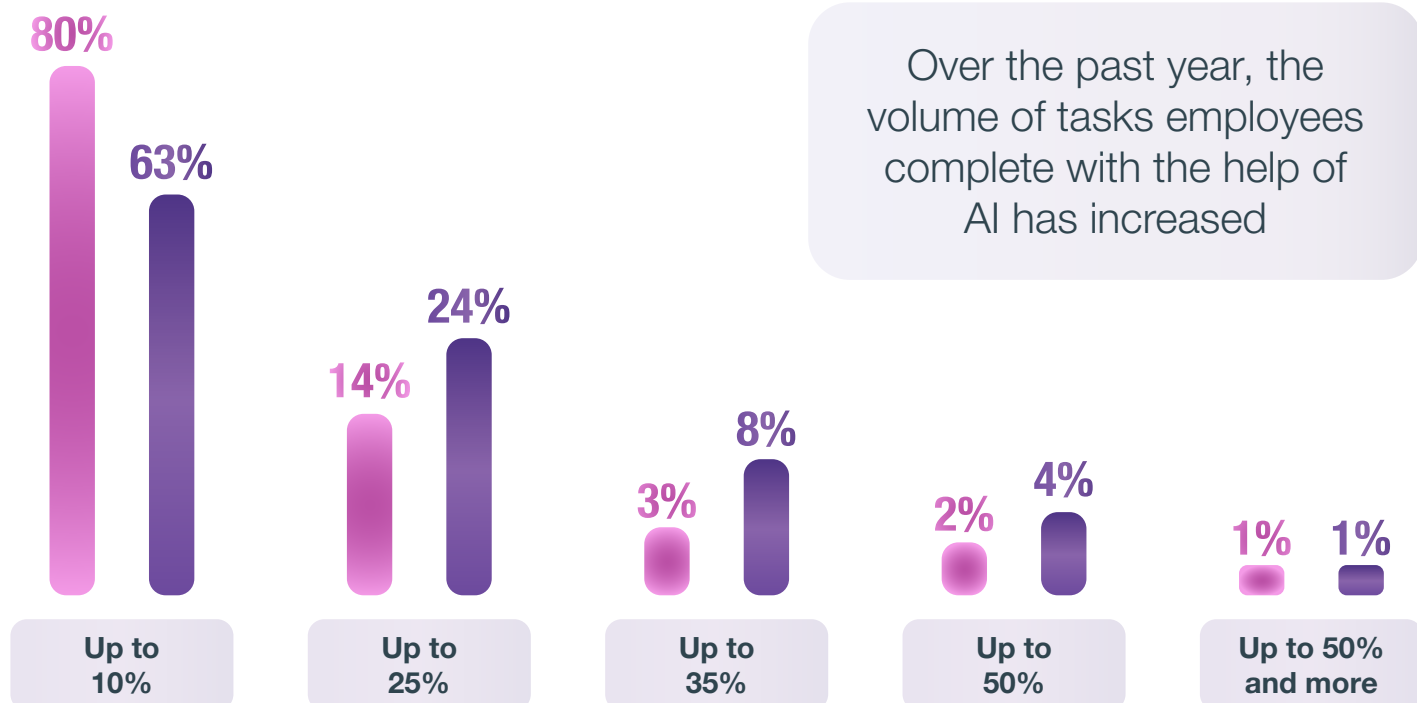


PERPLEXITY GROK GIGACHAT CLAUDE
ALICE AI CURSOR COPILLOT
CHATGPT
GEMINI DEEPSEEK



WHAT PROPORTION OF YOUR TASKS DO YOU COMPLETE WITH THE HELP OF AI?

2025
2026



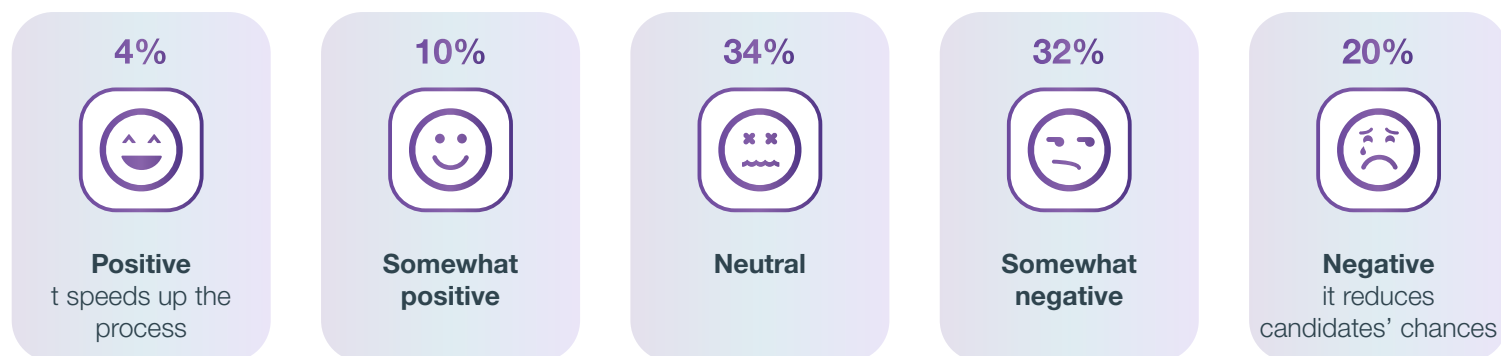
DEPENDING ON GENERATION

	Generation Z	Generation Y	Generation X
Up to 10%	47%	62%	70%
Up to 25%	35%	24%	19%
Up to 35%	10%	9%	7%
Up to 50%	7%	4%	3%
Up to 50% and more	1%	1%	1%



EMPLOYERS' USE OF AI

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT EMPLOYERS USING AI FOR INITIAL CV SCREENING?



DEPENDING ON SENIORITY LEVEL

	Senior executive	Manager	Specialist
Positive	6%	4%	3%
Somewhat positive	15%	11%	7%
Neutral	33%	34%	36%
Somewhat negative	29%	31%	32%
Negative	17%	20%	22%

HAVE YOU RECEIVED AUTOMATED REJECTIONS WITHOUT FEEDBACK FROM A PERSON?



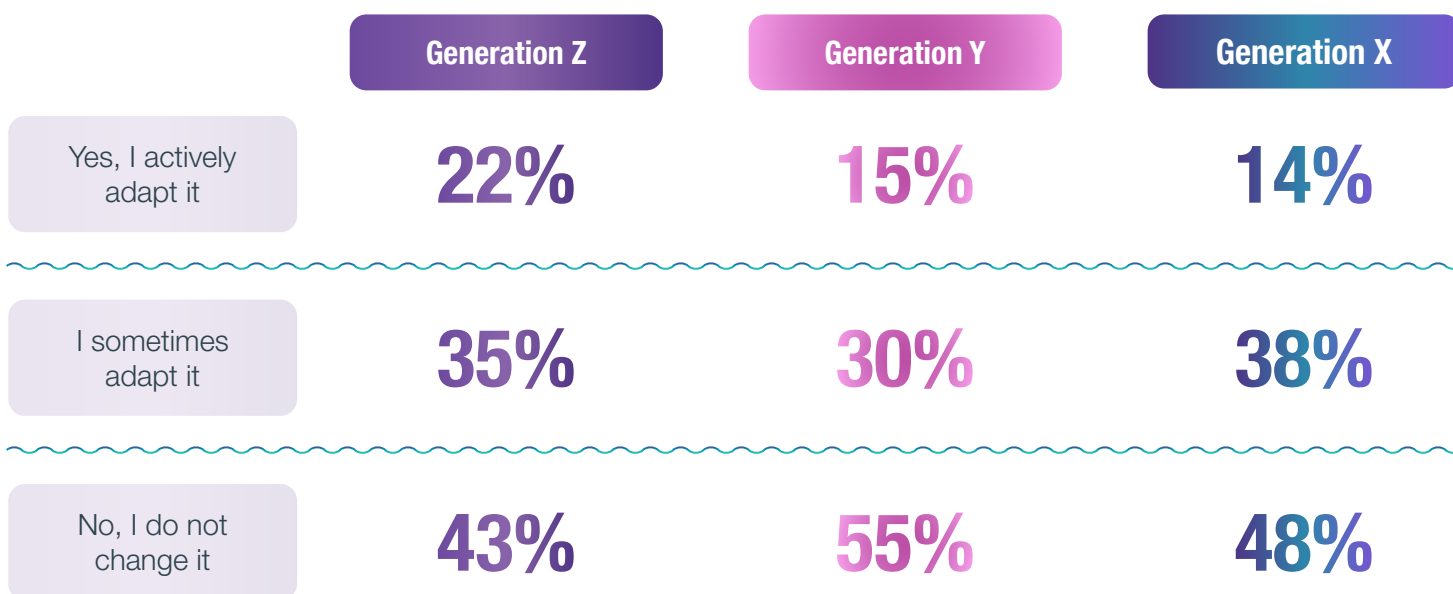


EMPLOYERS' USE OF AI

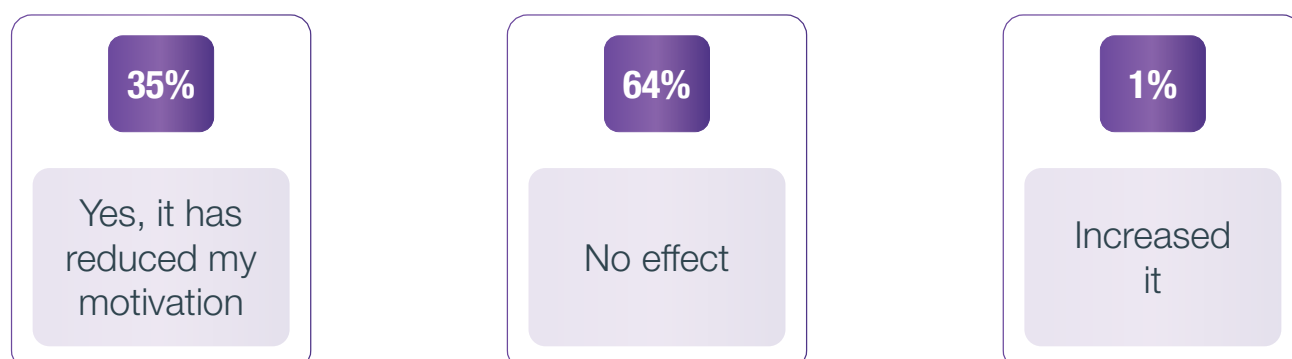
DO YOU ADAPT YOUR CV TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF EMPLOYERS' USE OF AI?



DEPENDING ON **GENERATION**



HAS AUTOMATED SCREENING AFFECTED YOUR MOTIVATION TO APPLY FOR VACANCIES?





CAREER PLANS FOR THE YEAR

32%



Improve my work-life balance

31%



Change employer

30%



Expand my responsibilities

27%



Progress in my career within the company

26%



Retrain / undertake further education

23%



Find an additional source of income UNRELATED to my professional work

11%



I am not planning any changes

10%



Change my field of work

7%



Start my own business / become a freelancer

7%



Move / relocate

5%



Take a career break / go on parental leave



TOP 5 CAREER PLANS FOR THE YEAR

DEPENDING ON GENERATION

Generation Z

48%

Progress in my career within the company

37%

Retrain / undertake further education

33%

Expand my responsibilities

33%

Improve my work-life balance

29%

Find an additional source of income UNRELATED to my professional work

Generation Y

33%

Improve my work-life balance

31%

Expand my responsibilities

31%

Change employer

30%

Progress in my career within the company

27%

Retrain / undertake further education

Generation X

32%

Change employer

29%

Improve my work-life balance

26%

Expand my responsibilities

23%

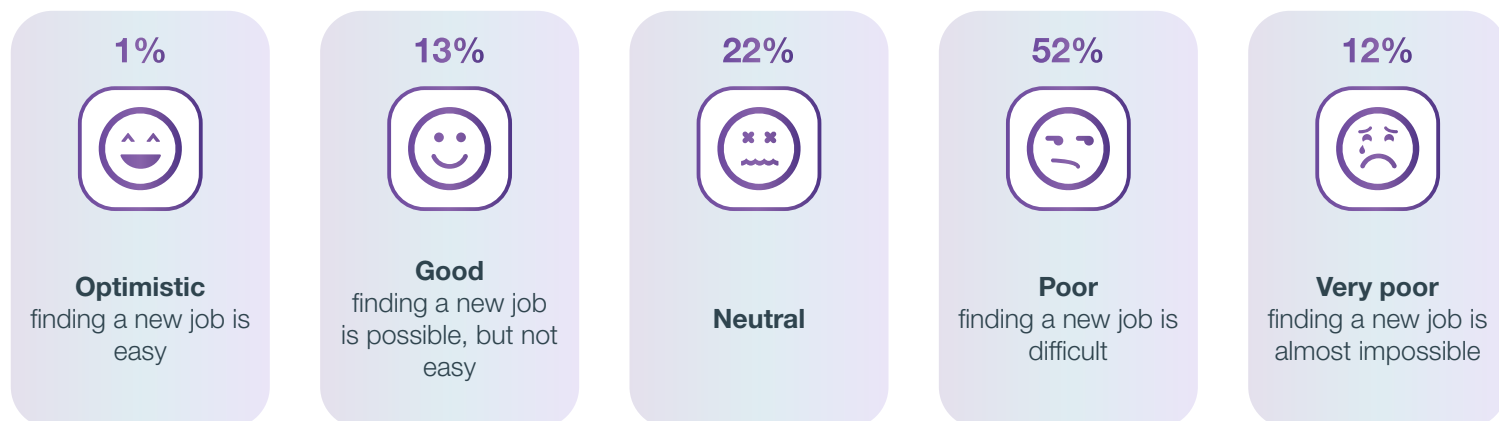
Find an additional source of income UNRELATED to my professional work

22%

Retrain / undertake further education



HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE CURRENT LABOUR MARKET?



Last year, employees and jobseekers responded as follows: 'Pessimistic: it is difficult to find a new job and there are few opportunities on the market' – 39%; 'Neutral' – **48%**, 'Optimistic: it is easy to find a new job and there are many opportunities on the market' – **13%**.

DEPENDING ON GENERATION

	Generation Z	Generation Y	Generation X
Optimistic	2%	1%	1%
Good	12%	12%	14%
Neutral	26%	22%	21%
Poor	43%	52%	52%
Very poor	17%	13%	12%

METHODOLOGY

The survey analyses data collected through an online survey of **3,827 respondents**. Participants were specialists, middle managers and senior executives working in Moscow, St Petersburg and other cities across Russia.

The survey was conducted from 15 May to 31 July 2026. The salary guide draws on data collected through the online survey, information held in Antal Talent's database and the expert assessments of Antal Talent consultants. Salaries are shown in Russian roubles before tax and exclude bonuses. The survey presents average minimum and average maximum salaries within each industry. These ranges exclude exceptionally high or low salaries that may occur in individual cases. Salary levels may vary according to company size, industry and country of origin, as well as the employee's experience, qualifications and responsibilities. The salaries presented are primarily representative of employees of international companies in Moscow.

Industries represented by respondents:

- Banking and financial services (banking, insurance, investment funds, payment systems, mobile payments and leasing)
- Public sector (ministries, committees, federal services and other legislative, executive and judicial bodies)
- Ingredients and equipment for the food industry (flavourings and food ingredients, raw materials for food production; food production equipment, including production lines and mixing, cutting and extrusion equipment)
- IT, telecoms, internet, automation and information security (fixed-line and mobile communications, internet service providers, software development, IT security, blockchain, big data and business analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning, the Internet of Things, augmented reality and virtual reality)
- Logistics and transport (transport and freight forwarding services; warehousing; road, air and sea freight; customs clearance)
- Media and entertainment (media groups, television, radio, print publications, advertising, video games, film, music, social media, sport and fitness clubs)
- Medical devices (clinical research, outpatient clinics and hospitals)
- Mechanical engineering (automotive manufacturing, specialist vehicles, road construction equipment, automotive components and vehicle servicing)
- Consumer goods / FMCG (light industry and food production, cosmetics and perfumery, household cleaning products, tobacco, consumer electronics and other fast-moving consumer goods)
- Natural resources (oil and gas extraction, transport and processing; energy; mining and mineral extraction; metallurgy)
- Professional services (recruitment, consulting, legal and educational services / teaching, market research, certification, translation, research institutes and culture)
- Equipment and technology (mechanical engineering, metalworking, and the manufacture of electrical equipment, automated machinery, plastics and rubber products)
- Retail and wholesale (traditional retail, distributors, pharmacies and pharmacy chains)
- Agriculture (crop production, livestock farming, agricultural holding groups, fishing and fish farming)
- Construction and real estate (design, engineering and construction of commercial and industrial facilities; manufacture of building and finishing materials; woodworking)
- Tourism and HoReCa (tour operators and travel agencies, hospitality, catering and exhibition services)
- Packaging and paper (packaging, packaging equipment, forestry, and the pulp and paper industry)
- Pharmaceuticals and medical devices (pharmaceuticals, medical devices, clinical research, outpatient clinics and hospitals)
- Chemical industry (bulk and speciality chemicals, including construction chemicals, paints, coatings and adhesives, petrochemicals, plastics and rubber)



JOB MARKET OVERVIEW AND SALARY SURVEY

SURVEY PARTNERS

RUSSIA

ANTAL TALENT

2026–2027

Accetera provides comprehensive accounting, payroll and HR administration outsourcing services, as well as legal advice and ERP system implementation and support.

The company was founded in 2019 by a group of managers with more than 30 years' experience in accounting outsourcing. Our employees have delivered over 1,000 projects to implement and support accounting, payroll and HR records management processes.

Our team is our greatest asset. Accetera experts have extensive expertise and experience, as well as Russian and international accounting qualifications, including ACCA and DipIFR.

We achieve the best results by putting our mission into practice: 'Happy people make happy clients'. As a result, Accetera's client satisfaction rate is 95%.

Accetera's quality system is certified to ISO 9001 and ISAE 3402. Our civil liability is insured, giving our clients complete peace of mind.

Tel. (495) 220 46 00

Email: info@accetera.com

www.accetera.com

FutureToday is a leading company in graduate recruitment and employer branding. For more than 20 years, we have helped employers address a wide range of challenges. We believe that people are a company's main driving force. We help our clients become even more attractive employers and create more opportunities for talented employees.

Major Russian and Western companies trust us to attract specialists and manage their employer brands. In everything we do, we strive to deliver the best possible outcome, working as one team to achieve results.

iSpring is a leading developer of online learning technologies for the global market. CNews Analytics ranks the company among the top three providers in the Russian HRTech and EdTech solutions market.

2026 is a milestone year for iSpring, marking its 25th anniversary. Throughout this time, iSpring has helped more than 61,000 clients in 172 countries build strong teams, deliver effective employee training, improve service and increase sales.

Its flagship product, iSpring Learn, is an LMS+ platform covering the entire talent management cycle, from preboarding, onboarding and training to individual development planning.

AST is a leading insurance broker and risk adviser, operating as a professional participant in Russia's financial market since 2004 (Central Bank of Russia licence SB No. 4094). It ranks among Russia's three largest insurance brokers. AST specialises in corporate risk protection and employee insurance programmes tailored to the needs of individual industries.

AST's portfolio includes 2,000 clients across sectors such as retail, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, IT, property development and construction. Through close dialogue with clients and the insurance market, the company develops effective business solutions and supports the development of insurance technology. In 2025, it launched the first digital broker for private medical insurance on the Russian market: a service that automates the tendering cycle for corporate medical insurance.

AST has brought together more than 3,600 experts in the active HR Dialogues community. For five years, it has provided a meeting place for professionals to discuss key HR issues, find solutions together and share best practice.

The PONIMAU corporate wellbeing platform delivers employee assistance programmes designed to increase companies' profitability by strengthening team wellbeing, resilience and performance. The programmes provide professional support with employees' work-related, personal and everyday concerns.

The platform offers individual consultations with psychologists, coaches, lawyers, personal finance experts, healthy lifestyle advisers, fitness trainers, mindfulness instructors and pet care advisers, alongside wellbeing information and educational events.



RAERR is a non-profit organisation bringing together specialists in retail and related industries. It was established to support the development of retail, protect market participants' interests, introduce innovation and raise professional standards.

RAERR membership provides an opportunity to advocate on important industry issues, gain insights from market leaders and visionaries, and connect with leading retail professionals.

The Association's purpose is to benefit retail, its partners and communities, both today and in the future. We aim to achieve this by influencing change and creating greater value for members through our events and activities.



JOB MARKET OVERVIEW AND SALARY SURVEY

EXPERT ARTICLES

RUSSIA

ANTAL TALENT

2026–2027



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PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



Article	Author
Optimisation without pain: how HR can approach workforce optimisation effectively	Galina Korshunova People Advisory Sr. Consultant Smith&Nephew
HR 2030: What Should HR Prepare for Over the Next 3–5 Years?	Yulia Sorokina HR Director Yves Rocher Vostok LLC
HR Strategy in Times of Economic Uncertainty	Ekaterina Spivak Board Member, HRD Detskiy mir
How does HR help businesses navigate periods of change?	Evgeniya Nefedova HR & Administrative Head Mayoly
Long-term incentive program as a tool for retaining and increasing the loyalty of key employees	Veronica Zueva CHRO NOYTECH Supply Chain Solutions
How HR Process Automation Affects Employee Loyalty	Dmitry Makhlin Partner and Business Development Director HRLink
Employee Retention on a Limited Budget	Anna Katkova HR Director «Ridan Trade» LLC

OPTIMISATION WITHOUT PAIN: HOW HR CAN APPROACH WORKFORCE OPTIMISATION EFFECTIVELY

EXPERT OPINION

Galina Korshunova
People Advisory Sr. Consultant
Smith&Nephew



When a business faces the need to reduce costs, one of the first measures considered is often workforce optimisation. However, successful optimisation does not begin with a list of positions to be eliminated. It is a complex, multi-level process that requires an analysis of business objectives, the organisational structure and the company's future operating model.

