RECRUITMENT TRENDS 2025





OVERVIEW



Let's face it, the world of work is changing faster than ever before. It's exciting, it's challenging, and it's definitely keeping us all on our toes! New technologies, shifting priorities, and a global pandemic have completely reshaped our perspective on work, talent, and the very nature of employment.

In this guide, we're diving headfirst into the biggest recruitment trends of 2025. We'll explore the challenges and opportunities that keep employers up at night, as well as the aspirations and anxieties that drive candidates' decisions. From the rise of the self-employed expert to the ethical dilemmas of Al, we'll unpack the trends that are shaping the future of work and offer insights to help you navigate this exciting new world.



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THE FACTS

- 56% of UK employees **prefer hybrid work** arrangements (Source: YouGov, January 2025).
- Companies with hybrid work models report a 15% increase in employee retention (Source: CIPD)
- Hybrid work can lead to a 13% increase in employee productivity (Source: Stanford University).

Problem:

The traditional model of working exclusively from the office has been challenged by the rise of remote work and the increasing demand for flexibility among employees. Employers are grappling with how to manage a hybrid workforce effectively, ensuring productivity, collaboration, and a strong company culture while accommodating individual needs and preferences.

Solution:

Embrace hybrid work models that offer a balance of remote and inoffice work, empowering employees to choose the arrangement that best suits their individual circumstances and work styles.

This requires:

- 1. **Establishing clear guidelines and expectations:** Define expectations for remote work, including communication protocols, availability, and performance standards.
- 2. Investing in technology and infrastructure: Provide employees with the tools and resources they need to work effectively from anywhere, such as reliable internet access, collaboration platforms, and video conferencing software.
- 3. Fostering a culture of trust and flexibility: Empower employees to manage their own time and work arrangements, while maintaining clear communication and accountability.
- 4. Promoting social connection and collaboration: Create opportunities for employees to connect and collaborate, both in person and virtually, to maintain a strong company culture and prevent feelings of isolation.



2. The Talent Shortage Crisis

THE FACTS

- 75% of UK employers are experiencing difficulties filling vacancies (Source: REC).
- 60% of businesses plan to increase investment in training and development in 2025 (Source: CIPD).
- Companies with strong employer brands receive 50% more qualified applicants (Source: LinkedIn).

Problem:

Businesses across various industries are facing a growing talent shortage, particularly in specialised roles requiring specific skills and experience. This is driven by factors such as an ageing workforce, a skills gap between education and industry needs, and increased competition for top talent.

Solution:

Think creatively and explore non-traditional talent pools to address the talent shortage.





- 1. Targeting candidates with transferable skills: Look beyond traditional qualifications and consider individuals with valuable skills from other industries or sectors.
- 2. Engaging with "boomerang employees": Welcome back former employees who may have gained valuable experience elsewhere and are now seeking to return.
- 3. Attracting candidates from underrepresented groups: Implement diversity and inclusion initiatives to tap into a wider talent pool and create a more representative workforce.
- 4. Investing in upskilling and reskilling programmes: Develop the skills of existing employees to meet evolving business needs and fill internal talent gaps.
- 5. **Building strong employer branding:** Create a positive and attractive employer brand to attract top talent and stand out in a competitive market.



3. The ESG Imperative



THE FACTS

- 72% of Gen Z and Millennial respondents stated that environmental credentials and policies are important when considering potential employers (Source: Deloitte, 2024).
- Companies with strong ESG performance have a 28% lower risk of employee turnover (Source: Harvard Business Review).
- 88% of consumers are more likely to buy from companies that support social and environmental issues (Source: Cone Communications).

Problem:

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors are becoming increasingly important to employees, especially younger generations who are seeking to work for companies that align with their values and contribute to a better world. Companies that fail to prioritise ESG may struggle to attract and retain top talent, face reputational damage, and miss out on business opportunities.

Solution:

Integrate ESG considerations into your recruitment strategies and workplace culture.

This involves:

- 1. Communicating your ESG commitments: Clearly articulate your company's values and initiatives related to sustainability, ethical practices, and social responsibility.
- 2. Attracting candidates who share your values: Highlight your ESG commitments in job descriptions and recruitment materials to attract candidates who are passionate about making a positive impact.
- 3. Creating a sustainable and inclusive workplace: Implement environmentally friendly practices, promote diversity and inclusion, and support employee well-being.
- 4. Partnering with organisations that share your values: Collaborate with non-profits, social enterprises, and other organisations that are committed to ESG principles.





FACTS

- 23% of UK workers plan to quit their jobs in 2025 (Source: UK attrition data).
- 67% of employees who leave their jobs cite lack of appreciation as a key factor (Source: Gallup).
- Companies with high employee engagement have 21% higher profitability (Source: Gallup).

Problem:

Employee attrition is on the rise, with a significant percentage of workers planning to quit their jobs in the coming year. This can be attributed to various factors, including burnout, lack of recognition, limited career progression opportunities, and a desire for greater flexibility and work-life balance. High attrition rates can lead to increased costs, decreased productivity, and a loss of valuable skills and knowledge.

Solution:

Focus on creating a positive and engaging employee experience that fosters loyalty, motivation, and a sense of belonging.

This can be achieved through:

- 1. Offering competitive compensation and benefits: Ensure that your salaries and benefits packages are competitive within your industry and location.
- 2. Providing opportunities for growth and development: Offer training programmes, mentorship opportunities, and clear career paths to support employee development and advancement.
- 3. Creating a supportive and inclusive work environment: Foster a culture of open communication, recognition, and respect, where employees feel valued and appreciated.
- 4. **Promoting work-life balance:** Offer flexible work arrangements, generous leave policies, and support for employee well-being.
- 5. Addressing the root causes of attrition: Conduct exit interviews and employee surveys to understand the reasons why people are leaving and take steps to address those issues.

5. The Rise of Al-Assisted Bias Mitigation

THE FACTS

- 60% of candidates have had a negative candidate experience (Source: CareerBuilder).
- 83% of candidates say a negative interview experience can change their mind about a role or company (Source: Talent Board).
- Companies with positive candidate experiences report a 7% increase in quality of hire (Source: IBM).

Problem:

Many companies focus their recruitment efforts solely on the interview process, neglecting the overall candidate experience. This can lead to negative perceptions of the company, decreased candidate engagement, and a higher likelihood of losing top talent to competitors.

Solution:

Provide a positive and engaging experience throughout the entire candidate journey, from initial application to onboarding.

- 1. Clear and transparent communication:
 Keep candidates informed about their
 application status, provide timely feedback,
 and answer any questions they may have.
- 2. Personalised interactions: Tailor communication and interactions to each candidate's individual needs and preferences.
- 3. **Streamlined application process:** Make the application process as simple and user-friendly as possible.
- 4 Positive onboarding experience: Ensure a smooth and welcoming onboarding process for new hires, providing them with the resources and support they need to succeed in their new roles.



6. Enhancing the Candidate Experience Beyond the Interview

THE FACTS

- 58% of UK businesses are concerned about the potential for bias in AI recruitment tools (Source: PwC).
- Al-powered bias mitigation tools can reduce bias in hiring by up to 40% (Source: Gartner).
- 76% of candidates believe that Al should be used to promote fairness and equality in recruitment (Source: Ideal).

Problem:

Al tools, while offering efficiency in recruitment, can inadvertently perpetuate existing biases in datasets, leading to unfair and discriminatory outcomes. This can result in a lack of diversity in the workforce and perpetuate inequalities.

Solution:

Invest in AI-powered recruitment tools that are specifically designed to mitigate bias and promote fairness.

- 1. Anonymised CV screening:
 Removing identifying information
 like names, gender, and ethnicity
 from CVs to prevent
 unconscious bias during the
 initial screening process.
- 2. Skills-based assessments:
 Using assessments that focus
 on skills and abilities rather than
 personal characteristics to
 evaluate candidates objectively.
- 3. Diverse data sets: Ensuring that Al algorithms are trained on diverse and representative data sets to avoid perpetuating existing biases.
- 4. Human oversight and intervention: Maintaining human oversight in the recruitment process to ensure that AI tools are used ethically and responsibly.

7. The Return of Boomerang Employees

THE FACTS

- 40% of employees would consider returning to a former employer (Source: LinkedIn).
- Boomerang employees often have higher engagement and retention rates than new hires (Source: Workplace Trends).
- Companies that actively re-engage boomerang employees report a 10% increase in employee morale (Source: HR Dive).

Problem:

Companies often lose valuable employees who may later decide to return, bringing with them new skills, experience, and a renewed appreciation for the company culture. However, many companies lack formal processes for re-engaging these "boomerang employees," missing out on the opportunity to re-hire talented individuals who are already familiar with the organisation.



Solution:

Welcome back "boomerang employees" by creating a clear and welcoming pathway for their return.

- 1. Maintaining relationships with former employees: Stay in touch with former employees through alumni networks, social media, and other channels.
- 2. Offering flexible return options: Provide opportunities for former employees to return in different capacities, such as part-time roles, contract positions, or even different roles within the company.
- 3. Providing customised re-onboarding programmes:

 Offer tailored re-onboarding programmes to help returning employees get up to speed quickly and reintegrate into the company culture.
- 4. Recognising and valuing their experience:

 Acknowledge the skills and experience that returning employees have gained during their time away from the company.