The first step is to determine what the organisation should look like once the changes have been completed. HR, together with management, needs to understand which functions will remain critical, which processes can be automated, where roles are duplicated, and which competencies, on the contrary, may be lacking. Only once the target structure has been defined does it make sense to assess the current workforce and make staffing decisions.

Particular attention should be paid to the roles and areas of responsibility of employees who will remain with the company. Following optimisation, some tasks will inevitably be redistributed, so it is important to update job descriptions, regulations and procedures. A clear allocation of responsibilities helps prevent employee overload, conflicts and a decline in efficiency. Optimisation often leads to changes in the volume or nature of work performed by individual employees. In such cases, it is necessary not only to formalise these changes correctly, but also to review the remuneration system. Under Part 1 of Article 60.2 of the Labour Code of the Russian Federation, an employees may, with their written consent, be assigned additional work alongside the duties stipulated in their employment contract. Such additional work is subject to additional remuneration in accordance with Article 151 of the Labour Code of the Russian Federation.

Reviewing compensation is important not only from the perspective of legal compliance. It is also one of the key tools for maintaining the motivation of employees who continue working for the company after optimisation. If workloads increase without corresponding remuneration, the risk of lower engagement and the loss of valuable specialists also increases.

The next stage is the direct reduction of costs. Since personnel expenses represent a significant share of the budget in many organisations, optimisation often involves a reduction in headcount. At this stage, compliance with legal requirements, transparency of the process and consistency in the employer's actions are particularly important.

At the same time, it is important to consider not only the employees who will remain with the company, but also those whose dismissal has already been planned. Once redundancies are announced, key specialists may begin looking for new jobs, creating risks for the business. To



Galina Korshunova
People Advisory Sr. Consultant
Smith&Nephew

mitigate these risks, employers use retention programmes that provide additional payments for completing specific tasks before the employee's termination date. These may include ensuring uninterrupted production, meeting an equipment installation plan, completing a project or transferring knowledge to colleagues. This approach helps retain the necessary expertise and ensure business continuity during a period of change.

Redundancy should not necessarily be viewed as a permanent separation from an employee. If an employee has demonstrated strong performance, possesses in-demand qualifications and has established a good track record within the company, they can be considered for re-employment when suitable vacancies arise in the future. For the employer, this provides an opportunity to meet staffing needs quickly without a lengthy recruitment and onboarding process, as such a specialist is already familiar with the corporate culture, internal processes and the specifics of the business.

Working with the wider team is equally important. For employees, optimisation is always associated with uncertainty, so open communication and timely information help maintain trust and reduce tension.

Ultimately, effective optimisation is not simply a mechanical reduction in headcount, but a comprehensive transformation of the organisational model that enables the company to reduce costs while maintaining business efficiency and the motivation of key employees.

HR 2030: WHAT SHOULD HR PREPARE FOR OVER THE NEXT 3–5 YEARS?

EXPERT OPINION

Yulia Sorokina
HR Director
Yves Rocher Vostok LLC



To understand what HR will look like over the next three to five years, it is important to recognise that HR does not exist independently of an organisation's business strategy. As a result, the future of HR is inseparably linked to the direction that businesses themselves will take in the years ahead.

It is important to recognise that businesses are likely to face significant changes in response to new legislative requirements, many of which have already begun to take effect this year, including tax reforms and other regulatory changes. HR's role is to monitor these developments closely and adapt internal business processes and corporate standards accordingly. This is not always straightforward, as organisations often have very limited time to implement changes and prepare employees for new responsibilities or projects.

In this environment, the role of HR professionals becomes increasingly dual in nature. On the one hand, they must act as drivers of change – leading transformation initiatives and designing new models of collaboration and decision-making. On the other, they must serve as facilitators, helping to simplify and optimise existing processes. This trend is already clearly visible in large organisations, and over the next few years its pace is likely to accelerate significantly.

Lewis Carroll's famous quote from *Through the Looking-Glass* perfectly captures this reality: "It takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

These changes are likely to affect every industry without exception. Some organisations will lead the way in establishing new standards, while others will need to adapt to the ongoing transformation of the economy and reshape their operations accordingly.

Given the current economic environment, businesses may develop under either an optimistic or a pessimistic scenario. In both cases, the ability to adapt to change will become one of the defining factors of business success, and HR, as one of the organisation's core functions, will play a central role in this process.

Under an optimistic scenario, businesses are expected to grow, and HR will need to support that growth through effective recruitment, workforce redeployment into new roles, and talent development in response to import substitution initiatives, AI adoption, and the relatively rapid expansion of organisations from medium-sized businesses into large enterprises.



Yulia Sorokina
HR Director
Yves Rocher Vostok LLC

EXPERT OPINION

Under a pessimistic scenario, organisations are likely to maintain strict financial discipline, closely control headcount, optimise costs, and reduce investment in employee development. Small and medium-sized businesses may continue to contract under pressure from rising labour costs, increasing logistics expenses, and declining consumer purchasing power. In such circumstances, the dominant business strategy will simply be survival.

Digital transformation, AI implementation, and automation will become integral parts of almost every organisation. However, the extent of adoption will depend on each company's financial resources and business requirements. For successful and financially strong organisations, implementation is likely to be comprehensive, whereas companies focused primarily on survival will invest only to the extent necessary to remain competitive.

This means that HR professionals at every level will need to place greater emphasis on strategic business partnership. Skills such as confidently interpreting financial and workforce metrics, understanding core business indicators, possessing a solid foundation in AI tools while being able to verify AI-generated outputs, translating workforce hypotheses into measurable calculations, making evidence-based decisions, justifying budgets through data, managing employee engagement and burnout, and developing initiatives that support mental wellbeing and flexible talent engagement will become essential – or “must-have” – competencies across almost all HR roles.

Over the past few years, forecasting has become increasingly uncertain, and this uncertainty is expected to remain high for the foreseeable future. As a result, management training focused on agile leadership, critical thinking, and risk management will become increasingly valuable.

Against this backdrop, HR professionals should strengthen their scenario planning capabilities and develop more flexible operating models that enable organisations to respond more rapidly to change while maintaining focus on their strategic priorities.

In summary, there is no single accurate prediction of the future – only a range of possible scenarios and probabilities. Success will belong to organisations that can rapidly change direction, reallocate resources, experiment with different business models, and adapt faster than their competitors. While businesses once relied on identifying a single winning strategy for others to imitate, today's competitive advantage lies in strategic flexibility, organisational agility, and the ability to operate successfully amid uncertainty.

This requires professionals who can combine competencies that were previously associated with distinct specialist roles, accurately assess risks and potential outcomes, and identify the decisions that will make the business more resilient. HR's role is to create an environment in which employees can adapt more quickly, continuously reskill, and respond effectively to new economic challenges. Ultimately, success will favour not those who predict the future with absolute precision, but those who adapt to it most effectively and at the greatest speed.

HR STRATEGY IN TIMES OF ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY

EXPERT OPINION

Ekaterina Spivak
Board Member, HRD
Detskiy mir



For the HR function, there is no fundamental difference between turbulent and stable times: HR is always about efficiency. Yes, during periods of crisis, workloads increase, planning horizons become shorter, and decisions need to be made faster. But the fundamental principles remain unchanged: providing the company with high-quality talent, working together with the business to achieve its goals, and retaining a strong team of experts.

The labour market is changing before our eyes: more than 70% of large companies develop their workforce strategies for only one to two years ahead, while for 60% of organisations, improving the productivity of existing teams has become a top priority. In these conditions, HR is becoming even more deeply integrated into business processes, acting as a strategic partner capable of ensuring organisational resilience amid sudden economic shifts.

What is important to do in order to be prepared for sudden changes?

1. Apply “helicopter thinking” and respond in a timely manner

In an environment of chaos and information overload, HR needs the ability to maintain a strategic perspective and see the bigger picture without losing touch with reality. This is not about distancing yourself from day-to-day operations, but about being able to switch at the right time between a broad strategic view and deep involvement in specific operational tasks. Monitor the external and internal environment on a daily basis. Do not simply observe — act proactively and anticipate developments.

2. Keep plans “A, B, C, D...” ready

In market cycles that are difficult to predict, the only viable strategy is risk management through scenario planning. Instead of waiting for change to happen, HR should define the room for manoeuvre in advance: how headcount will be managed, how workloads will be redistributed, and which resources will be deployed first. Plans “A, B, C, D...” are a tool for moving from reactive firefighting to systematic change management.

3. Set priority KPIs

In stable times, targets can be set at comfortable levels. In turbulent periods, KPIs should become more focused. For example, the priority may no longer be simply maintaining overall staffing levels, but ensuring the availability of business-critical specialists. At the same time, it is



Ekaterina Spivak
Board Member, HRD
Detskiy mir

important to control hiring costs and retain key holders of expertise in order to prevent disruptions to business processes.

4. Talk about strategy

An interesting fact is that declining performance is often caused not by external economic factors, but by the internal sense of uncertainty and anxiety within the team. Translate the business strategy into meaningful terms by answering the unspoken question every employee has: “How does my contribution support the company’s stability and development?” Do not communicate only dry figures and project names — explain what they will mean for each employee in the longer term. Hold regular Town Hall meetings — this will help every employee see a clear connection between their own responsibilities and the company’s overall success.

5. Manage the team’s internal resources

In unstable times, the pressure on teams increases significantly. To maintain productivity and prevent burnout, it is important to manage internal resources consciously. Instead of excessive training across a broad range of skills, focus on the targeted development of critically important competencies. Hold regular meetings, both as a team and in a one-to-one format. Apply a coaching approach to management and support psychological resilience within the team.

A period of uncertainty is not only a challenge, but also an opportunity to redesign the system and make it more effective.

HOW DOES HR HELP BUSINESSES NAVIGATE PERIODS OF CHANGE?

EXPERT OPINION

Evgeniya Nefedova
HR & Administrative Head
Mayoly



The Mayoly group of companies was formed in the Russian market following the merger of two companies in 2022 — part of Ipsen's OTC business and Mayoly Spindler. In early 2026, Nizhi Laboratory joined the Group with its dermocosmetics business and the Topicrem brand.

Over its relatively short history, the Group has gone through several large-scale changes. This experience has allowed me to take a fresh look at the role of the HR function and draw a conclusion: **during periods of transformation, HR becomes one of the business's key partners, helping not merely to support change, but to navigate it as smoothly and effectively as possible.**

A few conclusions as to why:

1. HR ensures transparent and open communication

During transformation, employees have questions: why are these changes happening, what comes next and, most importantly — **what does this mean for me personally?**

One of HR's key tasks is to **establish clear and timely communication.** At the same time, **it should not be one-way.** It is important to create opportunities for feedback: organise feedback sessions, individual meetings with managers and the HR team.

When people understand what is happening and see that their views are genuinely heard, uncertainty decreases and trust in the company grows.

2. Aligns the HR strategy with business objectives

HR needs to understand not only **what is happening in the business today, but also what people and competencies it will need tomorrow.**

During mergers, strategic changes or process transformations, HR analyses the business's workforce needs and aligns hiring, development and motivation decisions accordingly.

This may require a review of the organisational structure, redistribution of responsibilities, elimination of overlapping functions, creation of new cross-functional teams or the introduction of new roles.

HR's task is not simply to change the organisational structure, but to **help employees understand their place in the new system, their areas of responsibility and opportunities for professional development.**



Evgeniya Nefedova
HR & Administrative Head
Mayoly

EXPERT OPINION

3. Helps retain critical expertise and build a strong team

HR works in two directions at the same time: **retaining internal expertise and bringing in new competencies**. This may include employee development, transparent career paths, grading and bonus systems, as well as recruiting highly specialised professionals from the external market.

As a result, a team is formed that combines **accumulated expertise with new knowledge and is capable of moving the business forward**.

4. Helps build a culture of change

HR helps build a culture in which **change is seen not only as a necessity, but also as an opportunity for development**. This may include supporting change leaders, recognising and rewarding employee initiatives, and involving teams in discussions of new processes and practices.

The role of managers is particularly important — they are the ones who become agents of change within their teams.

5. Organises learning and development

Change often requires new skills. **HR helps identify which skills the team lacks today and which competencies the business will need tomorrow**. Based on this, development programmes are created: training, courses, mentoring, coaching, including knowledge sharing between employees.

The goal is to give employees the tools that will help them work confidently in new conditions and be part of the change, rather than simply adapt to it.

6. Supports employee wellbeing and helps prevent burnout

Any change requires additional resources from people. New processes, projects, roles and increased workloads can become a source of burnout.

Supporting employees during this period is not a separate HR initiative, but an important component of business resilience.

HR can initiate programmes to support mental health and physical activity, stress resilience training, consultations on work–life balance (workload), etc.

Overall, HR's main role during transformation is **not merely to support change, but to help the business navigate it proactively and systematically**. HR is not a function that deals with 'people separately from the business'. It is a function that helps the business change through its people — **consciously, sustainably and with minimal losses**.

LONG-TERM INCENTIVE PROGRAM AS A TOOL FOR RETAINING AND INCREASING THE LOYALTY OF KEY EMPLOYEES

EXPERT OPINION



Veronica Zueva
CHRO
NOYTECH Supply Chain Solutions

Over the past few years, many companies, primarily those previously owned by foreign individuals and legal entities, have undergone changes in their ownership structure after separating from large international corporations. On the one hand, these are the same companies that had already been operating in Russia. On the other hand, they have effectively become start-ups, as they have had to reconsider their business processes, build a new IT architecture with new IT systems, reshape their corporate culture, and revise their approaches to management and employee motivation.

Why is it important not to overlook employee incentive and motivation issues in such circumstances?

First and foremost, once companies cease to be part of a large corporate family, it becomes essential in their new reality to encourage employees to develop competencies such as entrepreneurial thinking, a business-oriented mindset even in back-office functions, innovation, flexibility, rapid decision-making, and the ability to assume responsibility without relying on the “ultimate authority” of a headquarters that would otherwise provide the strategy, define priorities, and allocate funding.

In other words, companies need to encourage employees to treat the Company as if it were their own business. One way to achieve this is by implementing a Long-term incentive program (LTIP).

What are such programmes designed to achieve?

These programmes are intended to share a portion of the Company’s profit with key employees by making them beneficiaries alongside the Company’s shareholders, although only in respect of the portion of profit allocated to the Programme Fund (for example, 10% of the Company’s profit).

Accordingly, the Programme:

- serves as a reward mechanism for continued, long-term and successful cooperation, as a Programme Participant remains employed by the Company, contributes to generating its profits, and therefore participates in the distribution of the portion of profits allocated to the Programme Fund;
- encourages Programme Participants to strengthen an ownership mentality by aligning the



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- interests of the Participant and the Company in achieving financial success;
- helps retain key employees (the Programme's principles and rules are tailored to each individual Company with the aim of engaging and retaining its key employees while preserving their expertise within the organisation);
- promotes a focus on the overall business performance (unlike traditional bonus schemes, where KPIs are typically linked to the performance of a particular department or even an individual employee, the Programme enables its Participants to focus on the overall business performance and financial results).

What criteria should be used when selecting Programme Participants from among the Company's employees? The recommended criteria include:

- the significance of the employee's contribution to the Company's overall success, based on achievements during the previous year (or other assessment period) and demonstrated personal effectiveness;
- maintaining the level of knowledge and professional skills required to achieve the Company's long-term objectives;
- continuous professional development and, for managers, the development of their teams;
- demonstrating the Company's values through everyday behaviour and actively supporting and promoting its corporate culture.

Main principles of the Programme:

- the Programme is implemented in addition to the Company's standard bonus scheme (short-term incentive programme);
- while the standard bonus scheme is designed to reward outstanding performance within an employee's area of responsibility and their contribution to the Company's current results, the Long-term Incentive Programme is intended to foster a sense of ownership, encourage strategic and long-term thinking, and support long-term cooperation between Programme Participants and the Company;
- the size of a grant (i.e. the Participant's allocated share of the Programme Fund) depends on the Participant's area of responsibility, contribution to the Company's profitability, and length of service (although an individual Company may choose to introduce additional or alternative criteria for determining grant allocations);
- award payout (i.e. the Participant receiving cash in exchange for their grant) is designed to take place in instalments in order to encourage employees to maintain their long-term relationship with the Company. For example, the Programme may provide that no more than 30% of the grant allocated for a particular year can be monetised at one time. In each subsequent year, the Participant becomes entitled to monetise a further 30% of the grant for each previous year, including 30% of the most recent year's grant;
- it is important to clearly define and document the circumstances in which grants may not be awarded to a particular employee (for example, in the event of disciplinary misconduct) and



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- the circumstances in which grants are not eligible for payout (for example, where the Company does not generate a profit during the relevant financial year);
- in addition, the Programme should establish the conditions under which an employee ceases to participate in the Programme and the rules governing payment in respect of accumulated awards. The most common reason for termination of participation is the employee's departure from the Company. In such cases, the Programme may distinguish between situations where the employee is entitled to receive payment for all grants that have vested by the date of termination and situations where such entitlement is forfeited. For example, if employment is terminated due to disciplinary misconduct or where the employee has caused financial loss to the Company, any unmonetised all outstanding unvested awards lapse without compensation. Where employment ends for other reasons, the employee may monetise all grants that have vested by the date of termination. The Company may also specify a date each year after which payment will be made for all eligible grants claimed by employees. For example, if employment terminates before the end of May, grants allocated for the previous year are forfeited. If employment ends in June or later, one-third of the previous year's grant, together with grants accumulated in earlier years, becomes payable.

The opportunity to monetise grants is available not only to employees leaving the Programme but also to those who continue to participate in it. One possible approach to annual payments is that, during May–June each year, Programme Participants receive a bonus based on the Company's financial performance for the previous financial year and the number of grant units individually allocated to them (with payment being made in respect of one-third of the allocated units).

$$\text{Payment amount} = \text{EBIT } 10\% * \frac{\frac{1}{3} \text{ of the individual grant units allocated for the previous year}}{\text{total annual Programme Fund, in grant units}}$$

A Programme Participant may choose not to receive the annual payment in respect of one-third of the grant units allocated following the previous financial year and instead continue accumulating those units. The potential benefit of doing so is the opportunity to monetise the grant units in a future year when the value of each unit is higher, depending on the Company's profit in the preceding year.

$$\text{Payment amount} = \text{EBIT } 10\% * \frac{\text{number of grant units being monetised}}{\text{total annual Programme Fund, in grant units}}$$

As an alternative, the Company may introduce a multiplier in cases where an employee postpones the payout of their grant, allowing the Company to continue using the undistributed funds.

$$\text{Payment amount} = 4 * \text{EBIT } 10\% * \frac{\text{number of grant units being monetised}}{\text{total annual Programme Fund, in grant units}}$$

HOW HR PROCESS AUTOMATION AFFECTS EMPLOYEE LOYALTY

EXPERT OPINION

Dmitry Makhlin
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HR process automation refers not only to tools used by HR departments, but also to digital services designed for employees themselves: electronic HR document management, corporate portals, personal accounts, online requests for certificates, etc. Their purpose is to make interaction between employees and employers as clear and fast as the digital services people are accustomed to using in everyday life.

According to [data](#) from a HeadHunter and HRlink survey conducted among more than 1,300 job seekers, almost every second candidate under the age of 45 pays attention to the level of digitalisation of HR processes when choosing an employer. For respondents, the most important factors are the ability to save time and the convenience of interacting with the company.

Convenience as Part of the Employer's Offering

People are used to ordering groceries, paying bills and booking doctor's appointments in just a few clicks — they expect the same level of convenience at work. However, in the corporate environment, many employees still have to spend hours obtaining approvals, searching for information, signing documents, requesting certificates or clarifying routine questions with HR. Each of these activities may seem insignificant, but together they shape the employee's day-to-day experience.

HR process automation frees employees from tasks that interfere with their core responsibilities. An employee can independently find a colleague's contact details, sign an application from their phone, check the status of a request submitted to the administrative department, or obtain a certificate without contacting HR. This has a direct impact on productivity: employees have more time for tasks that create value for the business.

In addition, by introducing convenient corporate services, a company demonstrates that it cares about its employees — not through declarations, but by ensuring that people are not required to perform manual work where it can be eliminated.

Thus, the link between automation and loyalty emerges through the quality of the Employee Experience. Research [shows](#) that convenient HR systems increase engagement and satisfaction, which in turn improve labour productivity. Companies are beginning to recognise the importance of automating support processes that are not directly related to employees'



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core responsibilities. In response to this demand, a new HR Tech niche is emerging in Russia — Employee Experience Platforms (EXP). These platforms incorporate the services employees need to interact with their employer.

Risks of Incomplete and Poorly Designed Automation

As more companies automate their processes, a phenomenon known as digital attachment is becoming increasingly widespread. Employees become accustomed to an intuitive portal, fast document management and the ability to resolve issues independently. As a result, moving to a company where everything is handled through paper documents, fragmented email correspondence and several disconnected systems may be perceived as a decline in quality of life. The digital environment is becoming not simply an advantage, but part of what employees expect from an employer.

Another risk is poorly designed automation. If a service is unstable, the interface is complicated, and data is not synchronised across systems, digital disappointment arises. In this case, the frustration may be even greater than with a completely manual process: the company has already promised convenience but failed to deliver on that promise.

What matters is not the mere introduction of a corporate portal or electronic HR document management, but the change it brings to employees' everyday experience. If it has become more convenient for people to work, then automation will have an impact on employee loyalty and labour productivity.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION ON A LIMITED BUDGET

EXPERT OPINION

Anna Katkova
HR Director
«Ridan Trade» LLC



When an aircraft enters an area of turbulence, coordinated and effective work by the entire crew becomes especially important. When a business faces challenges, one of its key management priorities is retaining the employees who will help the company navigate the turbulence and successfully make it through a difficult period together.

In difficult conditions, budget savings become essential. Priorities must be set clearly and the key actions that will help achieve more with fewer resources must be identified. Of course, competitive pay remains an essential part of any retention strategy, but it is rarely the only reason employees stay with a company. Experience shows that attempts to retain an employee after they receive an offer from another employer are often considerably more expensive and less effective than consistent preventive work.

For us, retention begins on an employee's first day with the company. The first few months largely determine whether an employee sees their professional future with the organisation. An induction course, a mobile app with useful information, a clear onboarding plan and support from their manager help new joiners feel confident in the team sooner. Every new employee is assigned a buddy, and a dedicated meeting is held halfway through the probationary period to ensure that onboarding is progressing as planned. These measures do not require a large budget, but they lay a solid foundation for long-term cooperation.

Research confirms that a significant proportion of voluntary departures can be prevented when a company works systematically on engagement, management quality and corporate culture. We have therefore identified these areas as our employee retention priorities.

Our retention efforts are based on a data-backed understanding of employee needs. Annual engagement surveys help us understand their expectations. Today, high-quality survey solutions are available on the Russian market at a moderate cost, but even without the budget to purchase a ready-made product, AI tools can be used to create an in-house survey that becomes a useful basis for dialogue with teams. It is equally important to tell employees which decisions have been made in response to the survey. Knowing that their views influence what happens within the company significantly increases trust and has a positive effect on engagement.

Building a strong corporate culture does not always require significant financial investment. Many of our successful practices are driven by employees' own initiative. Corporate quizzes, sports tournaments and other shared activities can be organised on a very modest budget.



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When employees help organise events themselves, they gain a sense of ownership, the opportunity to take initiative and bring their own ideas to life. For example, at our summer Family Days, you will not find professional entertainers: workshops, games and tours are run by employees themselves.

Charitable projects deserve special attention. Taking part in social initiatives together can unite a team just as effectively as corporate events. Knowing that the company makes a positive contribution to society and offers employees the opportunity to contribute alongside colleagues strengthens their emotional connection with the employer.

Open communication also plays an important role. Regular meetings with senior management and corporate news updates help employees understand current changes and the company's strategy, and feel involved in a shared endeavour. Open dialogue significantly reduces uncertainty and strengthens trust in leadership.

Another effective retention tool is employee development. Internal learning programmes, such as "Player-Coaches", a mentoring programme and best-practice reviews, help build a culture of continuous development without significant expense. For example, we use the best recordings from our annual negotiation tournament as learning materials for the entire sales team.

Even when an employee decides to leave the company, the organisation has an opportunity to learn valuable lessons. Exit interviews help identify the real reasons for departures, reveal weaknesses in management processes and adjust people-management approaches in good time.

Successful retention is built on many small but consistent actions by managers and the HR team: paying attention to employees' views, delivering high-quality onboarding, maintaining open communication and providing development opportunities. This comprehensive approach helps reduce turnover, retain key specialists and remain an attractive employer even without a substantial increase in budget.

PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY



Article	Author
Employee Productivity or Wellbeing: Can Companies Achieve Both?	Daria Fedorova CEO of the corporate wellbeing platform “Ponimau”, ACSTH ICF coach
How can organisational complexity be reduced and decision-making accelerated? How do companies develop a culture of accountability and autonomy?	Nataliia Berezhnaia HR & Org development Director Petrovax
Quiet Quitting: How to Spot the “Invisible” Employee on Your Team Before It Is Too Late	Konul Rahimova Celik HRD HAYAT Russia
A team that delivers results: five factors of high performance	Kristina Rukavishnikova Head of Talent Acquisition & Talent Management NIZHPHARM Group
How to Maintain High Productivity in Times of Constant Change?	Oksana Chistova HR Director Arnest Can Solutions

EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY OR WELLBEING: CAN COMPANIES ACHIEVE BOTH?

EXPERT OPINION

Daria Fedorova

CEO of the corporate wellbeing platform
“Ponimau”, ACSTH ICF coach



Discussions about employee productivity and wellbeing often create a false dilemma: either a company demands strong performance or it takes care of its people. In practice, a sustainable business cannot afford to choose just one. High productivity that depends on chronic overtime, constant urgency and employees' personal heroics delivers results only in the short term. After that, errors, staff turnover, sick leave, conflicts and hidden disengagement begin to increase.

This is particularly visible in high-performing teams. For a long time, they may appear to be doing well: they cope with the workload, rarely complain, take on more responsibility and carry the team through difficult periods. This is precisely why overload in such teams is often noticed too late. Strong employees compensate for weaknesses in the way work is organised by drawing on their own resources, until those resources begin to run out.

In our work with corporate teams, we regularly see the same paradox: it is not necessarily weaker employees who find themselves at risk, but often the most reliable ones. They are the people who are more frequently given additional tasks, relied upon during periods of intense pressure and who take longer than others to speak up about being overloaded. Therefore, the high performance of an individual employee does not necessarily mean that the system itself is working well.

It is important to distinguish between intensive work and chronic overload. A heavy workload is not dangerous in itself if a demanding period has a clear purpose, a defined end point and an opportunity to recover afterwards. The problem begins when working under constant pressure becomes the norm, every task is declared a priority, the working day starts to consume personal time, and recovery is perceived as a sign of weakness.

Employee wellbeing should therefore not be reduced to a set of additional initiatives. Psychological support, health programmes and training are useful, but they cannot compensate for poorly organised work. If the source of overload remains unchanged, such support continues to function merely as “firefighting”.

What can a company do? First, it should assess not only employee engagement but also the risk of exhaustion: overtime, unused annual leave, late work-related messages, increasing conflict and declining initiative. Second, it should develop its managers. The direct manager largely determines whether a heavy workload remains manageable or becomes destructive: whether they know how to set priorities, remove unnecessary tasks, provide clarity for the team and recognise early signs of overload. Third, companies should review the way work itself is



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EXPERT OPINION

organised: the number of parallel tasks, the frequency of meetings, availability expectations, the allocation of responsibilities and opportunities to recover after particularly demanding periods.

Finally, support should be available to employees before a crisis occurs, rather than only when they are already considering resignation or are physically unable to continue working.

Productivity and wellbeing do not compete with each other. What actually compete are two models of performance: a short-term model based on excessive use of human resources, and a sustainable model in which results are supported by the quality of management, clarity of priorities and the opportunity to recover. In the long term, the second model wins.

HOW CAN ORGANISATIONAL COMPLEXITY BE REDUCED AND DECISION-MAKING ACCELERATED? HOW DO COMPANIES DEVELOP A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND AUTONOMY?

EXPERT OPINION

Nataliia Berezhaia
HR & Org development Director
Petrovax



From an ordinary employee to the CEO of your own project

No company would describe itself by saying: we have cumbersome processes, ten layers of approvals and a culture where initiative and independence are treated as breaches of discipline. Today, most companies present themselves as open, flexible and democratic. Firstly, it is fashionable and shows that you are keeping up with current trends; secondly, it helps attract strong candidates.

Unfortunately, behind these declarations there are sometimes traditional inert structures with bureaucratic and cumbersome processes. We hear such stories not only from candidates, but also from our own employees who decided to change companies and found themselves facing a cultural mismatch.

So, what distinguishes truly agile companies, where decisions are made quickly and employees feel and behave like the CEOs of their own projects?

I suggest looking at three pillars which, in my view, shape the corporate environment and the so-called *way of doing business*: people, organisational structure and processes.

People. I strongly believe in the idea of a CEO mindset: every employee is the CEO of their own project, regardless of their grade or position within the organisational structure. They have the authority and opportunity to influence the outcome, ask questions of colleagues, including cross-functional teams, and change processes that have become outdated or lost their relevance. Such a person focuses not on obstacles, but on finding solutions, seeing themselves as a genuine co-owner of the business. They do not need a micromanager reminding them about deadlines and demanding daily reports. In such an environment, everyone is accountable for the result and is as interested in the success of the business as its owner.

Structure. The fewer management layers an organisation has, the more flexible and agile it becomes, and the closer the interaction between employees. In a flat structure, communication barriers disappear, departments do not become isolated from one another, but work as a single team. The company does not need to spend weeks approving decisions: it can change direction quickly, respond to the market and implement changes. Therefore, when another management vacancy appears, there is no need to rush to fill it with a new person. It is useful to consider whether the role is really necessary, what value it brings to the business and whether its responsibilities could be redistributed among others, particularly if they have the potential and motivation to take on more. In addition, a flat organisational model makes it easier to maintain



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a product-oriented approach, where employees can quickly come together as a project team and drive new products forward without wasting time on multiple approvals and bureaucratic obstacles.

Processes. Naturally, there are areas of business where strict compliance with rules and clearly defined procedures is essential — manufacturing technology, quality control, occupational health and safety, and so on. But even here — or rather, especially here — we should regularly review policies, regulations and procedures: are all these processes really necessary, can some of them be eliminated or simplified, and do these requirements still reflect reality? With artificial intelligence increasingly becoming part of business, we now have a great opportunity to focus on genuinely important and interesting work, delegate routine tasks to AI assistants and solve many business challenges faster.

It is no secret that maintaining a culture of freedom and accountability requires progressive HR practices. Many approaches developed several decades ago are outdated and no longer correspond to the modern pace of business. Approaches to goal setting and performance management, rules for annual salary reviews and long-term succession planning were designed for stable and predictable businesses with long planning horizons and low levels of entropy. Businesses operating in environments characterised by rapid change and high uncertainty require flexible approaches adapted to the specific needs of individual teams. The focus should shift from control and delayed rewards towards recognising results and exceptional effort “here and now”.

QUIET QUITTING: HOW TO SPOT THE “INVISIBLE” EMPLOYEE ON YOUR TEAM BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

EXPERT OPINION

Konul Rahimova Celik
HRD
HAYAT Russia



Your employee consistently meets their KPIs, arrives exactly on time and never misses a deadline. Sounds like the ideal employee? Do not be too quick to celebrate. They may already be in “**quiet quitting**” mode.

This is a state in which a person formally does only what is specified in their contract but completely disengages from the life of the company: they stop suggesting ideas, taking initiative and helping colleagues.

At **Hayat**, we do not wait until an employee submits their resignation. We identify quiet quitting at the earliest possible stages using three simple but powerful filters:

1. Weekly **Balancewise** pulse surveys help us track changes in employees’ mood, stress levels and engagement in real time, even before these changes begin to affect performance. This tool allows us to monitor changes in the team’s emotional state on an ongoing basis. The key indicators we focus on include:

- How the employee currently feels at work.
- Their level of everyday stress.
- Satisfaction with their current tasks.
- Willingness to express gratitude to colleagues.

Regular collection of this microdata helps management and the HR department identify the first signs of declining engagement at an early stage – before they develop into a systemic crisis and negatively affect overall productivity.

2. 360-Degree Assessment: A Multidimensional View of Burnout

While pulse surveys reflect the employee’s own internal state, the 360-degree assessment method provides a comprehensive external perspective. Feedback is collected from all levels of interaction: colleagues, subordinates and direct managers.

Changes in an employee’s behaviour noticed by those around them may signal possible internal burnout or hidden disengagement. These may include:

- Reduced overall responsiveness and willingness to help.



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- A decline in the quality of collaboration on projects.
- An increase in conflict in day-to-day communication.

Timely analysis of these indicators makes it possible to intervene at the right moment and provide the employee with the support they need.

3. Meetings Based on the Zebra System: Separating Feedback Contexts

A distinctive element of Hayat's culture is a unique approach to one-to-one meetings known as the **"Zebra system"**. Its key feature is the strict separation of corrective and positive feedback into different sessions.

Instead of combining criticism and praise within a single conversation, the company uses two separate formats:

1. Development session: focused exclusively on discussing areas for growth, analysing mistakes and identifying opportunities for improvement.

2. Recognition session: focused on acknowledging professional achievements, reviewing strengths and recognising the employee's successes.

This separation significantly reduces emotional tension, minimises defensive reactions from employees and helps build a genuinely open, honest and trust-based dialogue between leaders and their teams.

A TEAM THAT DELIVERS RESULTS: FIVE FACTORS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE

EXPERT OPINION

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Head of Talent Acquisition & Talent
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NIZHPHARM Group



Team performance is determined not only by the expertise of individual employees and the amount of resources available. What matters most is clarity of goals and roles, trust and psychological safety, as well as how people reach agreements, make decisions, distribute responsibility and respond to mistakes.

Purpose and impact

People are more consistently engaged in collaborative work when they see how their own tasks are connected to the customer, patient, product or strategic business outcome. Purpose does not replace a fair workload, adequate resources or compensation, but it helps the team maintain focus during periods of change and high uncertainty.

A leader strengthens this factor by going beyond simply assigning tasks and showing the consequences of decisions: what will change for the customer, the company and the team itself.

A shared goal instead of a collection of tasks

A team begins to work as a single unit when it understands not just a list of individual tasks, but the overall result: who it is being created for, why it matters and by what criteria it will be assessed. If the goals of different departments conflict, or if everyone optimises only their own KPI, collaboration quickly turns into shifting responsibility.

It is important for the leader to regularly translate strategic priorities into specific agreements: what needs to be done, by whom, by what deadline and how the result will be measured.

Clarity of roles and decisions

Even strong specialists lose momentum if it is unclear who makes the final decision, who needs to be involved and who only needs to be informed. Uncertainty leads to duplicated work, prolonged approvals and mutual frustration.

A useful minimum for the team is to agree on the owner of each outcome, the boundaries of autonomy and the escalation route. This is about transparency: team members should understand exactly what colleagues have the right to expect from one another.



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Trust as the foundation of collaboration

Trust within a team means confidence that colleagues will keep their promises, will not use one another's mistakes against them and are ready for open dialogue. Without trust, employees begin to over-control each other, withhold information and protect themselves through additional approvals, while decision-making inevitably slows down.

Trust is built through everyday practice. It is important that difficult topics — disagreements, risks, resource constraints and uncomfortable feedback — are discussed openly and respectfully.

The leader's task is to create a working environment in which people can ask any question, admit a mistake, flag a risk or disagree with a decision without fear of humiliation or punishment. This is directly linked to employees' willingness to voice ideas and propose innovations.

Shared rules of interaction

Clear rules of interaction turn team agreements into predictable working practices. It is important that these rules are not imposed from above as a formal policy, but are discussed and accepted by all participants. In this case, the team sees them as its own tool for effectiveness rather than as an additional layer of control.

It is useful to agree on specific principles: how decisions are made, within what timeframes and through which channels risks are communicated, how tasks and agreements are documented, what is considered an acceptable delay, how feedback is given and how disagreements are resolved.

The rules should be short, observable and applicable in everyday work. They should also be reviewed periodically: if a rule is systematically not followed, the team needs to understand why and agree on further actions.

HOW TO MAINTAIN HIGH PRODUCTIVITY IN TIMES OF CONSTANT CHANGE?

EXPERT OPINION

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Today, there is a great deal of discussion about flexibility, adaptability and antifragility. But people are not machines, and it is impossible to simply reconfigure them at the click of a finger. As the HR Director of a large manufacturing company, where thousands of employees work every day on production lines, with equipment and under strict quality and safety requirements, I see my role not only as looking to the future, but also as preparing people for it. And this is far from easy: reshaping human resources without losing efficiency, quality or safety, and without creating the feeling that the ground is shifting beneath people's feet.

Based on our experience, I can highlight 4 key rules for working with people in a constantly changing landscape:

1. Transparency instead of an information vacuum. If management remains silent, employees will fill in the gaps themselves, and the outcome is unlikely to be positive. Fear is paralysing, distracts attention, leads to a decline in the quality of work and, critically in manufacturing, creates safety risks. An open-door policy has always been close to the company's management approach. Regular meetings with employees at production sites and honest answers to questions – why we are changing, how it will affect income, schedules and people's way of life – help us stay on the same wavelength and address issues together. We do not wait for rumours to fill the information space: we communicate first and speak openly, including about challenges.

2. Mentoring and “microlearning”. New equipment and spare parts are introduced, while technological processes and standards change. There is no time for lengthy training that takes employees away from production. That is why knowledge is shared within the system: experienced mentors create short, practical instructions and provide training directly in the workplace, without taking employees away from their shifts. We are building a pool of internal experts for each area who can quickly transfer their expertise to colleagues. This approach reduces the adaptation period for innovations from months to weeks and helps maintain quality.

3. Flexibility. Wherever possible. Constant change leads to chronic stress and burnout. We have developed a Wellbeing programme covering 4 areas: employees' physical, financial, emotional and social wellbeing. We are actively working across all 4 areas: promoting corporate sports; providing an online financial literacy course and a corporate pension programme; offering access to an online psychologist as part of the voluntary medical insurance programme; organising corporate events, including family celebrations and functional team-building activities; and providing targeted support in difficult life situations. Genuine care helps strengthen loyalty and reduce employee turnover.



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4. Involving employees at all levels in change. When we implement changes, we do not simply issue formal directives from the top down; instead, we create focus groups. When employees themselves participate in developing a new policy or implementing process improvements, they become co-authors of the outcome and are more likely to support the decision rather than resist it.

Bringing structure to chaos without taking the life out of it is entirely achievable. And high productivity in an environment of constant change is not about total control or pressure through KPIs. It is about transparency, trust and the speed of communication.

The task of HR leaders is to support colleagues at all levels and help shift their role from simply following instructions to becoming co-authors of change. Only then can any external or internal storm become not a threat to the company, but an opportunity for growth.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE FUTURE OF WORK



Article	Author
Artificial Intelligence: An Assistant, a Tool, or a New Colleague?	Roman Romashevskiy Finance and HR Director PEC Holding
How can we preserve the human touch in a world of AI algorithms?	Tatiana Kadykova HR Director FRUKTOVAYA LAVKA JSC
Experience of Implementing a Mentoring Programme and Using AI to Select Mentor Candidates	Sofia Ladygina Head of Talent Acquisition and Learning & Development S7 Group
Artificial Intelligence Accelerates Work. The Team Delivers Results	Murat Vural Founding Partner UNIQ Development
Which HR Processes Should Not Yet Be Handed Over to Artificial Intelligence?	Yusuf Huseyin Biricik Human Resources Executive Renstroydetal
What will the labour market look like after the mass adoption of AI	Svyatoslav Vilk CEO Holding Aqua

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: AN ASSISTANT, A TOOL, OR A NEW COLLEAGUE?

EXPERT OPINION

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PEC Holding



In response to the crisis in the freight transportation industry, this year we had to adapt quickly. We combined the management of finance and human resources, while tasks that had been accumulating within HR for years had to be completed within months – and by a smaller team than we had before. To be honest, without artificial intelligence we simply would not have managed. Let me share three examples where AI enabled us to make a real breakthrough.

The first was a comprehensive analysis of how employees spend their working week. With the goal of optimising back-office processes, we collected data on how employees allocated their time: 77 business units across the Group, 416 roles and around 5,000 different activities – more than 16,000 hours of work per week, all described by employees and managers themselves. Analysing such a volume of information manually would have taken months. AI completed the task in a matter of hours. More importantly, it did not merely process the data – it identified patterns. We discovered that 17% of working time was spent in unproductive meetings, 14% on manual operations such as printing, reconciliations and transferring data, while every fourth activity required employees to switch between three or more IT systems. We also found that the company was using six different communication channels. As a result, we obtained a clear map of operational inefficiencies together with a well-defined roadmap highlighting which processes should be automated or redesigned first.

The second example was our job grading project. The company had been trying to implement it for several years. We had already developed our own point-factor methodology based on nine key factors and approximately fifty evaluation levels. However, grading more than 2,000 white-collar positions required either a dedicated internal team or expensive external consultants and, most importantly, a significant amount of time. We provided the AI with our grading methodology, job descriptions, organisational structure, workforce data and budget information. In return, it evaluated every position against every grading factor and provided a detailed justification for each assessment. People still reviewed, challenged and approved the results, but a project that had been stalled for years was completed within a single month.

The third example involved salary ranges. Once the grading structure had been completed, it needed to be benchmarked against the market. This meant comparing grades with independent salary survey percentiles, industry-specific benchmarks, regional coefficients and tens of thousands of rows of compensation data. According to our estimates, completing this work manually would have required thousands of person-hours from an entire Compensation and Benefits team. With AI, we completed the project in just two weeks. The outcome was an interactive analytical model showing how the remuneration of every position compared both



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with the salary range of its grade within the company and with external market benchmarks. We also developed budget scenarios for bringing employees' salaries up to target levels and even created a web application to make the analysis more convenient for our HR analytics team.

During these projects, we developed three simple principles. First, no personal data is ever processed by AI models. All information is anonymised before processing and can only be restored within the company's secure internal environment. Second, AI performs the analysis – people validate the results and make the decisions. Responsibility for the final outcome is never delegated to an algorithm. Third, the most suitable tasks for artificial intelligence are one-off, labour-intensive analytical projects involving vast amounts of input data but based on a clear and well-defined methodology. In other words, those projects everyone agrees should be done, but which remain untouched for years simply because no one has the time or resources.