8. Holistic Employee Wellness

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THE FACTS

- 76% of employees believe that their employer has a responsibility to support their well-being (Source: CIPD).
- Companies with holistic well-being programmes report a 10% increase in employee engagement (Source: Gallup).
- Employees who feel supported in their well-being are 3 times more likely to be productive (Source: Harvard Business Review).

Problem:

Employee well-being encompasses more than just physical and mental health; it also includes financial wellness, social connections, and overall life satisfaction. Companies that fail to address these broader aspects of well-being may experience decreased employee engagement, productivity, and retention.



THE SOLUTION

- 1. Financial wellness programmes: Provide resources and support for financial planning, budgeting, and debt management.
- 2. **Mental health support:** Offer access to counselling services, stress management workshops, and employee assistance programmes.
- 3. Work-life balance initiatives: Encourage flexible work arrangements, generous leave policies, and opportunities for employees to disconnect and recharge.
- 4. Social connection and community building:
 Foster a sense of community and belonging
 through social events, team-building activities, and
 employee resource groups.
- 5. Personal growth and development opportunities:
 Support employees in their personal and
 professional growth through training programmes,
 mentorship opportunities, and career development
 initiatives.





THE FACTS

- 64% of employees want their employer to provide opportunities for
- skills-based volunteerism (Source: CECP).
- Companies with
- skills-based volunteerism programmes report a 13% increase in employee morale (Source: Deloitte).
- 85% of consumers have a more positive image of a company when it supports a cause they care about (Source: Cone Communications).

Problem:

Employees are increasingly seeking opportunities to contribute to their communities and make a positive impact through their work. Companies that fail to provide such opportunities may miss out on a valuable way to engage employees, enhance their employer brand, and contribute to social good.

Solution:

Implement skills-based volunteerism programmes that connect employees' professional skills with charitable causes, allowing them to give back to their communities while also developing their skills and strengthening their connection to the company. This involves:

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10. Customisable Career Pathing

- 76% of employees want more flexibility in their career paths (Source: LinkedIn).
- Companies with customisable career pathing programmes report a 10% increase in employee retention (Source: Gartner).
- Employees who feel they have control over their career development are 4 times more likely to be engaged in their work (Source: Gallup).

Problem:

Traditional career paths can be rigid and linear, failing to accommodate the diverse needs and aspirations of modern employees. This can lead to decreased engagement, limited career progression opportunities, and increased turnover.

Solution:

Offer customisable career paths that allow employees to tailor their career progression to their individual skills, interests, and life circumstances.

This involves:

- 1. Providing flexible career frameworks: Create career lattices or other flexible frameworks that allow employees to move laterally, take on new challenges, and explore different career options within the company.
- 2. Offering personalised career development plans: Work with employees to develop individualised career development plans that align with their goals and aspirations.
- 3. Providing opportunities for skill development and growth:
 Offer training programmes, mentorship opportunities, and job rotations to support employees in acquiring new skills and expanding their knowledge.

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FOCUS ON SALES

TRENDS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF SALES RECRUITMENT

Recruitment Trend

Description

Impact on Sales Recruitment

The Rise of the Self-Employed Sales Force

- 63% of UK businesses are considering using more
- self-employed consultants in 2025 (Source: IPSE).
- Self-employed sales professionals earn an average of 20% more than their traditionally employed counterparts (Source: HMRC).
- 78% of self-employed individuals report higher job satisfaction compared to those in traditional employment (Source: Upwork).

Businesses are considering using more selfemployed consultants to access a wider talent pool, reduce overhead, and increase agility. Experienced sales professionals are seeking selfemployment for greater autonomy, flexibility, and uncapped earning potential, with selfemployed professionals often reporting higher job satisfaction and earning 20% more.

Businesses should embrace this trend to attract experienced talent who desire flexibility and direct performance-based income. This offers access to a global network of skilled professionals with entrepreneurial mindsets.

Problem:

Businesses are struggling to attract and retain top sales talent in a competitive market, facing challenges like high salaries, demanding benefits packages, and a desire for greater work-life balance among candidates. At the same time, many experienced sales professionals are seeking greater autonomy, flexibility, and uncapped earning potential, leading them to explore self-employment options.

Solution:

Embrace the growing trend of self-employed sales consultants.

The Skills-Based Revolution in Sales

- 77% of UK hiring managers now value relevant skills more than educational background (Source: LinkedIn).
- 63% of sales professionals believe that continuous learning and skills development are crucial for career success (Source: Salesforce).
- Companies that prioritise skills-based hiring report a 20% increase in employee performance (Source: Josh Bersin Academy).