So, what is artificial intelligence to us – an assistant, a tool or a colleague? By its very nature, it is a tool. In terms of its impact, it is an assistant: it gave a relatively small team capabilities that previously would have required a much larger workforce. But it is not yet a colleague. A colleague shares responsibility, whereas accountability for decisions still rests with us. Although, to be honest, any manager would gladly welcome into their team an “intern” capable of completing three years' worth of work in just a single month.

HOW CAN WE PRESERVE THE HUMAN TOUCH IN A WORLD OF AI ALGORITHMS?

EXPERT OPINION

Tatiana Kadykova
HR Director
FRUKTOVAYA LAVKA JSC



In 2026, it is already difficult to think of artificial intelligence as a technology of the future. The ability to use this tool is gradually becoming part of a professional skill set — much like Excel or Outlook once did. At JSC Fruktovaya Lavka, we have trained some of our employees to work with AI and added AI proficiency to their competency profiles: it analyses data, helps create content and saves us hours of work.

But as efficiency increases, another question arises: if algorithms are becoming better and better at performing tasks, what exactly should remain the responsibility of people?

For me, as an HRD, a human approach does not mean rejecting technology or trying to preserve the familiar way of doing things at any cost. It means understanding one simple thing: people are behind every business result. This means that whenever we need to understand the context, motivation, potential, doubts or the consequences of a decision for a particular person, an algorithm alone is not enough. AI is particularly effective where there are large volumes of data, repetitive tasks and an opportunity to verify the result. It can be an excellent adviser. But an adviser and the person who takes responsibility for a decision are not the same thing.

For example, in recruitment, AI can assist with the initial screening of candidates. Over the years that I have worked in manufacturing companies, I have repeatedly come across talented people with CVs that did very little to “sell” them. I think many HR professionals will recognise the situation: you read a CV and realise that the person has written almost entirely the wrong things, and yet, for some reason, you have a feeling that there could be a match. You call them, have a conversation — and realise: this is the ideal candidate. A person may not be very good at describing themselves or their achievements, yet still be an expert in their field. To get a good result from AI, you need a good prompt. But a person does not need to be a perfectly formulated prompt in order to have potential and expertise.

In people management, we constantly encounter situations where a number requires interpretation and a recommendation needs to be tested. A decline in performance may indicate a loss of motivation. Or it may reflect a difficult period in a person’s life. High staff turnover may be the result of a particular manager’s actions. Or it may be a consequence of changes in the business model. An algorithm can identify a pattern. A person needs to understand what caused it.

At the same time, a human approach is often mistakenly equated with being soft. But humanity in business does not mean always saying “yes”, supporting an employee or keeping them in



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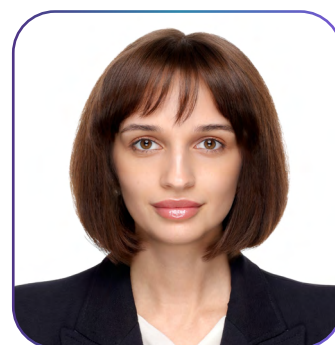
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the company at any cost. Sometimes the most human decision is to give honest feedback, decline a promotion or part ways with an employee. The difference lies in whether the decision is made mechanically or responsibly — with an understanding of the context and the consequences for the individual, the team and the business.

So preserving the human touch in a world of AI does not mean putting technology on hold. Quite the opposite: we need to learn to use AI where it is genuinely stronger than people, while being especially careful to preserve the human qualities in areas where people are stronger. The better algorithms become at handling routine tasks, the more valuable critical thinking, empathy, the ability to understand context, build trust, make decisions and take responsibility for them become. Perhaps the main challenge of the AI era is not whether we will learn to work with algorithms, but whether we will forget how to work with one another.

EXPERIENCE OF IMPLEMENTING A MENTORING PROGRAMME AND USING AI TO SELECT MENTOR CANDIDATES

EXPERT OPINION



Sofia Ladygina
Head of Talent Acquisition and
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In the current realities of the Russian labour market, employee retention is one of the most important areas of modern HR policy. Recent employee engagement and retention studies show that although financial motivation remains an important retention factor, employee loyalty to an organisation increasingly depends on opportunities for professional development, the quality of onboarding, support from managers, and corporate culture.

Within the S7 Group management company, one of the measures introduced to improve employee retention was a mentoring programme.

Despite the existing mentoring practices, the company did not have unified standards and requirements for mentors, criteria for assessing their readiness to perform this role, or common approaches to transferring knowledge and expertise. This created risks related to the quality of employee onboarding and professional development.

The following project objectives were defined:

- establishing a unified approach to mentoring within the company;
- developing a mentor competency model;
- developing assessment activities to evaluate mentor candidates against the competency model;
- creating a system for preparing and training mentors.

After the programme was launched, the main challenge for us was organising the candidate assessment process. In the very first week, we received more than 100 applications from employees wishing to participate in the programme.

The assessment process included conducting competency-based interviews, reviewing interview recordings, analysing the results, and preparing feedback for candidates. The total expert time required to assess one person was approximately five hours. Given the number of applications and the limited size of the assessment team, there was a risk of a significant increase in candidate review times. As a result, the established deadlines for providing feedback began to be regularly missed: instead of the target period of two weeks, some candidates had to wait up to one month for a decision. This required us to reconsider the existing approach and find a way to optimise the process without compromising quality.

To address this challenge, we sought support from the department responsible for developing corporate AI tools. As a result of our joint work, an AI agent was developed that enabled automatic transcription of interview recordings, converting them into text format. Experts now only



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needed to reread the interview content rather than review the recording again, which required significantly less time and reduced the overall time spent on analysis.

The next stage was the development of a prompt, which ultimately amounted to almost eight pages. The prompt contained a description of the mentor competency model, assessment criteria, and requirements for generating feedback. Based on the interview transcript, the AI conducted a preliminary assessment of the candidate across five key competencies, determined the level at which each competency was demonstrated, selected supporting examples from the interview, and prepared a draft of the feedback. The final decision was made by the expert after reviewing the materials prepared by the system.

The introduction of the AI agent into the mentor candidate assessment process, together with the development of a detailed prompt, made it possible to significantly optimise the assessment process. Before automation, the total amount of expert time required per candidate was approximately five hours. After the implementation of AI, assessing and analysing the results for one candidate required only about two hours: one hour for conducting the interview and approximately one additional hour for analysing the results, reviewing and, where necessary, correcting the AI-generated conclusions, and preparing feedback for the candidate. As a result, expert workload was reduced by 60%.

The reduction in result-processing time also made it possible to significantly accelerate the delivery of feedback to mentor candidates. While at the initial stage employees could wait up to one month for a decision, after the implementation of AI, feedback was in most cases provided on the next working day following the interview.

As noted at the beginning of the article, the original objective of the mentoring programme was to improve the quality of onboarding and employee retention. The programme results were therefore measured within one of the company's most critical departments, characterised by high-volume recruitment and traditionally high employee turnover. Before the programme was introduced, the employee turnover rate stood at 36%. Following the launch of the programme, the preparation of mentors, and the introduction of unified onboarding standards for new employees, the figure fell to 7%.

The results enabled us to clearly demonstrate that a mentoring system built around a unified standard has a direct impact on the quality and success of new employee onboarding and can be used as an effective employee retention tool.

S7's practical experience shows that the use of AI technologies in assessing mentor candidates not only significantly reduces the amount of expert time required, but also improves the efficiency of HR processes, making it possible to scale the programme without increasing the size of the HR team.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ACCELERATES WORK. THE TEAM DELIVERS RESULTS

EXPERT OPINION

Murat Vural
Founding Partner
UNIQ Development



Today, companies are facing two major shifts at the same time. On the one hand, attracting and retaining strong talent is becoming increasingly difficult. On the other, artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the very way people work. Many executives derive a seemingly straightforward conclusion from this: offer competitive salaries, provide employees with cutting-edge tools, and performance will naturally improve.

In reality, things are far more complex.

A competitive salary certainly helps attract highly qualified professionals. Artificial intelligence accelerates data analysis, document preparation and routine tasks. However, an employee's individual speed and a company's overall performance are not the same thing. Someone may work exceptionally fast, but if they are not moving towards a common objective alongside other departments, if they do not share information, and if they fail to understand how their decisions affect the business as a whole, that speed does not translate into real value.

Moreover, when an organisation is poorly structured, artificial intelligence can amplify existing problems rather than solve them. Different teams may work on the same issue while relying on different datasets and assumptions, producing ever more reports, yet ultimately no one takes ownership of the final decision. In such an environment, technology accelerates not efficiency, but fragmentation.

A strong team is not simply a group of talented individuals. It is a team whose members understand a shared objective, exchange information at the right time, are capable of engaging in open and constructive debate, and take collective responsibility for the final outcome. This is not about agreeing with one another all the time. Far more important is the ability to challenge underlying assumptions, discuss potential risks before decisions are made, and, once a decision has been reached, move forward together in the same direction.

Artificial intelligence can support this process, but it cannot create it on its own. It can compare data, generate alternative solutions and summarise meetings, but it cannot build trust, resolve interpersonal conflicts or assume responsibility for difficult decisions.

The most valuable employees of the future will not simply be those who know how to use AI tools effectively. They will be those who know how to formulate the right questions, assess the quality of available data, recognise when an AI-generated answer may be incomplete or inaccurate, and, when necessary, reject the system's recommendation altogether.



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We experienced this first-hand. During one of our recruitment processes, a candidate presented exceptionally strong materials prepared with the support of artificial intelligence. The candidate clearly stood out from the others, and we made the decision to hire them.

However, once we started working together, we saw something important: the ability to use AI tools effectively did not compensate for a lack of independent decision-making ability or the professional expertise required for the role. An impressive presentation had created the impression that the candidate was ready for the position, but it could not replace genuine experience, sound judgement, or the ability to take responsibility for the outcome.

At UNIQ Development, we are also working to develop our business processes in line with this approach. Working from shared data, defining responsibilities clearly, aligning teams around a single outcome and establishing clear ownership of decisions are the foundations of this transformation.

As part of this process, we are launching a pilot AI training programme for our employees. Our aim is not simply to complete tasks faster, but also to understand how artificial intelligence can improve the quality of analysis, judgement and decision-making.

We are fully aware that we are still at the beginning of this journey. We also know that this transformation cannot be achieved through a few new procedures or internal rules. Real change requires discipline and a shift in everyday working habits. Even so, we are optimistic about the results this approach can produce.

The companies that succeed in the future will not be those that use the most artificial intelligence, but those that successfully combine technology with human judgement, teamwork and shared responsibility.

WHICH HR PROCESSES SHOULD NOT YET BE HANDED OVER TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

EXPERT OPINION

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Human Resources Executive
Renstroydetal



In the era of globalisation and rapid technological advancement, artificial intelligence (AI)-based tools are increasingly being used across various industries, helping businesses save time and improve operational efficiency. You have most likely come across the famous video of Will Smith eating spaghetti. Back in 2023, the video looked completely unrealistic and resembled an animation. By 2026, however, it has become almost indistinguishable from a real film scene. We are living in an era where we can witness with our own eyes how artificial intelligence is improving on a daily basis. However, if we look at this issue from the perspective of strategic human resources management, a logical question arises: will artificial intelligence eventually be able to take over all HR processes, how useful is it in practice, and are there still areas where AI capabilities remain limited?

Like any business function, HR consists of a defined set of processes with measurable performance indicators. AI can support personnel administration, payroll processing, and employee learning and development. However, removing human involvement from these processes does not always benefit the organization.

Take recruitment as an example. Imagine a job interview where every question is asked exclusively by artificial intelligence following a predefined script. Even if the system has been trained on all corporate requirements, KPIs, competency models, and technical job criteria, it may still overlook small but important details that candidates mention during the interview but that are not included in their CVs. Or imagine a candidate talking about their passion for extreme sports. Would AI be able to correctly interpret and make meaningful use of this information? Doing so requires not only algorithms but also the professional experience of the interviewer, pattern recognition developed through years of practice, and the ability to interpret context. These competencies are built over many years of practical experience.

AI capabilities continue to evolve every year, and there is no doubt that it will soon become an indispensable assistant for every business. However, in many HR processes, attempting to replace people entirely with artificial intelligence may lead to serious mistakes.

To support this point, let us consider other HR processes, such as personnel administration, payroll, compensation and benefits management, and employee performance management. All of these are based on specific input data and rely on clearly measurable indicators. Technologies such as chatbots and intelligent assistants are already being successfully implemented and used in these areas. For example, AI can analyse macroeconomic indicators and labour market conditions to generate recommendations for optimising compensation and



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reward systems. At the same time, there is another important concept – corporate culture. Corporate culture is the organisation's internal code. It develops over many years and reflects the company's history, the characteristics of its workforce, and the management experience accumulated by its leaders, including lessons learned from numerous non-standard situations. Together with economic indicators and legal requirements, these fundamental elements shape every internal process. Are AI algorithms truly capable of correctly interpreting factors such as a multicultural workforce, the history of long-standing relationships within a team, or the experience gained from previous management mistakes when making decisions? We all understand that artificial intelligence technologies can significantly accelerate and optimise many processes. However, in a function such as Human Resources, where people are the organisation's most valuable asset, fully transferring HR processes – from attracting talent to retaining and developing employees – to artificial intelligence may become the point at which irreversible mistakes begin.

Behind every individual stands a unique professional journey, personal motivation, life experience, and way of thinking. A person is not merely a collection of competencies but also their attitude towards the organisation, their values, ambitions, and capacity for growth. These are often the very qualities that cannot be fully measured or converted into data. Evaluating them requires a human being.

The future of human resources management is undoubtedly linked to AI technologies. However, the most effective model is one in which AI and people work together, with artificial intelligence serving as a powerful tool rather than a replacement for HR professionals.

WHAT WILL THE LABOUR MARKET LOOK LIKE AFTER THE MASS ADOPTION OF AI

EXPERT OPINION

Svyatoslav Vilk
CEO
Holding Aqua



The First Industrial Revolution once set in motion a flywheel of acceleration that, over the course of two hundred years, reshaped the logic of human development. Within the lifetime of three generations, we moved from the steam engine and the telegraph to harnessing atomic energy, decoding DNA, space exploration, and a global digital network. Today, this process continues before our eyes: gene editing, mRNA technologies, robotics, and generative artificial intelligence (hereinafter referred to as AI).

AI is often discussed as something that happened to us and is now determining our future, but this is not the right perspective, because AI is simply another turn of the same spiral and, in essence, is not very different from the automation we are already familiar with. Automation has always been based on one principle — an employee produces more or works faster within the same unit of time, meaning not “instead of a person,” but “with the help of a person, only differently.”

This is where my view differs from most forecasts. In my understanding, AI is a tool for scaling rather than for reducing labour costs. In the first case, you achieve more with the same workforce; in the second, you achieve the same with fewer people. Those who choose the second approach tend to make some unpleasant discoveries.

Ramp and Revelio Labs studied 21,500 US companies, for the first time linking actual spending on AI with workforce statistics. Companies that invested most intensively increased their headcount by 10.2% over two years, while the number of entry-level employees grew by approximately 12%. The authors openly acknowledge that this is correlation rather than proven causation. In other words, if AI automatically replaced people, job cuts should theoretically be concentrated precisely among its most active users.

But there is another side to the story that optimistic articles tend not to discuss.

This year, Ford admitted that it had overestimated the capabilities of AI. The company placed its bets on automated quality control, installed nine hundred cameras with AI-powered analysis, and reduced its workforce. Quality declined, and Ford became the US automaker with the highest number of recalls. Over three years, the company had to hire 350 experienced engineers to retrain the systems that were supposed to replace them. Only after that did Ford, for the first time since 2010, rank first in the J.D. Power quality ranking.

Experienced engineers left before they had time to transfer their knowledge to the systems designed to replace them. Decades of expertise disappeared and had to be bought back.



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Therefore, the real risk of the coming years is not unemployment caused by AI-driven automation, but the loss of people who carry critical knowledge under the illusion that all of this knowledge has already been digitised.

The second part of the problem comes from another direction. Economists from Stockholm University and the University of Hong Kong observed 26,800 Chinese school students for thirty months. With the arrival of AI, homework grades increased by 18% and completion time fell by 30% — but performance in closed-book examinations without AI declined by around 20% within just six months, while results in entrance examinations fell by 18–24%.

But the key point lies elsewhere: the losses were concentrated among roughly four-fifths of students whose behaviour corresponded to simply delegating their intellectual effort to AI — very short completion times combined with high grades. Those who continued spending as much time on assignments as they had before lost nothing.

I often tell my team: AI will make stupid people even more stupid and smart people even smarter. It does not level people out; it amplifies what a person was already doing — both thinking and refusing to think.

What we are doing at Holding Aqua

We are developing a map of routine processes for subsequent automation, including through the use of AI. I will not claim that we have made a breakthrough: we are still at the beginning of the journey. Some solutions are already in operation — agents working with local regulations and supporting the IT function, market analysis and evaluation of ideas from the company's idea bank, as well as proofreading and layout.

What matters more is how AI is introduced. There are two models: “if you are not with us, you are against us,” and building a critical mass of ambassadors who promote the idea from within. We are following the second path: we train people and explain to each employee why this matters personally to them and why it matters to the group of companies. The difference is not in the speed of implementation, but in the outcome — whether employees will hide their use of AI from management or use it consciously and responsibly.

The main message we communicate to employees is that the ability to work with AI is no different from the ability to work with 1C, Word, or Excel. It is the same element of professional hygiene, and the objective is not simply to add another line to a CV, but to ensure that the technology becomes as natural a part of everyday work as a search engine or a messenger.

What this means for the labour market

It will not be professions that disappear, but outdated ways of performing them. At the same time, value will shift in a direction that is not usually expected: demand will not be highest for



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those who can generate results faster, but for those who are able to verify those results and take responsibility for them. Employers will increasingly value the ability to define tasks, verify outcomes, and take responsibility — for everything that AI does not take upon itself.

To job seekers, I would say this: there is nothing to fear, but there is no reason to relax either. Give routine tasks and initial analysis to machines — and increase your own workload by exactly the same amount in those areas where thinking and decision-making are required. If the time you have freed up simply disappears into nothing, you have lost to yourself.

The labour market of the future is not a market of people versus machines. It is a market of people who know how to work with machines. We need to move along this path in step with progress — while remaining the ones who make decisions, create something new, and take responsibility for the result.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT



Article	Author
Why does corporate training fail to deliver business results?	Ekaterina Suhih Head of Training, Development, and Evaluation Elevel
How to identify Employees with high development potential	Andrey Zykov HRD SILMAR GROUP

WHY DOES CORPORATE TRAINING FAIL TO DELIVER BUSINESS RESULTS?

EXPERT OPINION

Ekaterina Suhih
Head of Training,
Development, and Evaluation
Elevel



This question often comes up in my conversations with businesses: some test my expertise, some question whether the costs will pay off, while others have seen first-hand that 100% course completion and excellent test scores do not guarantee sales growth. Does this mean that training is useless? No. The problem lies in the approach: how training is planned, delivered and supported, and how its results are measured. Let us examine each stage through a checklist of the right actions, together with the typical mistakes made at each stage.

1. Planning the Training

How it should work:

- The business clearly defines the problem that the training is intended to solve;
- Both sides understand that the problem is specifically linked to employees' competencies, rather than to marketing, processes, work systems or company culture;
- The trainer gathers requirements from the sponsor and the audience, then designs the programme, exercises and tools around the specific skills that affect results.

Typical mistakes:

- **Training disconnected from the business objective.** Training is launched out of habit or simply to tick a box. According to research (Brandon Hall Group, 2026), more than half of investments in development become disconnected from the real drivers of growth. For example, managers are trained in negotiation while sales are declining because the CRM system is malfunctioning.
- **Training as a «magic pill».** Courses are used in an attempt to plug systemic gaps, such as a toxic atmosphere, unclear responsibilities or weak motivation. A single communication course will not help here. It may teach people effective communication tools, but it does not remove the need for systemic changes to processes and corporate culture.
- **No preliminary diagnosis.** Without a skills audit and gap analysis, the programme is designed for an imaginary 'average employee' rather than to address genuine gaps. As a result, participants either cannot follow the trainer or, conversely, become bored by material they have heard many times before.
- **A box-ticking approach and no internal demand.** Training imposed from above and offering no personal value to employees is doomed to fail. This is especially true for Generation Z: without career prospects or recognition, their motivation declines and the knowledge remains abstract.
- **Training «for future needs».** For example, an employee acquires management skills but has



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- no intention of becoming a manager. There is nowhere to apply the new experience: it is forgotten, and the new neural connections break down.
- **Pursuing quick and inexpensive solutions.** Under tight deadlines and limited budgets, businesses choose online courses or low-cost programmes while expecting profound changes in competencies that take years to develop. The result is disappointment.

2. Delivering the Training

How it should work:

- The programme meets the expectations of the sponsor and the audience;
- The trainer is a practitioner with experience in the relevant industry and provides relevant examples, which builds trust and makes it easier to transfer skills to the workplace (this is precisely why I believe businesses would benefit from introducing an L&D BP role, modelled on the HR BP role).
- Case studies based on the company's real challenges are examined so that employees can apply the solutions the very next day.

Typical mistakes:

1. An off-the-shelf programme despite requirements having been gathered. Participants hear general truths, but their specific expectations are not addressed.
2. The 'generalist' trainer. They deliver courses on any subject and for any industry, but cannot handle in-depth questions or examples drawn from the participants' own experience.
3. Cases at the wrong level of difficulty. Experienced B2B sales professionals are given simplistic tasks such as selling a pen. They breeze through them, but real client challenges remain unaddressed.

3. Post-Training Support

How it should work:

- After the training, tests are conducted and feedback is collected to assess participants' understanding of the theory and whether the training met the stated expectations;
- The business receives a report and recommendations on the next steps;
- Managers systematically reinforce skills in the workplace through feedback and coaching;
- Competencies are assessed regularly and development plans are adjusted accordingly (training is a system, not a series of isolated events).

Typical mistakes:

- **No reinforcement.** Without support from their manager, an employee quickly returns to their old ways of working. Research confirms that regularly discussing new skills during meetings increases the likelihood that employees will use them by 65%. This is precisely why it is important for managers to work together and follow the recommendations after the training.
- **Unclear accountability.** L&D delivers the course but is not involved in implementation, while



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- the business unit waits for a miracle without creating the conditions for change. Training exists in a vacuum, and its results are detached from day-to-day practice.
- **Lack of a systematic approach.** Training sessions are held sporadically, whenever time and/or budget are available, even though developing complex competencies requires time and consistency. If there is no system, no one should expect miracles from standalone training programmes.

4. Measuring Results

How it should work:

- Here and now: we measure satisfaction with the training (feedback forms) and check the knowledge acquired (tests and homework);
- Long-term evaluation: we monitor changes in competencies in the field, during subsequent training sessions and through regular assessments;
- Indirect metrics: engagement (eNPS, ESI), staff turnover (overall and among key talent), the proportion of employees considering leaving, and behavioural indicators such as participation in initiatives, the number of ideas implemented and the speed at which new hires reach full productivity. Training directly affects these metrics, which in turn affect productivity (a fact now supported by a wide range of studies).

Typical mistakes:

- **Refusing to measure because it is difficult.** If we do not measure L&D indicators, we cannot manage them. The L&D function must track not only test results but also HR metrics and their relationship with business indicators.
- **The direct question: «Where is the sales growth?».** In a B2C business, it is theoretically possible to measure performance 'before' and 'after' training. For example, an employee is trained to increase the average transaction value, returns to the outlet, and the figure rises, so we have done a great job. But even in this case, the result is affected by the demand curve, the broader economic environment and marketing activities. In long-term B2B sales and project-based deals, the direct effect of training becomes almost impossible to isolate (you might say that we could run training pilots and compare regions with and without training, but, colleagues, business is not a university: no one is going to wait for us to complete our experiment).

It follows from the above that corporate training is not a one-off event or magic, but a system in which every stage matters. Yes, it is difficult to measure the direct effect, but that is not a reason to abandon measurement; it is a reason to build the process deliberately, in partnership with the business and employees. Invest in people systematically, reinforce skills in practice and assess progress, and training will cease to be a cost item and become a driver of sustainable growth. Real change always starts from within, and it is worth it.



HOW TO IDENTIFY EMPLOYEES WITH HIGH DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

EXPERT OPINION

Andrey Zykov
HRD
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Why do yesterday's stars often fail to shine in the future?

For a long time, our approach in logistics was simple: meet your KPIs and you get promoted. This worked while the environment remained predictable. But the greater the turbulence, the clearer it becomes that yesterday's top performers do not always cope with new challenges. They wait for instructions where none exist yet and struggle to relearn when familiar tools become obsolete.

Research confirms that past performance is a weak predictor of future success^[1]. In an unstable environment, learning agility comes to the fore — the ability to quickly draw lessons from unfamiliar experiences and apply them in new situations^[2].

What does high potential consist of?

If we set abstractions aside, high potential rests on three pillars.

The first pillar is the ability to learn from experience — from any experience, not only success, but also failures, unusual situations and difficult projects. Such a person does not merely master something new; they extract lessons from everything that happens to them and apply those lessons going forward. Research breaks this quality down into several components: mental agility, results orientation, social sensitivity and reflection^[3].

The second is motivation to grow. This is not simply a desire to move up to the next level, but an internal drive to understand complex issues, take on unfamiliar tasks and persist in the face of setbacks. Other researchers add curiosity, insight and determination to this list^[4].

The third aspect is social intelligence: the ability to read people accurately, reach agreement in tense situations and influence others without formal authority. In logistics, this is critical, because we have to build bridges between completely different functional worlds.

How can we look into the future? Assessing potential is not magic, but observation

The most reliable tools are not guesswork, but structured observation of behaviour in unusual circumstances.

We use situational interviews for all candidates. A question such as, "Tell me about a time when you took on a task you initially knew nothing about. What did you do? What did you learn?"



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reveals a person's true learning agility better than dozens of theoretical questions. It is important to assess not only the outcome, but also the person's thought process and how they worked through their mistakes^[2].

We collect structured references for all candidates from their previous managers. The conversation with a manager is no longer centred on whether the employee met their targets, but on how they responded to tough feedback, whether they took on tasks they did not yet know how to perform, and whether they were willing to teach others.

Specialised tests — psychometric questionnaires — should also be included. They provide an objective snapshot of learning agility and supplement a manager's subjective impressions with quantitative data^[5].

Finally, there is the simple 9-box matrix. The horizontal axis represents current performance, while the vertical axis represents potential — that same learning agility. It helps provide a complete picture of the talent pool and identify those who fall into the “high performance — high potential” category. When identifying employees with potential, these are the people who should receive attention first ^[6].

What everyday signals reveal a potential star?

Even without complex procedures, simple signals can be noticed in day-to-day work, and their reliability has been confirmed by dozens of studies.

The first is the response to failure. If an employee says, “I realised that I had failed to take this factor into account; next time I will do it differently,” this indicates reflection. Someone who systematically looks for causes outside themselves is unlikely to be inclined to learn.

The second is the quality of their questions. Deeper questions such as “why is it structured this way?” and “what would happen if we tried a different approach?” reveal breadth of thinking, while constant requests for instructions indicate the opposite.

The third is proactivity. When someone volunteers for a project outside their area of responsibility or suggests automating routine work, this demonstrates determination and curiosity — the very factors highlighted in the potential model^[4].

Why is versatility becoming more important than narrow expertise?

Digitalisation and increasingly complex supply chains are changing the profile of a high-potential employee. A narrow specialist who knows one area extremely well but becomes lost in adjacent areas quickly loses value.

Today, we need someone who can switch calmly from operational tasks to implementing new



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software, communicate effectively with both IT specialists and frontline employees, and quickly assemble and inspire a team to tackle an unusual task. This combination of learning agility and adaptability is becoming the decisive criterion when selecting future leaders^[7].

Where can you start tomorrow?

Introducing a potential assessment system does not require enormous resources. Here is an algorithm that produces a rapid effect:

1. Shift the focus of regular conversations: instead of asking “what did you do?”, ask “what did you learn, and what did you try doing differently?”
2. Incorporate one or two situational questions focused on learning agility into the hiring process and restructure the format of interview questions.
3. Start recording behavioural signals — who draws the best conclusions from mistakes, who asks deeper questions, and who is drawn to unfamiliar tasks.
4. Create a simple 9-box matrix and identify the HiPo group.
5. Develop an individual plan for every employee in the upper-right quadrant: a cross-functional project, mentoring and microlearning.

It is worth trying to stop measuring people’s potential solely by their past and start noticing how they learn and respond to the unknown. The talent picture then becomes clearer, while investment in development becomes more targeted and justified.

Notes and sources

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MANAGEMENT OF MANAGERS



Article	Author
How to develop leaders in an environment of constant change?	Yaroslava Vasiljeva CHRO ABZ-1 Group of companies Liudmila Antonova Deputy CHRO ABZ-1 Group of companies
What competencies distinguish an effective leader today?	Tatyana Preobrazhenskaya HR Director HAIER CIS
Management talent pool	Daria Guseva Head of Internal Communications, HR Assessment & Development Sawatzky
Managing managers. How to develop management skills without expensive training programmes. lessons from General Electric	Gulnara Valeeva Executive director JSC TAIF

HOW TO DEVELOP LEADERS IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF CONSTANT CHANGE?

EXPERT OPINION



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«To manage, one must, after all, have a precise plan for at least some reasonably decent period of time. Allow me to ask you, then, how can a person manage if he is not only deprived of the opportunity to draw up any plan, even for a ridiculously short period of time, <...> but cannot even vouch for his own tomorrow?»

M. Bulgakov, The Master and Margarita

Following the classic author's line of thought, let us model the current context in which today's leaders operate. A prolonged polycrisis and uncertainty are compounded by team fatigue and may be further intensified by leaders' personal crises. Leaders need to maintain several areas of focus simultaneously — strategic ambitions, operational constraints, and the human side of change.

How can we help leaders choose the right development vectors and develop effectively, without unnecessary haste, while taking into account the context, the team's potential, and their own personal potential in an environment of constant change?

In our group of companies, the process of identifying development vectors and formats for leaders starts with the **Leadership Check-up** programme, which includes various diagnostic tools and coaching sessions.

The purpose of the Leadership Check-up:

through understanding oneself, one's roles, and learning styles, to identify key areas for development, both strategic and tactical. To understand what and how can be mastered quickly in the near term, and what will require rethinking, transformation, and long-term, persistent development. In other words, to look at the development challenge by switching between low beam and high beam.

If we look at the "low beam", short practical formats work best. Here, our observations are consistent with the findings of SberUniversity's Corporate Development Index 2025–2026. Current learning and development topics are centred around leadership models, self-managed teams, the perennial topic of effective communication, digital literacy, operational efficiency, and risk management.

The "high beam" and uncertainty focus our attention on developing leaders' adaptive potential, or **learning agility**, which enables them to:



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- quickly learn lessons from their own experience;
- rethink mistakes and feedback;
- transfer these lessons to new, non-standard situations where there are no ready-made instructions.

This is not “learning ability” in the narrow sense of how a person attends training sessions and passes tests. It is about how they act when there are no regulations and no “senior colleague” nearby, while their decisions affect the company’s money, people, and reputation.

Five components of adaptive potential according to Korn Ferry research conducted across hundreds of Fortune 500 companies: self-awareness, mental agility, people agility, change agility, and results agility in new circumstances.

WHAT COMPETENCIES DISTINGUISH AN EFFECTIVE LEADER TODAY?

EXPERT OPINION

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Today, it is already clear that an effective leader is neither a “general commanding from headquarters” nor a figure sitting behind a massive desk, but rather a person who is the first to switch on the light in a dark room, helps every team member find their place, and creates a sense of support and stability. That is why I suggest we speak here specifically about the effectiveness of a leader rather than that of a traditional manager. Amid talent shortages and an overall decline in employee engagement in Russia, money and bonuses are no longer the only primary currency, while traditional motivation systems are becoming outdated, failing to keep pace with changes in the labour market. This is precisely why people stay where they feel seen, heard and valued. The set of competencies required of a leader has fundamentally changed over the past couple of years.

Strategic Agility and a Culture of Continuous Improvement

Uncertainty has become the norm. An effective leader makes decisions quickly, often without having complete information, and takes responsibility for promptly adjusting plans — without transmitting anxiety to the team. Their strategy is not a static document designed for the next three years, but a daily search for answers to the questions: “How can we do this better? Where are we losing time and resources?” Continuous process improvement, elimination of inefficiencies and protecting people from meaningless workloads should become part of everyday working practice. This is how operational efficiency can grow without leading to burnout.

AI Literacy as the Foundation of Productivity

According to global HR expert Brigette Hyacinth, author of *Leading in the Age of AI*, the modern leader is moving away from being a controller and becoming an architect of an environment in which technology empowers people rather than replaces them. The pace of change in AI is remarkable: what was impossible in Q1 2026 has already become a reality today. AI literacy is not a fashionable trend, but a practical skill: the ability to independently identify and configure AI tools for the team’s needs, design hybrid “human + artificial intelligence” processes, and free people from routine tasks. This approach directly increases productivity: the team works not more, but smarter, while the leader gains a competitive advantage through faster and higher-quality decision-making. It is a continuous process.

Emotional Intelligence and Engaging Leadership

At a time when trust in processes and management is under pressure, emotional intelligence is becoming critically important. A leader notices the first signs of fatigue and “quiet quitting”,



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distributes workloads with balance in mind, and provides space for recovery at the right time. They act as a buffer between external market pressure and the team, speak openly about problems, and work together with the team to find solutions. According to the latest employee engagement studies in Russia, leading companies are placing particular emphasis on engaging leadership — on understanding employees' real needs rather than simply showing empathy. While the topic of human-centricity was actively developing in 2024–2025, this year there has been growing interest in employee trust, autonomy and accountability — something that is impossible without a leader possessing well-developed emotional intelligence. In Russia, public recognition of employees' contributions and honest, supportive feedback have a stronger impact than formal KPIs.

From Control to Coaching and Trust

A true leader creates other leaders, not followers. Hierarchical management has long ceased to belong in modern workplace culture. Leaders need coaching skills rather than a directive management style: they set clear direction, remove obstacles, delegate authority and develop autonomy. The right balance between support and corrective feedback is becoming a working standard. In this model, micromanagement is a direct obstacle to both productivity and motivation.

Multicultural and Generational Awareness

The cultural dimension of leadership is also important in international teams, including within emerging business environments. Russia has noticeably reoriented its business focus: instead of traditional Western markets, attention has shifted towards Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the CIS countries. Partnerships with China, India, Türkiye, the EAEU member states, as well as countries in Latin America and Africa, are particularly significant. It is critical for a leader to be able to recognise unfamiliar cultural codes and adapt to different communication styles — this is the foundation of trust and effective collaboration in diverse teams.

Equally important is the internal dimension of this awareness — taking generational differences into account. Amid an acute shortage of qualified professionals, differentiated motivation is becoming a necessity: for younger specialists, timely feedback is critically important, as it gives them a sense of progress and involvement. For experienced employees, stability, recognition of their professional contribution, and respect for their expertise come to the forefront. Such a balanced environment becomes a key factor in employee retention and increased engagement.

The “Effective Leader”. What Ultimately Matters?

An effective leader-manager is someone people follow not out of a sense of obligation, but because they genuinely want to, seeing that person as a source of support and direction. They know how to combine “data” and emotions: they are confident in using AI tools while remaining highly attuned to their team; they maintain a strategic focus while staying attentive to people;



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they establish discipline while simultaneously creating an environment in which everyone can fulfil their potential. Amid talent shortages and high levels of uncertainty, this approach is not an advantage but a necessity: it helps maintain engagement, reduce burnout and move forward with confidence. It is a demanding profile, but these are precisely the leaders who make a company stronger and more resilient — day after day.

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The loss of a key executive can paralyse business processes and blur strategic focus. A leadership succession pipeline is a systematic response to such risks, ensuring continuity of leadership.

Let us briefly look at the methodology.

To begin with, not every company needs a succession pipeline at all times. A leadership succession pipeline is critical in three situations:

- business scaling (expansion, launch of new business areas);
- talent risks (high turnover among senior management, ageing of key leaders);
- integration following M&A transactions.

In all other cases, targeted development of HiPo employees may be sufficient, without building a complex succession system.

The overall objective of a succession pipeline is to ensure leadership continuity, fill critical roles internally and reduce dependence on costly external hiring.

A succession system consists of two tracks. The internal pipeline includes current employees with the potential to grow. The external pipeline consists of “warm” leadership candidates from the market with whom the company proactively builds relationships before a vacancy even arises. The choice of track depends primarily on timing. If the role needed to be filled “yesterday”, we look externally; if the planning horizon is one to two years, we develop talent internally.

Internal pipeline: developing your own talent

Tools that can be used include Performance Reviews, 9-Box Matrix assessments, Assessment Centres and 360-degree feedback.

The process works as follows: we assess not only current performance but also potential — learning agility, ambition, adaptability, commitment and motivation. Once candidates have been selected, the results must be calibrated with senior management. This is followed by continuous, detailed work with succession candidates: individual development plans, mentoring, participation in cross-functional projects and rotations.

External pipeline: hunting for stars in the market

Tools include talent mapping, alumni databases, professional business communities and referrals.



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The process involves identifying promising candidates in the market, capturing their profiles in a database and building long-term relationships with them. Here, HR acts as both a marketer and a diplomat. The employer brand needs to be regularly “sold”, candidates’ career expectations must be closely monitored, and relevant opportunities should be offered when they arise.

Benefits and risks of both tracks

Internal pipeline: the advantages include loyalty, a deep understanding of the company’s culture and business processes, as well as a powerful motivational effect on the team. The risks include a lack of fresh perspective, groupthink and the potential demotivation of employees who were not selected.

External pipeline: the advantages are a fresh perspective and new competencies. The risks include lengthy and costly adaptation, potential cultural mismatch and high headhunting costs.

How to manage the pipeline without keeping people “on the bench” for too long

This is where HR may encounter a classic trap — the “benchwarmer syndrome”.

A typical scenario: a talented sales manager is placed in the succession pipeline for the Head of Sales position. One year passes, then two — “the position should become available any time now”; three years — “you’re our future leader, just be patient a little longer”. In the fourth year, the succession candidate quietly leaves for a competitor and becomes Head of Sales there. We kept them “on the bench” for too long.

To prevent this, the following approach should be followed:

1. Transparency. Clearly define and document the criteria for entering and leaving the succession pipeline, as well as the expected time horizons.
2. Regular review. Conduct a six-monthly calibration with the succession candidate and their manager to reassess motivation and expectations.
3. Integration into the HR cycle. Include succession candidates in learning and development programmes and link their development to grades and compensation reviews.
4. Business involvement. Line managers should be directly involved in assessing and developing succession candidates. HR’s role here is that of a methodology owner and facilitator.

A well-designed succession pipeline delivers significant returns, turning the HR function into a genuine driver of business resilience.

MANAGING MANAGERS. HOW TO DEVELOP MANAGEMENT SKILLS WITHOUT EXPENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAMMES. LESSONS FROM GENERAL ELECTRIC

EXPERT OPINION



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When we hear the phrase “management training”, the first things that usually come to mind are expensive external programmes: business schools and MBA programmes. This is the traditional route, with professional networking as an additional benefit.

What is the difference between developing skills and acquiring knowledge?

Without denying the value of such programmes, it is important to distinguish between transferring knowledge and developing skills. Skills are formed only through regular practice. No training course can complete the Knowledge → Abilities → Skills journey on behalf of a manager. Therefore, the workplace itself should become the main environment for developing management skills.

A manager's manager is his primary coach

General Electric's famous management development centre in Crotonville was a large-scale and expensive initiative. Yet one of its key strengths can be replicated in almost any company: managers participated in the development of their colleagues, while training was built around solving real business challenges.

Two principles from this experience are worth adopting:

1. managers develop managers;
2. real company challenges become training material.

Mentoring should be one of the fundamental elements of a management skills development system. Everyday work situations provide constant opportunities to practise these skills. At the same time, the task should be slightly above the employee's current level: challenging enough to take them beyond what they can already do confidently, but not so difficult as to be beyond their reach.

To achieve this, a manager only needs to integrate development into everyday work:

- when assigning a task, identify which skill it will help develop;
- if knowledge is lacking, recommend material for independent study, such as books, articles or podcasts;

after completion, provide specific feedback. Rather than simply saying “you missed the deadline”, analyse why it happened, which checkpoints should have been established and what should be changed next time.



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It is important for the employee to understand that such feedback is not intended to undermine their self-esteem, but to support their development as a manager.

When large-scale management training is necessary

Sometimes targeted development through work assignments and mentoring is not enough. This may be the case, for example, when a company is undergoing significant changes: restructuring its processes or organisational model, or introducing new approaches to goal setting, performance assessment and management.

In this case, the purpose of training is not so much to improve the skills of individual managers as to create a shared management framework: common terminology, a common understanding of management principles and shared working tools.

If one manager understands delegation as the complete transfer of responsibility — once the task has been delegated to someone else, they no longer bear responsibility — another sees it as assigning a task under strict control, while a third understands it as completely withdrawing from the process, there is no unified management system.

The same applies to concepts such as “goal”, “result”, “feedback” and “responsibility”.

During significant organisational changes, it is reasonable to train managers as a single group under a common programme developed specifically around the company’s needs. The involvement of the company’s top executive is critically important — not simply by giving a welcome speech at the opening, but by participating fully in most discussions. This demonstrates that the initiative is not simply an HR function project, but is about establishing common rules for managing the company.

This was another strength of Crotonville: the training helped to spread a common management language and shared approaches throughout a large diversified company.

The key point

Regardless of how training is organised — through independent study, a mentoring system or large-scale training programmes — its value is not determined by the number of training hours.

Training can accelerate a manager’s development, but it cannot replace a conscious approach to practising skills independently in real working situations. Management skills are developed through a simple sequence: task → action → feedback → adjustment → further practice. Building on strengths and consistently identifying areas for growth should become a regular management practice so that managers themselves become drivers of skill development among their team members.

PRODUCTION PERSONNEL



Article

Author

Employee retention in production:
top 5 tips

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Leaving the office for the factory: a myth
that businesses need to turn into reality

Anastasiya Tsygankova
HR Director
OCTAPHARMA-PHARMIMEX LLC

Orientiry - the way to leadership
in production

Olga Nikolaenko
HR Lead SC, R&D and supporting
functions
Arnest UniRus

EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN PRODUCTION: TOP 5 TIPS

EXPERT OPINION

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When I was asked to choose a topic, I realised that employee retention is something managers at every level deal with on a daily basis. That is why I decided to share the challenges I have personally faced, what my team and I have been through together, and how these experiences have shaped the way we work.