The focus is shifting from traditional academic qualifications and lengthy CVs to demonstrable skills, experience, and adaptability. The rapid evolution of technology and need for specialised knowledge drive this shift.

Sales recruitment must adopt a skills-based hiring approach by defining core skills (e.g., communication, negotiation) and using assessments or simulations to evaluate candidates. Companies should embrace diverse backgrounds and invest in upskilling/reskilling programs.

Problem:

The traditional emphasis on academic qualifications and lengthy CVs is becoming increasingly outdated in the fast-paced sales landscape. Businesses are realising that specific skills, experience, and adaptability are more crucial for success than formal education. This shift is driven by the rapid evolution of technology, the need for specialised knowledge, and the growing demand for sales professionals who can thrive in a dynamic and customercentric environment.

Recruitment Trend	Description	Impact on Sales Recruitment
The Skills-Based Revolution in Sales Cont.	Embrace a Skills-Based Hiring Model. This solution shifts the focus from traditional credentials to demonstrable abilities and potential. We'll identify core skills for each sales role and use practical assessments and simulations to evaluate candidates in real- world scenarios. By embracing diverse backgrounds and investing in upskilling, we ensure our team has the exact abilities needed to succeed and grow.	Solution: Adopt a skills-based hiring approach that prioritises demonstrable abilities and potential over traditional credentials. This involves: • Identifying core skills: Clearly define the essential skills needed for each sales role, such as communication, negotiation, problem-solving, and relationship building. • Assessing skills through various methods: Utilise assessments, simulations, and practical exercises to evaluate candidates' skills in real-world scenarios. • Embracing diverse backgrounds: Look beyond traditional sales experience and consider candidates with transferable skills from other industries. • Providing opportunities for upskilling and reskilling: Invest in training programmes to develop existing employees and bridge skills gaps.
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The Human-Centric Approach to Al in Sales Recruitment

- 67% of UK HR
 professionals reported
 significant improvements
 in identifying top talent
 through AI, but 43% also
 expressed concerns about
 potential bias (Source:
 Deloitte).
- 80% of candidates prefer a personalised and engaging recruitment experience (Source: Candidate Experience Survey).

While AI and automation streamline recruitment tasks like CV screening and scheduling, an overreliance on technology risks dehumanising the candidate journey. **Impersonal** chatbots, lack of transparency, and potential for algorithmic bias can create a poor experience.

Problem:

While AI and automation offer significant benefits in streamlining recruitment processes, such as automating CV screening, scheduling interviews, and providing initial candidate engagement through chatbots, there is a growing concern about the potential for dehumanising the candidate experience.

Overreliance on AI can lead to impersonal interactions, a lack of transparency, and even perpetuate bias if algorithms are not carefully designed and monitored.

Solution

Adopt a human-centric approach to AI in recruitment, where technology is used to enhance, not replace, human interaction.

Trends Shaping the Future of Sales Recruitment Cont.

Recruitment Trend Description

Predictive Analytics for Sales Talent Forecasting

- Companies using predictive analytics for workforce planning reduce their time-to-hire by 20% (Source: SHRM).
- 69% of businesses believe that predictive analytics will become even more important in the next five years (Source: Deloitte).
- Predictive analytics can improve the quality of hire by up to 30% (Source: Bersin by Deloitte).

Traditional recruitment is reactive, scrambling to fill vacancies only after they occur. This causes prolonged hiring cycles and leaves the organization unable to adapt to the dynamic sales landscape where talent needs shift rapidly, resulting in missed opportunities.

Problem:

Impact on Sales Recruitment

Traditional recruitment methods often rely on reactive measures, scrambling to fill vacancies when they arise. This can lead to prolonged hiring processes, missed opportunities, and an inability to adapt quickly to changing market demands. In the dynamic sales landscape, where talent needs can shift rapidly, a more proactive approach is essential.

Solution:

Leverage predictive analytics to forecast future talent needs in the sales industry.

This involves:

- Analysing historical data: Examine past trends in employee turnover, hiring patterns, and skills gaps to identify potential future needs.
- Monitoring market trends: Stay informed about industry developments, economic forecasts, and competitor activity to anticipate changes in talent demand.
- Using AI and machine learning: Implement sophisticated tools to analyse data and predict future talent requirements with greater accuracy.
- Developing proactive recruitment strategies: Build talent pipelines, engage with passive candidates, and nurture relationships with potential future hires.



Ready to Get

Started?

The 2025 recruitment landscape is a whirlwind of change, but people remain our priority. Citrus Connect is committed to connection, empathy, and building inclusive, equitable workplaces. We're not just filling roles; we're building relationships. Keep the human touch at the core of your strategy—let's build a better world of work together.



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