In my view, the greatest risk facing companies today is the loss of skilled employees and the shortage of qualified personnel. Much has already been written about this issue, and Russia's annual unemployment rate of 2.2%, according to Rosstat, only confirms how relevant this challenge remains. In addition, our industry is currently benefiting from high gold prices, creating favourable conditions for investment in new processing plants and intensifying competition for experienced specialists.

In 2023, I joined the "Russian Platinum" team and set out to understand the main reasons why highly qualified professionals were leaving the company. Just a few days later, I travelled to meet our employees in person. Our gold mining division operates two major regional centres — one in Siberia and one in the Russian Far East — employing around 3,000 people who work in the Far North under harsh conditions and at high-risk industrial sites.

The first issue I discovered was that we simply did not know why employees were leaving or what they genuinely wanted. One of our mining and processing plants is located a two-hour flight north of Khabarovsk. I left a city where people were still wearing T-shirts in early autumn, only to arrive in deep snow and freezing temperatures. During a meeting with colleagues from one of our underground mining operations, I spoke about the company's plans, answered their questions, and personally thanked them for their hard work.

Only afterwards did I learn that I was the first HR Director who had ever travelled there in person to meet them and answer their questions. That meeting changed our approach. Today, every manager in my HR team regularly visits our mines and processing plants, meets employees face to face, and learns directly from them what is happening on site. This enables us to hear genuine feedback and practical ideas that help us improve our operations and increase productivity.

The second major area of focus was digital transformation. Alongside optimising HR processes and recruitment, we automated the employee travel booking process. Since every rotational worker travels to the site several times a year and then returns home, arranging flights had become extremely time-consuming. Moreover, severe weather conditions frequently caused



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flight cancellations, forcing employees to change their tickets repeatedly, creating frustration and generating additional costs. By centralising and automating ticket purchasing on behalf of the company, we reduced travel costs by 7% and increased workforce staffing levels by 3% during the first six months of 2026.

The third priority was strengthening business resilience by retaining key employees. Today we see major mining and metals companies investing heavily in new operations while actively competing for scarce specialists. Losing a critical leader not only reduces productivity but also increases operating costs. We therefore identified the employees with the greatest impact on business performance and developed targeted retention and development plans for them. This approach will help reduce workforce-related risks and strengthen the long-term sustainability of the business.

In conclusion, here are my top five practical recommendations for retaining employees in industrial operations:

1. Build reliable communication channels from frontline employees to senior management. Your operational workforce is your most valuable source of information and ideas.
2. Express appreciation to your employees and managers more often. It is one of the simplest and most effective ways to increase engagement, loyalty, and job satisfaction.
3. Always consider your company's specific context. Just because a Boeing 777 can successfully complete transatlantic flights does not mean that a narrow-body regional aircraft can do the same.
4. Put forward new ideas, but be prepared to receive criticism. That is a natural part of driving change.
5. Continuously look for new ways to reduce operating costs. By doing so, you not only contribute to your company's success but also increase your own value to the business.

LEAVING THE OFFICE FOR THE FACTORY: A MYTH THAT BUSINESSES NEED TO TURN INTO REALITY

EXPERT OPINION

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It is no secret that manufacturing companies across Russia are experiencing a labour shortage, particularly when it comes to engineering personnel and skilled workers.

Every year, manufacturing processes become increasingly technological and require a new, significantly higher level of workforce training. Simple operations are no longer simple and now require employees to have technical knowledge and a wide range of skills. At the same time, the remuneration levels of these specialists have increased substantially in recent years. Why, then, are young people not choosing to work in manufacturing?

The roots of the problem lie in education. Modern education does not encourage children to take an interest in manufacturing careers and does not explain the opportunities they may offer. Subjects are taught by theoreticians who have little understanding of modern manufacturing processes. The equipment used in universities and vocational colleges has long since ceased to be used at factories, while practical training often follows the principle of: “Sit down and stay out of the way!”

Bringing young people back into manufacturing is possible, but it requires a comprehensive approach. Introducing children to manufacturing should begin while they are still at school.

For future specialists to receive a modern education and become effective employees, businesses and educational institutions need to work together. Career guidance sessions should begin several years before students have to choose the subjects for their Basic State Exam and Unified State Exams. Such meetings are best organised as a dialogue: responding to future students’ and their parents’ questions, providing honest and comprehensive answers, and, whenever possible, introducing them to the company’s products by demonstrating samples. Mini-stations that simulate a manufacturing process or part of one are particularly popular. Children and their parents are always interested in taking part in interactive activities, becoming involved and trying themselves in the role of manufacturing specialists.

Career guidance is most effective when schools, universities/vocational colleges and businesses work together.

Such a platform makes it possible to systematically show school students the entire educational and career journey: from the first steps in preparing for admission to employment after graduation.

One of the most effective tools for promoting manufacturing careers is organising visits to



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production facilities for children and their parents. Why is it important to invite parents to such events? Parents are often the people who help us decide on our future careers. If you gain their support, you can consider half the job done.

A facility visit is an excellent way to introduce a child to manufacturing and spark their interest: allowing them to hold something in their hands, follow the sequence of steps and personally take a small but genuine part in the process. This is why conventional formats such as presentations and talks are unlikely to be effective: to interest a child in manufacturing, you need to allow them to become an active participant rather than a passive listener.

The next step is helping them choose an educational institution and participating in the educational process.

A single visit is clearly not enough to genuinely engage school students and their parents.

An effective strategy requires systematic work: active participation in open days at relevant educational institutions, regular attendance at meetings with parent communities, and maximum involvement in schools' career guidance activities. This approach significantly increases company awareness and strengthens its reputation as a reliable employer.

An important element of this work should be a dedicated employee — a kind of liaison between the company and educational institutions. This person should always be available, help students navigate partner universities and vocational colleges, explain admission requirements in detail, and quickly provide the necessary contact details for educational institutions.

The opportunities offered by television advertising should not be overlooked — particularly in the regions. Television continues to hold a leading position among news channels and remains one of the most widely used media resources.

Company merchandise should also be actively used. It should not only be stylish and modern, but genuinely desirable: stationery and clothing should be items that people actually want to use and wear rather than put away in a drawer.

Even if your efforts have paid off, it is too early to relax. The key task is to maintain contact with students throughout their education and make their learning as practical and engaging as possible. It is important for the educational pathway to be closely connected with the company's real manufacturing processes.

Special lectures and practical sessions prepared and delivered by company employees can be an effective solution. Practitioners are particularly valuable: their experience, knowledge of regulations and understanding of real working processes allow them to provide students with relevant, first-hand information.



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Regular intellectual activities — competitions, academic contests and quizzes — can help not only to assess theoretical knowledge but also to identify the most promising students from their first years of study.

Informal interaction is equally important. Factory tours combined with quizzes, equipment demonstrations and explanations of how internships are organised all help to dispel myths about manufacturing and show what the work is actually like. Participation in student life and the organisation of sporting events demonstrate the company's social responsibility and help create a positive employer brand. Rewards for the most active students are more than just a pleasant bonus: they are a sign that their efforts are recognised and a clear message that initiative is valued here.

Particular attention should be paid to organising internships, as this is one of the crucial stages in building a talent pipeline. Students should not feel that they are “in the way”: if they are left sitting around with nothing to do, the feeling that they are not needed can quickly destroy their interest in both the profession and the company. It is therefore critically important to prepare real tasks in advance — the same types of tasks performed by junior specialists. The internship supervisor should not simply observe but actively interact with the student: set clear tasks, explain which process the student is involved in and how their work contributes to the overall result, and respond promptly to questions.

Feedback is an essential element. At this stage, an HR specialist should become involved: their task is to motivate successful interns as much as possible to choose the company as their future employer. An employment offer should not be postponed: if there is a staffing need, it is better to make an offer immediately with a deferred start date. This allows the student to complete their studies with peace of mind, knowing that their future employment is already secured.

Thus, systematic cooperation between businesses and educational institutions — from early career guidance through to employment — can reverse the current trend and restore the prestige of manufacturing professions. The future of manufacturing lies in creating a continuous development pathway for young professionals, where every stage becomes a deliberate step towards an in-demand and meaningful career.

ORIENTIRY - THE WAY TO LEADERSHIP IN PRODUCTION

EXPERT OPINION

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Today, Russian industry is undergoing significant changes: manufacturing is becoming increasingly technology-driven, while the role of people in managing production processes is becoming even more important. A modern manufacturing manager needs to be not only an experienced technical specialist, but also a strong leader capable of developing a team, managing processes effectively and delivering sustainable results.

Companies are actively investing in production line modernisation, digitalisation and automation. However, these investments can only deliver their full potential when companies have well-prepared middle managers — people who know how to unite a team, make decisions and connect technological capabilities with business objectives. This is why systematic leadership development programmes in manufacturing are becoming an important tool for improving business efficiency and long-term sustainability.

Graduates of technical universities usually have strong fundamental engineering knowledge and professional skills. At the same time, their leadership and soft skills require further development through practical experience, teamwork and participation in significant projects. This is exactly why we launched the **“Orientiry”** programme for young engineering talent.

Programme objective:

To develop promising employees from shop-floor specialists into functional leaders through a structured career path.

Why is it important?

To build a talent pipeline of future manufacturing leaders.

To increase labour productivity through effective team management.

How is the programme structured?

The programme is open both to external candidates — graduates of technical universities — and to current employees with relevant experience who graduated from university no more than six years ago.

The programme lasts 3–3.5 years and consists of four stages:

- Manufacturing rotation – *working on the production line as an equipment technician.*
- Engineering rotation – *project work.*



Olga Nikolaenko
HR Lead SC, R&D and supporting
functions
Arnest UniRus

EXPERT OPINION

- Cross-site rotation – *sharing experience across production sites.*
- Preparation for a management role – *team management.*

The training programme includes modules on goal setting, financial literacy, digitalisation, leadership standards, internal entrepreneurship and strategic thinking.

The programme has been well received by participants. Today, 12 young professionals are developing through the “Orientiry” programme across different regions of the country. Their managers confirm the participants’ high level of engagement and commitment, as well as their willingness to invest in their further development at local sites.

Participants received an average manager rating of 4.6 out of 5 following their rotations. Participants in the “Orientiry” programme are involved in projects that are important to the company alongside experienced leaders. They demonstrate their ability to contribute effective ideas and solutions, confirming the programme’s value and importance for the business.



Article	Author
Is it necessary to build career paths to retain talent?	Ellina Ryakshina Deputy HR Director «Sever» Development Company
Three HR practices that help bring together employees from different generations	Denis Kaminsky Founding partner FutureToday
How different generations approach process and team management	Tatiana Galkina Director of the iSpring Academy
What can employers learn from generation Z?	Mariya Shipovalova HR & Communication Director Russia FM Logistic

IS IT NECESSARY TO BUILD CAREER PATHS TO RETAIN TALENT?

EXPERT OPINION

Ellina Ryakshina
Deputy HR Director
«Sever» Development Company



Professional development is an important prerequisite for building a career. Throughout their active professional lives, employees, regardless of their profession, job level, the company's industry or its legal and organisational form, continue to develop, build and strengthen their professional competencies.

The development process also varies between companies and employees. Some companies pay particular attention to employees' career development: they create individual development plans, develop career paths and establish corporate universities.

In other companies, the employee development process may be unstructured and not properly established: employees who are interested in their professional development and career growth often initiate the development process themselves and take responsibility for their own professional development.

At Sever Development Company, we have highly qualified engineers and professionals in their fields for whom the opportunity to advance in their careers and move into more senior positions is not particularly important. They are much more interested in tackling complex tasks, realising their potential through a variety of interesting projects, developing within their profession and increasing their level of expertise.

For such a specialist, following a career path as a mandatory process may not only fail to help them remain with the team for as long as possible, but may even encourage them to leave the company.

We entrust our engineers with complex, non-standard construction projects and give them maximum independence. Under these conditions, the entire team has the opportunity to apply and refine their professional expertise.

Sales department employees, by contrast, have ambitions for career growth; it is important for them to develop and move up the career ladder. For such talent, building a career path will be one of the most important ways of retaining them within the company.

We have developed a career path for our sales team: a new employee joins the company as a sales manager; continuously strengthens their competencies in product knowledge, client interaction, negotiations and handling objections, as well as sales methodology; consistently delivers results and progresses to the position of senior sales manager. Later, if the employee



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EXPERT OPINION

has practical skills in developing sales strategies, is proficient in team management tools, and has skills in analysing the market, competitors and internal performance indicators, they may be considered for the position of Head of Sales.

Thus, by observing colleagues from different departments within the company, we have realised that it is important to take an individual approach to the development and implementation of career paths, taking into account, first and foremost, the employee's goals and motivation. It is important to talk to colleagues and understand what truly matters to them: the desire to move up the career ladder or the opportunity to grow and develop within their profession.

THREE HR PRACTICES THAT HELP BRING TOGETHER EMPLOYEES FROM DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

EXPERT OPINION

Denis Kaminsky
Founding partner
FutureToday



I am quite often invited to speak about the labour market for young professionals and the differences between generations. To illustrate these differences, I frequently ask a very simple question: “If a person (let’s call him Misha) is not succeeding at what he is doing, what is the most likely reason?”

Before reading further, think about how you would answer this question yourself.

In practice, representatives of older generations usually answer that the reason is that Misha has not spent enough time on it or has not tried hard enough. Younger respondents, on the other hand, usually say that the reason is that the work Misha is doing is simply “not his calling” and that he should not waste his time on it.

If you think about it, both answers are correct. On the one hand, achieving success requires determination and persistence. On the other hand, why try to teach a fish to climb a tree? This contradiction highlights the main challenge companies face in cross-generational teams: preventing potential value-based conflicts and transforming them into a mutually enriching experience for people with different value systems and different life experiences.

If building high-performing cross-generational teams is part of your area of responsibility, the following three HR practices may prove useful.

1. Design work, tasks, and projects. Look for ways to leverage the strengths of employees of different ages and backgrounds. For example, more experienced employees may have a deeper understanding of the industry, while younger colleagues may be more proficient with innovative tools. Senior employees often have valuable knowledge of what has worked—and what has not—while younger employees can bring fresh perspectives and propose unconventional approaches.

However, for everyone to contribute their strengths, the task itself must be designed to make that possible. Formulate a shared objective that employees cannot achieve individually without collaborating with one another.

One effective practice is to create assignments where both sides interact on an equal footing, allowing them to exchange ideas regardless of organisational hierarchy. Examples include volunteer initiatives or joint brainstorming sessions involving employees from different departments.



Денис Каминский
Партнер и со-основатель
FutureToday

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2. Open conversations and a team covenants. People do not always understand what matters to their colleagues or realise how certain workplace habits may irritate others. To address this, introduce the practice of open discussions that result in a documented team covenants: what is considered acceptable, what is not, and what individual preferences or sensitivities team members may have.

For example, younger employees often dislike phone calls and prefer communicating through messaging apps. In instant messaging, a period mark at the end of a sentence may be interpreted by students as a sign of aggression. More experienced employees may expect interns to speak up proactively if something is bothering them, while the interns themselves may not even realise that this is expected. For one person, addressing colleagues by their first name may be a sign of trust; for another, it may feel overly familiar. And so on.

A meaningful discussion of these issues, combined with the ability to update the team covenants in real time, helps maintain a comfortable and productive working environment.

3. Paired recognition. Sometimes employees may feel that all of the company's investments are directed exclusively towards younger people. Or, conversely, that all opportunities are already taken and that no one is interested in young professionals. Such perceptions can create resentment, fuel unnecessary conflicts, and at the same time have little to do with reality.

To foster a healthier perception, highlight a diverse range of successful role models. Develop a communication format that allows newcomers and experienced employees to be recognised side by side on a symbolic "wall of recognition."



HOW DIFFERENT GENERATIONS APPROACH PROCESS AND TEAM MANAGEMENT

EXPERT OPINION

Tatiana Galkina
Director of the iSpring Academy



Attitudes towards leadership differ across generations. However, these differences are less about people's willingness to manage others and take responsibility than about how they perceive a manager's role: why move into management, how to organise processes, and what principles should underpin relationships within a team.

Millennials associate leadership with personal growth, a deep understanding of the business context, and the opportunity to achieve results together with their team. For them, a good manager is someone who takes responsibility, remains focused on the overall outcome, and maintains a balance between the interests of the business and the team. They develop as leaders through inspiring examples, challenges, responsibility for the team, and an understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses.

At iSpring, this approach can be seen in the organisation of iSpring Days. A large event team works on the project, and it is important for everyone involved to feel that they are making a meaningful contribution to it. The manager's task here is to teach employees to manage their own areas of responsibility and give one another feedback, unite them around a shared goal, and maintain a high level of customer service.

Gen Z and Zillennials tend to view leadership differently. According to a survey, 51% of employers report that their Gen Z employees are not striving for management positions. For them, leadership is no longer necessarily viewed as an essential stage of career development: the decision to become a manager should be a conscious one. They are motivated by the opportunity not only to take responsibility for their own tasks, but also to influence processes, create value, implement ideas, and see the practical impact of their work.

Gen Z employees expect managers to have a clear sense of direction for the team, think strategically, and show empathy. Openness to ideas, trust, a clear vision of the desired outcome, and honest feedback are also important to them.

For example, a design festival at the iSpring Institute was organised by students who were studying while also working on projects within the company. The manager coordinated the work, while the students themselves communicated directly with contractors, ordered materials, liaised with speakers, and managed the budget.

For now, Generation Alpha can primarily be assessed through educational projects. Their key strengths include curiosity, creativity, adaptability, and the ability to work with technology.



Tatiana Galkina
Director of the iSpring Academy

Meaningful work is important to them. any do not yet see themselves as managers, although they are already gaining leadership experience and are eager to learn.

At our Infotech Lyceum, eighth-grade students spend project week identifying a real-life problem, formulating a hypothesis, testing a solution, creating a product, and presenting it to a jury. Participants say that the most challenging aspects are teamwork, organisation their own work, meeting strict deadlines, and learning new software as they go.

Different generations therefore require different management approaches. Millennials need challenging goals, support, and a clear connection with the end result & Gen Z employees need to understand their contribution, receive regular feedback, and have room to propose ideas. Generation Alpha needs learning opportunities and the chance to put its ideas into practice.

At the same time, a culture of continuous learning remains important for everyone. If employee development is a company priority and the team is ready to learn, employees of any generation can grow into leaders.

WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS LEARN FROM GENERATION Z?

EXPERT OPINION

Mariya Shipovalova
HR & Communication Director Russia
FM Logistic



The specifics of working with Generation Z have been one of the key topics of discussion within the professional community for several years now.

In our company, we have drawn conclusions about the needs and motivations of Generation Z employees based not only on information from external sources, but also on the results of a large-scale corporate study of young FM Logistic employees conducted in the form of an online survey.

Generation Z employees represent the future of the workplace, and therefore an employer's willingness to build strong relationships with them today is a solid foundation for long-term, effective and successful cooperation. So, what can we as employers learn from Generation Z?

First and foremost, it is important to focus on building a mentoring system for young employees. According to the results of our internal study, 92% of respondents highlighted the importance of being able to turn to more experienced colleagues for help. Generation Z's desire to receive a certain level of guidance and support from a mentor or manager can be explained by the way they grew up in a constantly changing environment, as well as by the trend towards greater parental involvement in their upbringing. In any case, an effective mentoring and onboarding system for new employees becomes an additional factor in increasing loyalty and reducing employee turnover across all generations.

Another area of growth for employers may be the development of corporate culture and the creation of a positive working environment. Emotional comfort, opportunities for self-expression, work-life balance, and ease and openness in communication not only with colleagues but also with managers are important to Generation Z. Authoritarian management styles and rigid instructions are gradually giving way to partnership-based communication, while the importance of shared meaning and values within the company, as well as mutual respect between employees regardless of their position or seniority, continues to grow. Through their willingness to leave an uncomfortable workplace, young people are transforming the working environment: corporate culture is becoming more human-centred, and everyone benefits from this shift.

The undeniable strengths of Generation Z employees include high adaptability, the ability to learn quickly and strong technological skills – qualities that every employer needs to develop in today's environment in order to succeed in their industry. Previous experience no longer always provides the answers, while the world is changing too rapidly. It is therefore certainly worth listening to the perspectives of new generations so that we can jointly identify new paths for development and build a world in which all of us can live more comfortably.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS



Article	Author
Which benefits do employees really value, and which ones no longer work?	Alena Tatarnikova Deputy HR Director FODD
Personalising rewards without increasing costs: pay for contribution, not for waiting	Natalia Fedorova HRD Lindaily
Artificial intelligence: an assistant, a tool, or a new colleague?	Vitaliya Kanishcheva HR director Ex Logistics Provider

WHICH BENEFITS DO EMPLOYEES REALLY VALUE, AND WHICH ONES NO LONGER WORK?

EXPERT OPINION

Alena Tatarnikova
Deputy HR Director
FODD



The benefits system in place within a company has a significant impact on the employer's attractiveness in the labour market, helps retain employees and improves business efficiency. Today's employees assess a company not only by the level of compensation it offers, but also by the care and wellbeing programmes that can genuinely support them in their everyday lives. However, benefits that used to attract employees are increasingly becoming a standard minimum package of perks with little additional importance or value.

Based on recent surveys*, we can identify a number of benefits that are no longer as effective today and provide limited value to employees:

1. Corporate events and team-building activities. Such events are increasingly perceived as an additional obligation for employees, particularly when they do not take personal circumstances and individual interests into account.
2. Corporate gifts and branded merchandise. They may help create a positive atmosphere, but they do not address employees' everyday or financial needs. Today, such benefits are more likely to be perceived as an element of corporate culture.
3. Gym memberships and discounts on products. Not every employee leads an active lifestyle or is interested in the products offered, which may make such benefits feel irrelevant.
4. Corporate mobile phone plans. With the average cost of an unlimited mobile phone plan being around RUB 1,000 per month, corporate mobile communication has lost much of its perceived value among employees and is increasingly regarded not as a benefit, but as a tool required to perform their work.
5. Basic voluntary medical insurance without extended coverage. Voluntary medical insurance remains an important benefit in itself, but a basic policy with a limited choice of clinics and no dental care, hospitalisation or diagnostics is no longer particularly attractive. Employees expect not simply to have medical insurance, but to receive a clear and genuinely useful healthcare package with comprehensive coverage.

So, which benefits do employees really value?

1. Examples of such benefits include an additional paid day off, financial assistance following the birth of a child or in difficult life circumstances, and support in the event of the loss of a



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close relative. Such benefits are perceived as genuine human care rather than as a marketing initiative.

2. Corporate meals and high-quality workplace facilities. At construction sites, where shifts are long, schedules are intensive and the site may be located far from employees' homes, meal allowances or organised hot meals, as well as access to showers and rest areas, are perceived as genuine practical support and care.

3. A transparent career path, paid training and participation in industry conferences. Employees want to understand how they can progress from an entry-level or specialist position to a management role. The opportunity to acquire new skills meets employees' need for self-development and increases their value in the labour market. As a result, clear career paths provide a sense of stability and an opportunity to influence future income.

4. Hybrid working, remote work and flexible start times. In cities with significant transport congestion, such as Moscow, these options are becoming a major competitive advantage for employers.

5. Support for employees relocating from other regions. This may include reimbursement of transport and relocation expenses, the provision of accommodation, or partial compensation for rental costs.

6. Providing a parking space or reimbursing parking costs. Given the shortage of parking spaces in Moscow, this benefit is particularly popular among employees who prefer to travel around the city by private car.

7. Voluntary medical insurance remains one of the most sought-after benefits for the majority of employees. A valuable addition to a standard voluntary medical insurance programme can be corporate critical illness insurance, which provides employees with financial and medical support if they are diagnosed with a serious illness, including assistance with arranging treatment and covering the costs of therapy and rehabilitation.

Benefits have a significant impact on attracting and retaining employees, particularly when they are designed around employees' actual needs and informed by an analysis of the benefits offered by competing employers. One increasingly promising approach is to allow employees to choose which benefits they want to use and which they do not need. This is known as a flexible benefits or "benefits cafeteria" model. Such a system can accommodate the needs of different generations and employee categories while also increasing engagement and employees' sense of fairness.

* Based on the results of Antal Talent's 2026 annual survey. Question: "Which benefits are most important to employees?"

PERSONALISING REWARDS WITHOUT INCREASING COSTS: PAY FOR CONTRIBUTION, NOT FOR WAITING

EXPERT OPINION

Natalia Fedorova
HRD
Lindaily



Personalising the reward system does not necessarily mean increasing costs or creating complex individual formulas for every employee. Above all, it means establishing a clear link between the result an individual delivers and the reward they receive. Employees should understand exactly what their bonus is awarded for, how they can influence the outcome and why that outcome matters to the business.

Many companies still use bonus schemes with long deferral periods, tied primarily to overall metrics such as revenue, profit and customer satisfaction. We often see this legacy in former international organisations. Employees frequently perceive such payments as a guaranteed supplement to their salary. The greater the time lag between the work performed and the reward, the weaker its motivational effect: the link between day-to-day actions, individual contribution and the final payout becomes blurred.

Personalisation should start not with revising the budget, but with changing the logic of rewards. For frontline employees and middle management, one effective approach is to replace long deferral periods with shorter assessment cycles. This makes feedback timely: employees can see interim results, adjust their actions and understand the consequences of their decisions without waiting for a lengthy cycle to end.

The second principle is to combine operational and project-based metrics. The set of goals should depend not only on the business unit but also on the individual's role. For some employees, the key measures will be process stability, quality, meeting deadlines and service levels. For others, they will be launching change, implementing initiatives, participating in development projects and creating new solutions. In this way, personalisation does not become a formal set of KPIs; it reflects the actual content of the role and the employee's scope of influence.

It is also important to cascade goals: translate the company's strategic priorities into team and individual objectives. Employees then see not abstract corporate indicators, but a concrete link between their own tasks and business outcomes. Operational metrics and target values should be reviewed regularly in line with changes in the business plan and company priorities, while project tasks should be shaped by strategic goals.

The third condition is transparency. The bonus policy, scorecards, calculation formulas and data sources should be accessible to employees and set out in clear language. Transparency reduces perceptions of subjectivity, decreases the number of disputes and increases trust in the system. Regular conversations between managers and employees are equally important:



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EXPERT OPINION

discussions should cover not only the final assessment, but also progress, barriers, priorities and potential adjustments.

This approach makes it possible to avoid increasing the payroll budget and instead direct the existing variable pay more precisely towards outcomes that genuinely matter to the business. In our experience, after the schemes were revised, employees gained a better understanding of their contribution to achieving company goals, managers reported an increase in individual performance, and the number of projects and initiatives implemented increased fourfold - without any increase in the payroll budget.

Reward personalisation works when every employee can answer three questions: what outcome is expected of me, how is it measured and what exactly can I do to influence it? The bonus then stops being a formal payment and becomes a tool for managing performance.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: AN ASSISTANT, A TOOL, OR A NEW COLLEAGUE?

EXPERT OPINION

Vitaliya Kanishcheva
HR director
Ex Logistics Provider



The logistics sector in 2026 is shaped by conflicting trends. The talent shortage remains, yet the balance of the labour market is gradually shifting in favour of employers. At the same time, automation is transforming competency requirements, moving the focus away from manual work towards technology management and data-driven decision-making. With employee retention budgets under increasing pressure, every pound invested must deliver measurable value. As a result, deciding whether to prioritise salary, career development or leadership has become a strategic business decision.

There is no universal answer. Every employee has different priorities: some are primarily motivated by financial rewards, others aspire to career progression, while some are willing to tolerate almost any working conditions provided they have a supportive manager. In such circumstances, isolated salary increases, one-off training programmes or management courses produce only short-term results.

We decided to take a systematic approach. We introduced an employee engagement and loyalty survey that measured far more than eNPS – it identified the specific areas where employees experienced frustration or dissatisfaction. We also conducted structured assessment interviews, analysing employees' motivational drivers, evaluating their soft skills and performance, while incorporating feedback from their line managers. The findings from both assessment methods aligned remarkably well, giving us a consistent and reliable picture.

The next step was to organise three-way discussions involving the employee, their manager and an HR representative. These were not formal review meetings or standard development recommendations, but open conversations about career aspirations, development pathways and the factors that genuinely motivated each individual. This approach produced tangible results: employee engagement increased, while trust in leadership strengthened.

Our analysis revealed that employees could broadly be divided into three groups, each driven by a different primary motivator.

Group 1. Salary

These employees are neither enthusiastic advocates of the company nor openly dissatisfied with it. However, they know exactly what competitors are offering. They demonstrate high levels of engagement but relatively low loyalty – they would readily accept another offer tomorrow if it provided a salary around 15% higher.



Vitaliya Kanishcheva
HR director
Ex Logistics Provider

What should employers do? This group values a transparent and predictable reward system, combined with short-term performance-based incentives. Salary progression should be linked to the acquisition of new skills so employees clearly see that developing their capabilities increases their market value. For key talent, career pathways should include clear opportunities for financial progression alongside professional growth.

Group 2. The Manager

These employees generally consider their pay to be fair and are satisfied with the nature of their work. However, their loyalty begins to decline as soon as problems arise in their relationship with their manager. During interviews, they consistently speak about fairness, support and the overall working atmosphere. They do not leave the company – they leave a particular manager.

What should employers do? If engagement levels within a team fall below average, start by looking at the quality of leadership. Evaluate managers not only on business results but also on how effectively they communicate with and support their teams. Teach them to provide constructive feedback, avoid micromanagement and recognise employees' achievements. Give these employees greater autonomy and a genuine voice in decision-making, and they will respond with stronger loyalty.

Group 3. Career Development

These are experienced professionals. They are satisfied with both their salary and their manager, but they become disengaged when their work no longer challenges them. They need continuous development and new opportunities. Many are even prepared to sacrifice part of their income in exchange for more stimulating and meaningful work.

What should employers do? Say “yes” to their ideas. Give them complex projects, appoint them as mentors for new colleagues and involve them in cross-functional initiatives. If an employee in this group sees no prospects for growth over a period of three months, they are likely to begin exploring opportunities elsewhere – even if they are well paid.

These groups are not fixed. People's priorities change as their careers and personal circumstances evolve. Conduct employee surveys twice a year, but instead of asking, “Are you satisfied?”, ask, “What would you change about your salary, your work or your communication with your manager?” The answers will reveal the pulse of each employee group and give the organisation time to respond before valuable people decide to leave.

Salary, leadership and career development should not be viewed as competing priorities – they complement one another. Pay people fairly, invest in developing your managers and provide employees with opportunities to grow. When each individual receives what matters most to them, spending on people ceases to be an expense and becomes an investment with a clear and measurable return.

NEW CHALLENGES IN THE LABOR MARKET



Article	Author
New labour market challenges: employees no longer belong to a single company	Ekaterina Frolova Director of Talent Acquisition and Recruitment Logika moloka
Labour market situation	Natalya Parkhomenko Senior analyst specialised labour market research team Antal Talent
The logistics labour market in 2026: from talent shortages to skills shortages	Anastasia Kovaleva Head of Logistics providers sector Antal Talent
The 2026 workforce paradox: what is happening to administrative staff and how businesses are optimising the back office	Daria Feoktistova Operations manager Antal Business Solutions
How to manage the employees who have several sources of income?	Svetlana Domkina Head of HR Administration Accetera
What employers still do not always understand about today's employees	Yulia Kuvyrtalova HR Manager Chint
Why do employers continue to complain about talent shortages despite the growing number of CVs?	Olga Miroshnikova HR Manager Russian biotechnology company
A new generation: how can leadership succession be ensured?	Ekaterina Tyshkovskaya HRD ANGIOPHARM

NEW LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES: EMPLOYEES NO LONGER BELONG TO A SINGLE COMPANY

EXPERT OPINION

Ekaterina Frolova
Director of Talent Acquisition
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The Russian labour market is undergoing a major transformation: talent shortages are being accompanied by changing employee perceptions of work and career. [According to hh.ru](#), in 2026 the market is shifting from mass hiring towards strategic employee retention and development: while the number of vacancies has fallen by 27% year-on-year, the number of active CVs has increased by 41%. At the same time, interest in flexible employment models is growing. According to a 2025 [RBC study](#), 46% of Russians who have a side job openly tell their employer about it, while 11% are undergoing training to acquire an additional profession. In 2026, [RBC is already talking](#) about the emergence of a “portfolio career” — a combination of a primary job, freelance work and other sources of income.

We are observing a deeper shift — the very model of the relationship between an individual and an employer is changing. We have moved from the VUCA world into the TACI reality: turbulent, accidental, complex and uncertain. Anxiety is becoming a constant background factor, which makes the ability to adapt, learn new things and maintain a sense of control over one’s own professional trajectory particularly valuable. This largely explains employees’ growing interest in flexible forms of employment, project-based work and multiple sources of income.

Multiple sources of income — the new normal?

Having a side job is gradually ceasing to be seen as a sign of financial difficulties or insufficient engagement. For some employees, it is a deliberate strategy: to have several sources of income, develop additional competencies and reduce dependence on a single employer. We can already see that project-based employment is becoming an independent labour market trend. For employers, this means the need to reconsider their approach to loyalty. In my view, rather than prohibiting employees from having other professional interests, it is important to clearly define the rules of interaction: avoid conflicts of interest, comply with agreements and working hours, and ensure confidentiality. An employee with several sources of income can remain effective and engaged if the company evaluates them primarily on results rather than on the amount of time spent within the organisation.

Why project-based employment is becoming more attractive than a career

The traditional career model implied gradual progression within a single company: specialist, manager, leader. Today, this path remains relevant, but it is no longer the only option.

Project-based work gives people what a traditional career often lacks: a variety of tasks, rapid



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competency development, the opportunity to choose projects and independently manage their professional trajectory. [According to RBC](#), the value of projects undertaken by Russian freelancers increased by 15–20% in 2025, depending on the specialisation, while the average monthly income of freelance professionals rose by 25.7%, reaching RUB 44,000.

Therefore, the question for employers today is no longer “how can we convince someone to stay for 10 years?”, but rather “what can we offer them at the next stage of their professional journey?”. The opportunity to learn, change roles, participate in new projects and see the results of one’s work is becoming part of a competitive EVP.

Loyalty is becoming shorter-term

The very concept of loyalty is also changing. An employee may be committed to a company today but reconsider their decision tomorrow if their manager, responsibilities, workload or development opportunities change.

Among the factors that [researchers identify](#) as having the strongest impact on engagement are alignment between personal and corporate values, transparency of career prospects and the ability to express opinions freely.

This creates a paradox: people have not become less interested in work; they have become more demanding about what that work should be like.

I am convinced that employee well-being is directly linked to business performance. Research shows that productivity can increase by 13%, and with a high level of well-being, the increase can reach 25%. Therefore, for me, corporate culture is far more than an additional HR option. It is an environment that helps people maintain their energy, develop, remain engaged and, ultimately, supports business resilience.

What should employers do?

In the new environment, attempting to return employees to a model of lifelong loyalty makes little sense. It is far more effective to create an environment in which staying with the company is both beneficial and interesting for the employee.

To achieve this, companies will need to:

1. Shift from controlling employment to managing results.

If an employee performs their tasks to a high standard, having external projects should not automatically be perceived as a threat.

2. Create opportunities for development within the company.

Project-based work is attractive precisely because of its variety. This means companies



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should give employees the opportunity to change tasks, try new roles and participate in cross-functional projects.

3. Work on culture, not just compensation.

Money can retain an employee in the short term. But long-term commitment is shaped by trust, respect, purpose, development and a sense of belonging.

4. Change the logic of retention.

The task of HR is not to make sure that an employee never looks at the market. The task is to make sure that, even after looking at it, they still choose their current company.

The labour market of the future is a market of continuous mutual choice. The employee chooses the company, and the company chooses the employee — and this choice becomes part of their everyday relationship.

Natalya Parkhomenko

Senior analyst specialised labour market
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Antal Talent



The unemployment rate in Russia remains at a record low of 2.2% (according to Rosstat data as of June 2026). However, the situation is not that straightforward. **Against this backdrop, a paradoxical situation is emerging: the market is simultaneously facing workforce reductions and an acute labour shortage.**

Salary growth has slowed, and companies have become more cautious about salary indexation. HR experts note that the “salary race” has eased due to the challenging economic situation in the country and the slowdown in economic growth following the results of 2025. Under these conditions, companies are forced to optimise costs in order to maintain business profitability and, as a result, are finding it increasingly difficult to make further substantial adjustments to employee compensation across all grades, giving priority only to the most critical cases at the moment (key employees, hard-to-fill positions, roles with salaries below market levels, etc.).

According to pulse surveys conducted by Antal Talent in 2025, most companies expected salary increases in 2026 to be in the range of 4–12%. In addition, most employers focused on replacing employees who had left — 56% — rather than expanding headcount (the share of companies planning growth declined from 53% in 2025 to 34% in 2026). Companies shifted their focus towards employee retention and training, productivity improvement, and process optimisation.

According to surveys by the Bank of Russia and analytical reviews published in 2026, Russian companies’ need to expand headcount has indeed declined. Some companies have frozen workforce growth, moving from mass hiring to targeted optimisation. Demand for employees decreased due to slower growth in demand for goods and services. At the same time, companies tried to avoid workforce reductions, fearing future difficulties with hiring.

And what about candidates?

In July, the hh.index, which shows the ratio of the average number of active CVs to the average number of active vacancies, stood at 8.7 points, indicating a high level of competition among jobseekers. According to hh.ru, the number of CVs also increased by 58% compared with July 2024.

Many candidates currently looking for work reported that workforce reductions or optimisation had affected them to some extent as well, while some expect companies to continue reducing



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headcount. Some candidates noted that the responsibilities of colleagues who had been laid off were transferred to them without additional compensation. Such measures help companies maintain financial stability in difficult conditions, but at the same time have a negative impact on employee motivation.

According to VCIOM surveys, the unemployment index has been steadily increasing since 2024. The index is based on a nationwide survey and represents the difference between positive and negative responses to a question about job losses among people in respondents' close social circles. The higher the index, the more acutely people perceive the problem. In July, the share of Russians who reported one to three job losses among relatives, friends, or acquaintances over the previous two to three months increased to 29%. This means that the issue of unemployment has become more noticeable to the population.

Today, candidates need to see a tangible benefit before taking the risk of moving to a new employer.

Uncertainty and stress have changed candidate motivation. Over the past year, people have become much more cautious and deliberate when considering a job change, as they do not want to risk their current position unless they see a clear and favourable outlook for the future development of both the new company and the industry as a whole. They are looking not only for a higher level of income or career growth when changing jobs, but also for stability, security, and the ability to make longer-term plans.

There are many jobseekers and CVs on the market, but in practice not all candidates who have entered the market are genuinely ready to change jobs. Some are anxious about their future and want to assess their prospects and opportunities in case they need to change employment.

Naturally, higher inflation and rising prices for goods and services affect candidates' salary expectations as they seek to maintain their previous standard of living. When changing jobs in 2025–2026, candidates more often expect a salary increase of 10–15% (whereas in 2023–2024 expectations were typically +20–30% compared with their current income). It is important to note, however, that many surveyed respondents are prepared to give up a salary increase after a prolonged job search or in difficult personal circumstances and may even accept a temporary reduction in income if there are prospects for future salary growth, involvement in interesting projects, broader responsibilities, or career advancement. In addition, respondents are open to offers from other industries and express a willingness to undertake training if necessary.

The talent shortage remains acute

However, despite the increased number of CVs and seemingly high competition for jobs — the so-called “employer’s market” — finding employees has often become even more difficult.



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Official unemployment remains low but does not reflect the real situation in the labour market. In 2026, the shortage is qualitative rather than quantitative. The core of the problem is the gap between employers' expectations and candidates' actual competencies, resulting in a significant imbalance between supply and demand.

- More than half of employers report that candidates lack the required competencies. According to Antal surveys, 87% of employers identify this as the main challenge when filling vacancies. Under cost-saving pressures, employers seek maximum productivity and, as a rule, want to hire a versatile specialist with the right education and experience who can effectively perform the work of several employees.
- Candidates' salary expectations exceed the level of compensation offered by employers. According to Antal research, 49% of companies reported difficulties filling vacancies because the compensation offered did not correspond to market conditions.
- One of the key trends of recent years, which continues to gain momentum, is the shortage of skilled workers, manufacturing personnel, and engineering and technical specialists.
- The number of vacancies significantly exceeds the number of CVs in the following sectors: manufacturing, retail, and logistics (according to hh.ru data for June–July 2026).
- The market is oversaturated with “white-collar” professionals. According to hh.ru, the strongest growth in the number of active CVs is observed among office-based employees, including tourism managers, HR specialists, lawyers, and others.
- The fundamental causes of the talent shortage — the demographic crisis and the decline in the working-age population — will continue to affect the Russian economy over the coming years.

Conclusion

Under the current circumstances, companies can consider the following steps:

- Start preparing scarce skilled workers and engineers through co-operation with universities and vocational colleges (industrial internships for students, attractive employment conditions for future graduates, etc.). This will help businesses secure the specialists they need in the foreseeable future.
- Automation of production and office processes will help free some employees from routine tasks and make it possible to redeploy them to more complex responsibilities that require human involvement.
- Training, onboarding, and reskilling. All of these measures can help reduce restrictive



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candidate requirements and broaden hiring opportunities. Under current conditions, this may prove more cost-effective than spending many months searching for a candidate with exactly the required qualifications.

- Introducing the practice of hiring older employees will provide access to a broader pool of qualified candidates. The average age of an employee in Russia exceeded 41 years in 2026. This figure reflects the broader trend of the gradual ageing of the workforce that has been observed in the labour market over the past decade.
- Employee retention — as the salary race gives way to competition for qualified professionals — decent working conditions, growth opportunities, and market-aligned compensation are now simply essential.

The labour market is full of surprises, but salary budgets require precision. Order **a specialised salary survey** and base your decisions on up-to-date market data.

THE LOGISTICS LABOUR MARKET IN 2026: FROM TALENT SHORTAGES TO SKILLS SHORTAGES

EXPERT OPINION

Anastasia Kovaleva

Head of Logistics providers sector
Antal Talent



The logistics labour market is becoming more balanced in 2026: companies no longer have the same level of demand across all employee categories and are increasingly competing for specific competencies.

According to hh.ru, in May 2026 the number of vacancies in the “Transport, Logistics and Freight” sector increased by 4% compared with April, while the number of CVs fell by 12%. These figures reflect what we are seeing in our own practice: **the market is becoming calmer, but there is still a shortage of high-quality specialists.**

From quantity to quality

Until recently, the main challenge for logistics businesses was finding enough people. Today, the question is increasingly different: **what kind of specialist are we actually missing, and how quickly will they be able to deliver results?**

At the operational level, the shortage of frontline staff — drivers, warehouse employees and shift specialists — remains relevant. At the same time, the white-collar market is becoming much more fragmented.

In our practice, we see sustained demand for sales and business development managers. Logistics companies continue to look for people who can attract new clients, develop existing portfolios and, at the same time, have a strong understanding of the logistics product.

The salary race for sales professionals is gradually slowing down. Companies are becoming more rational about the level of fixed pay and total compensation they are prepared to offer at the start. However, the shortage of strong candidates has not disappeared.

Moreover, requirements for sales professionals are increasing. Employers no longer need simply a good salesperson, but someone with relevant experience, an understanding of the market, knowledge of the economics of the logistics product and the ability to reach target performance relatively quickly.

This creates an interesting situation: employers are becoming more rational in what they offer, expectations are rising, while the number of genuinely suitable candidates is not increasing significantly.



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Sales: high demand and higher expectations

For 3PL businesses, this is a particularly sensitive issue. Sales of logistics services rarely deliver quick results. A new manager needs time to understand the product, assess the capabilities of the operations team, build a pipeline and only then convert it into actual deals.

Moving to a new company therefore always involves a certain level of risk for a sales professional.

A candidate leaves a familiar workplace where they already have clients, a proven track record and an established income, and joins a new system where they effectively have to start almost from scratch.

At the same time, we see that companies are becoming less willing to wait for employees to adapt. Decisions on whether an employee has successfully completed their probation period are now often made faster than they were several years ago.

This creates a paradox: the business needs a strong sales professional, but a strong sales professional is not always prepared to take the risk of joining a company where results are expected almost immediately.

This is why clear agreements at the outset are becoming increasingly important: what is considered a result after 30, 60 and 90 days, what pipeline is expected from the manager, what client base will be provided and how realistic the sales target is.

China is becoming a distinct career competency

Another trend that we have seen particularly clearly in recent years is sustained demand for specialists who speak Chinese and have experience of working with this region.

The most valuable combination of competencies is: **Chinese language + logistics + commercial or operational experience.**

Specialists with this combination remain relatively rare in the market. In effect, Chinese is becoming not a profession in itself, but a tool that provides access to a specific business segment.

Automation is changing the profile of specialists

At the same time, talent shortages are accelerating the adoption of technology across the industry.

WMS solutions, warehouse automation, robotics, analytics and AI tools enable logistics operators to increase productivity and reduce their dependence on headcount.



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But technology does not eliminate the need for people — it changes the requirements placed on them.

Experience of working with AI is appearing more and more frequently in candidate requirements. This does not necessarily mean technical expertise or a deep understanding of algorithms. Employers want to understand whether a person is able to use AI tools in their everyday work: to analyse information and data, automate routine tasks, prepare materials, accelerate the search for solutions and improve their own productivity.

For managers, there is an additional level of expectation — the ability to understand where artificial intelligence can transform a process or improve team efficiency, and where human expertise and decision-making remain critical.

AI is gradually becoming not a separate competency, but a standard working tool.

How the definition of a strong specialist is changing

In our view, this is where one of the most interesting shifts is taking place — and not only in logistics.

The labour market is gradually moving from evaluating what a specialist can do to evaluating how they think and what results they are capable of creating.

Companies increasingly need more than employees who simply perform their functional responsibilities well. Greater value is placed on people who understand the business context, see the connection between their own work and the company's results, and are prepared to go beyond the boundaries of a formal job description.

In other words, businesses need people who **think in terms of results rather than processes.**

Such a specialist understands how the company makes money, how their work affects financial performance and what they can do to improve that performance. If they see a problem, they do not simply identify it — they propose a solution. If a new technology emerges, they do not wait until its use becomes mandatory, but try to understand how it can be applied in their own work.

Soft skills are becoming part of professional effectiveness

This is particularly important in a turbulent environment.

We live in a world where technologies, business models, client expectations and working processes are constantly changing. It is impossible to create a detailed instruction for every possible scenario in advance.



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This is why qualities such as **adaptability, initiative, independence, flexible thinking, communication and emotional resilience** are becoming increasingly valuable.

For companies, this means that competition for talent is gradually moving beyond salary. Compensation levels and employer brand still matter, but so do management quality, realistic expectations, onboarding and the ability of specialists to influence outcomes.

Today, a strong specialist is not simply someone with relevant experience and strong hard skills. It is someone who understands the business context, is able to see a task beyond the boundaries of their own function, thinks in terms of results, is willing to learn and adopt new technologies, demonstrates initiative and works effectively in conditions of uncertainty.

In our view, this shift will become one of the key factors shaping competition for talent — not only in logistics, but across the labour market as a whole.

THE 2026 WORKFORCE PARADOX: WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AND HOW BUSINESSES ARE OPTIMISING THE BACK OFFICE

EXPERT OPINION

Daria Feoktistova
Operations manager
Antal Business Solutions



The labour market in 2026 is turbulent, but the impact is far from even. Despite record-low unemployment across the country, companies are not experiencing a talent shortage in the office and administrative segment. On the contrary, the balance is shifting in favour of employers: salary growth is slowing, budgets are being cut, and candidates are finding it increasingly difficult to secure a job. At Antal Business Solutions, we see a clear trend — companies no longer want to expand their headcount unnecessarily. The main objective today is to convert fixed costs into variable costs and pay only for actual results. In this environment, moving back-office functions outside the permanent headcount appears to be a logical step.

Anxiety and burnout: how candidates feel

Antal research shows that 64% of jobseekers believe it is currently difficult to find a good job. In the administrative segment, 60% of respondents share this pessimistic view. People are facing a wall of silence: companies review CVs but do not invite candidates to interviews (56%), there are too few open vacancies (53%), and the salaries on offer fall short of expectations (52%). As a result, job searches are taking longer — 38% of administrative professionals spend between one and three months looking for a job, and in some cases the process can take up to six months.

To reduce costs, businesses often review their internal processes and combine the roles of secretary, office manager and assistant. However, these savings can be illusory. Combining several functions leads to severe stress, reported by 22% of employees, burnout (16%), and resignations caused by a lack of career prospects (30%) or conflicts with management (24%). Ultimately, the company may lose more money by restarting the recruitment cycle than it saves on salary costs.

The new back-office economics: from payroll costs to operating expenses

Constantly filling gaps in the workforce during a period of strict cost control is inefficient. Outsourcing removes routine administrative work and allows businesses to address several important challenges.

For example, it provides a legitimate way to work within headcount restrictions. In our experience, companies often turn to outsourcing when they face strict limits on employee numbers or need to launch a temporary project quickly, making it impractical to create new permanent positions.



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Operations manager
Antal Business Solutions



Another important factor is that the provider assumes the legal risks associated with employee termination. Based on our clients' experience, disputes with dissatisfied employees can continue for months, while an external service contract provides the business with an additional layer of protection.

In addition, payroll costs are removed from the company's internal headcount structure. The expenditure moves into the category of payments for services provided by a contractor, which can improve the company's financial metrics and allow it to recover input VAT.

At the same time, the business saves resources on routine processes. Internal teams no longer need to spend time on recruitment, employment administration, sick leave calculations and holiday management. In business-critical areas such as administrative support, the company is not purchasing a CV but a continuous service: if an administrator or secretary is absent due to illness, the provider immediately supplies a replacement.

In 2026, organisational flexibility is more important than maintaining an oversized workforce. Attempting to keep every service function in-house reduces a company's ability to respond quickly to change. Dividing the back office into a strategic core, which remains within the organisation, and a service layer, which is entrusted to an external partner, is no longer simply a cost-optimisation measure — it is becoming a long-term market trend.

HOW TO MANAGE THE EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE SEVERAL SOURCES OF INCOME?

EXPERT OPINION

Svetlana Domkina
Head of HR Administration
Accetera



Portfolio careers are becoming increasingly popular. More and more employees, in addition to their main job, run their own projects, provide consulting services or take on additional work for another company.

For employees, this model has obvious advantages: if things do not work out with their primary employer, they always have a “backup option”. There is also the additional income and the hope that a side project may eventually grow into their own business. Sometimes, it also serves as an “outlet”, allowing people to use skills that are not in demand in their main job, such as teaching or creative work.

For a company, the situation is more complicated. An employee involved in several projects may be less engaged in their main job or may use company time and resources for their own business. They may also burn out quickly due to excessive workload. There are also risks of conflicts of interest and the disclosure of confidential business information.

However, there are benefits for the company as well: through their outside activities, employees gain new expertise that may sometimes be impossible to acquire internally, sharpen their skills and build useful professional connections that can also benefit their employer.

How to manage and motivate such an employee?

In our view, the first priority is to agree on clear boundaries, and the second is to agree on expected results. During the hiring process, discuss with the candidate in advance whether they are allowed to work on outside projects during working hours, which types of activities require notifying their manager, what constitutes a conflict of interest, and whether the use of company equipment, databases and other company information is prohibited.

Thirdly, agree on how the employee’s success will be measured: what tasks they are expected to complete, what performance indicators they are expected to achieve, and within what timeframe.

As a rule, people who work on several projects tend to demonstrate a higher level of maturity than other employees, and reaching an agreement with them is usually not difficult. The important question to ask yourself is: why should this specialist find it beneficial and interesting to work with me? Rather than: “How can I control them?”



Svetlana Domkina
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Accetera

How should employment relationships with an employee who has multiple sources of income be formalised from the perspective of the Labour Code and Tax Code?

When it comes to formalising such arrangements, several scenarios are possible:

1. Combination of duties is additional paid work performed for the same employer during the employee's established working day. For example, an accountant may additionally perform HR administration duties, or a lead developer may volunteer to give lectures at the company's corporate university. A separate employment contract is not required; the employee's written consent, an employer's order and an addendum to the existing employment contract setting out all the conditions of the additional duties are sufficient. This arrangement is governed by Articles 60.2 and 151 of the Labour Code of the Russian Federation.
2. Secondary employment is work performed outside the employee's main working hours under a separate employment contract. Secondary employment may be internal — with the same employer — or external — with another employer. An employee may enter into secondary employment contracts with several companies unless the law establishes restrictions for a particular category of employees.
3. Individual entrepreneurship alongside employment is another possible scenario. In this case, the employee pays taxes both on their salary and on income from their business in accordance with the standard rules.
4. Self-employment alongside employment under an employment contract is also permitted. An employee may receive a salary while simultaneously applying the Professional Income Tax (NPD) regime to income earned from independent activities. However, there is an important restriction: an employment relationship must not be disguised as a self-employment arrangement. Such an approach may result in the tax authorities and Labour Inspectorate reclassifying the relationship, assessing additional personal income tax and social insurance contributions, and imposing a fine on the company.

Portfolio careers can benefit everyone, but they require clear boundaries to be established — legal, professional and ethical.



WHAT EMPLOYERS STILL DO NOT ALWAYS UNDERSTAND ABOUT TODAY'S EMPLOYEES

EXPERT OPINION

Yulia Kuvyrtalova
HR Manager
Chint



The labour market is constantly changing, and employee expectations are evolving with it. However, many employers still rely on outdated management models. Let me look at the key aspects they overlook - and what this leads to.

1. Work-life balance - has consistently remained one of the most important criteria when choosing an employer for several years.

In the past, employee loyalty was often measured by the number of hours spent in the office. Today, that approach no longer works. Modern professionals, especially Generation Z, draw a clear line between work and their personal lives. They are not prepared to sacrifice their time and health for the sake of KPIs and value companies that:

- set clear boundaries around the working day and do not encourage a culture of 'heroic overtime';
- offer psychological support programmes;
- are willing to offer remote working and project-based employment

2. Transparency of career progression criteria. Abstract promises of 'career opportunities' are no longer motivating. Employees want to understand clearly from the outset:

- which specific achievements lead to promotion;
- how their contribution is assessed;
- which skills they need to develop for career progression.

A lack of clear rules creates room for manipulation and demotivates the team.

3. 'Meaning at work' as a driver of loyalty. Salary remains important, but it is not the only incentive. Today's employees are looking for:

- a clear link between their role and the company's strategy;
- the opportunity to see the results of their work;
- involvement in socially significant and large-scale projects.

Without a sense that their work has value, even high pay may not be enough to retain a professional.

4. Autonomy instead of micromanagement. Strict control and detailed regulation of tasks are increasingly demotivating. Young professionals prefer to:

- focus on results rather than the process;
- choose how to approach tasks independently;
- work flexible schedules with greater freedom of action.

Companies that provide this kind of environment gain a more engaged team.



Yulia Kuvyrtalova
HR Manager
Chint

5. Continuous learning as the norm. Today's employees see work as a platform for development. They expect:

- access to courses and training;
- mentoring support from experienced colleagues;
- opportunities to try new roles within the company.

An employer that invests in flexible learning systems gains an advantage in the competition for talent.

6. Regular feedback. Annual performance reviews are becoming outdated. Employees want to:

- receive feedback as often as possible;
- hear constructive criticism accompanied by specific recommendations;
- see their achievements recognised.

This helps them adjust their actions and feel valued. In my view, the key quality of a leader today is the ability to maintain close contact with their team.

7. An individual approach. However, it is a mistake to assume that all young employees are alike. Among them are:

- career-driven individuals who are prepared to take on heavy workloads for the sake of progression, although they are relatively few;
- those who prioritise work-life balance;
- explorers who value a variety of tasks and are still finding their path;
- experts who focus on a narrow specialism.

One-size-fits-all HR strategies do not work here - what is needed is a flexible approach and managers who can keep a finger on the pulse of their employees' sentiment.

8. Digital literacy as the standard. Today's employees quickly master new tools and expect their employer to provide:

- convenient digital platforms for work;
- a move away from paperwork and bureaucracy;
- the integration of modern AI technologies into business processes.

Slow or cumbersome systems reduce productivity and cause frustration. Cutting corners on automation today means falling behind in the competition for talent.

I think the main conclusion for today's reality is that an employee is not simply an executor, but a partner. They are looking for fair conditions, meaning in their work and open dialogue. Employers that adapt their HR policies to these expectations and prepare their managers accordingly will benefit in the long term: they attract talented professionals, reduce staff turnover and increase overall team productivity.

WHY DO EMPLOYERS CONTINUE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT TALENT SHORTAGES DESPITE THE GROWING NUMBER OF CVS?

EXPERT OPINION

Olga Miroshnikova
HR Manager
Russian biotechnology company



Over the past three years, the Russian labour market has demonstrated a persistent paradox: despite the growing number of CVs and increasing candidate activity, employers continue to complain about staff shortages. This trend is particularly pronounced in IT, back-office functions, sales and marketing, where a single vacancy can receive 700 or more applications within just 2–3 days of being posted on job sites. At the same time, there is a significant shortage of candidates for manufacturing, engineering and technical roles: such vacancies may receive only 20–30 applications over the same period, of which fewer than 10% are relevant. Vacancies remain open for months. We are seeing a clearly pronounced duality in the market: on the one hand, an illusion of abundance in terms of candidate numbers; on the other, a classic shortage of suitable candidates.

Why, then, do companies continue to face talent shortages despite such a high volume of applications? The answer lies not in quantity, but in systemic imbalances — ranging from education to recruitment technologies.

Structural imbalance in the market: education, salaries and new competencies

Over the past decades, a persistent imbalance has developed within the higher education system: the number of state-funded and commercial places in IT and humanities programmes has grown, while engineering, technical and vocational disciplines have declined. This has resulted in an oversupply of graduate programmers, marketers and managers — and an acute shortage of process engineers, engineers, automation specialists and manufacturing professionals. This imbalance lies at the heart of the market's duality.

At the same time, overheated segments such as IT, sales and marketing have for years developed a culture of high salaries: fearing competition for talent, companies offered compensation levels that did not correspond to actual productivity. This drove candidate expectations upwards and, in the current environment, has made hiring economically inefficient. Another factor is the adoption of AI: businesses increasingly need specialists who are proficient in AI tools and analytics, while most CVs demonstrate only basic digital skills. As a result, only a handful of candidates out of hundreds of applicants are genuinely relevant.

Recruitment automation

Another challenge can be added to those already mentioned — the widespread adoption of AI screening and automated interviews. Incorrectly configured assessment criteria often make the



Olga Miroshnikova
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situation worse: keyword-based filters screen out candidates with interdisciplinary skills, while AI interviewers are unable to assess context, motivation and learning agility — qualities that are becoming increasingly critical today. As a result, companies either lose strong specialists or end up with an average candidate pool that does not meet their actual needs. In addition, automation is often implemented without revising internal processes: vacancy profiles remain vague, assessment criteria are superficial, and interaction between HR and the business is largely formal.

What should employers do to avoid these mistakes?

To turn a flow of CVs into actual hires, companies need a systematic approach:

- Review vacancy profiles and move away from vague wording towards specific, measurable criteria.
- Configure automation as a supporting tool, regularly comparing its performance against actual hiring outcomes and updating it in line with current business needs.
- Involve hiring managers in candidate assessment at every stage rather than shifting decision-making responsibility onto an algorithm.
- Review salary policies and link compensation to the market value of actual competencies rather than to inflated demand.

Develop reskilling and internal mobility programmes — particularly for scarce engineering and manufacturing roles.

- Introduce a transparent retention policy, including counteroffers and career paths, in order to avoid losing valuable employees.

The growing number of CVs does not solve talent shortages — it merely exposes systemic failures: imbalances in education, inflated salary expectations, outdated skills, superficial automation and weak retention practices. Revising the HR strategy will allow companies to use the apparent surplus of candidates as a resource, while developing their own professionals in areas where talent remains scarce.

A systematic approach is the only solution.

A NEW GENERATION: HOW CAN LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION BE ENSURED?

EXPERT OPINION

Ekaterina Tyshkovskaya
HRD
ANGIOPHARM



When discussing generational change within a management team, the conversation usually focuses on the risks of losing knowledge and experience. But if we look at it from the perspective of identifying strengths, it becomes clear that **generational change is not a loss; it is an acquisition and an opportunity for growth.** How does this happen?
Through exchange.

Every generation has its own superpower

Those who entered the profession earlier bring experience, established processes and intuition developed through dozens of difficult decisions. They know “how things really work here” – and this is knowledge that cannot be extracted from a textbook. Younger leaders bring something different: a fresh perspective, speed, natural engagement with the digital environment, and freedom from long-standing habits that can sometimes become an obstacle, even if they were once the right approach.

Neither of these sides is stronger than the other. The company’s task is not to choose the “right” generation, but to build a bridge between them. However, mixed leadership teams require an intelligent, almost finely calibrated approach from HR. After all, every superpower also comes with differences in levels of development and motivation systems. What inspires an experienced manager may discourage a younger one, and vice versa. The role of the HR function is to calibrate these “differences” so that they do not create tension, but instead generate energy.

A Map Instead of Guesswork

At ANGIOPHARM, we approach this systematically through the “nine-box” methodology. We assess managers and key employees along two dimensions: performance and potential. The result is not a “better/worse” ranking, but a map showing different types of talent: rising stars, stars, potential leaders and core players.

Each category requires its own development approach. A rising star needs challenge and visibility: stretch assignments, opportunities to make results visible, and a mentor from among experienced leaders. A star needs to be retained through purpose and an expanded sphere of influence, rather than through bonuses alone. A potential leader needs time for their performance to catch up with their ambitions. A core player needs recognition of stability as a



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EXPERT OPINION

value, together with targeted development within their area of expertise.

This map makes it possible to see who will be ready to fill a position in six months and who will require two or three years of systematic preparation. It is not guesswork – it is calculation.

Why It Takes Us Years, Not Months

ANGIOPHARM is a science-intensive business, and this is not merely a figure of speech. In 1987, recombinant angiogenin was synthesised at the Novosibirsk Institute of Bioorganic Chemistry – and this work continued even throughout the most difficult years for Russian science in the 1990s. We are a direct continuation of the Soviet scientific school, and this sets a high standard: studying active ingredients, developing formulations, manufacturing, and conducting stability and safety tests all take time. In an intellectual business, developing experts and leaders takes years, not a sprint.

A person becoming part of these processes must be more than knowledgeable – they must be a perfectionist by nature. That is why we begin looking for future experts while they are still students: in the science hubs of Koltsovo and Akademgorodok, and at one of the strongest departments of Novosibirsk State University, where biotechnologists and chemists are trained. In addition, we maintain close ties with the biotechnology community across the country – developing talent in advance instead of rushing to find it at the last possible moment.

Who We Are Really Looking For

For us, recruitment is a philosophy rather than a formality. We value not only expertise, but also cultural alignment: people who are focused on creating value for society, who genuinely care about the development of Russian science, rather than simply meeting KPIs. At the same time, results are not optional: a business with a human face does not mean softness without substance, but rather a combination of care and high expectations.

We look for courageous people – those who take on challenging assignments where there is no ready-made solution and one must be created from scratch. And perhaps the most important quality we value in both experienced and younger leaders is mental maturity: the ability to take responsibility for results, acknowledge mistakes, and see difficult work through to completion. A mature product can only be created by a mature team.

Tools That Make Succession a Reality

Next come the tools that many companies are familiar with but do not always use systematically: individual development plans, coaching and the “70–20–10” principle – 70% through real-life experience and challenging assignments, 20% through feedback and mentoring, and 10% through formal learning. The role of experienced leaders is particularly



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important here: they are the best mentors because they pass on not only skills, but also context, the history behind previous decisions and an understanding of risks. Without this transfer of knowledge, the company would repeatedly have to learn the same lessons the hard way.

A Bridge, Not a Crisis

Readiness for generational change is not a one-year programme and not a reaction to someone leaving the company. It is a continuously functioning mechanism: a regularly updated talent map, leaders who see mentoring as part of their role rather than an additional burden, and a culture in which experience and fresh perspectives do not compete, but work together.

Companies that build this bridge in advance do not experience generational change as a crisis. They experience it as natural, manageable growth.



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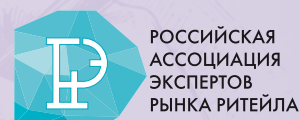
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