



Workforce 2020: attracting and retaining talent in the digital world

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WHITE PAPER



Four human capital management trends

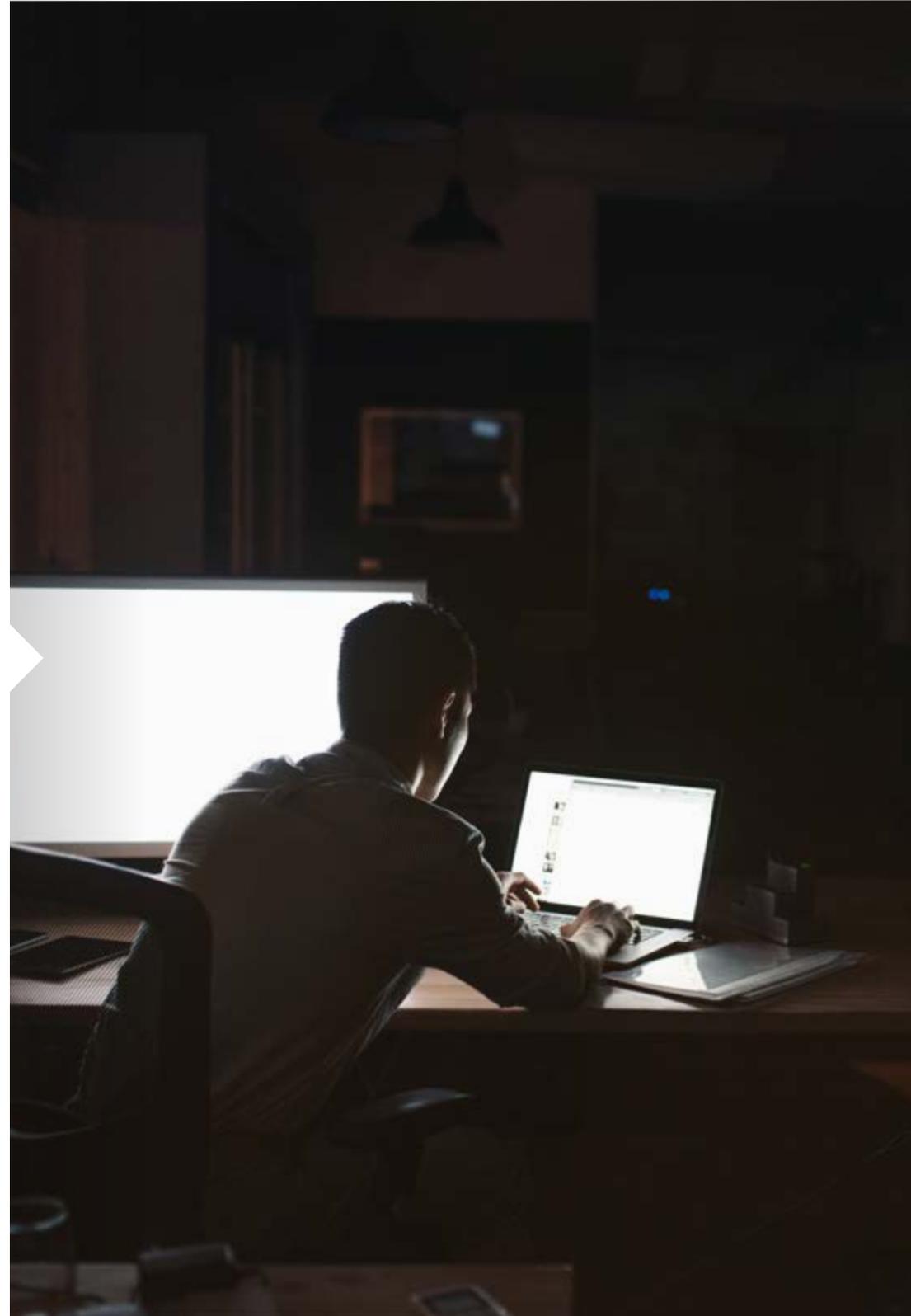
1. Work-life balance

According to the Hays UK Salary & Recruiting Trends [2020 guide](#) (Hays Salary Guide) only 21 per cent of employers think work-life balance is important to attract staff. But 31 per cent of professionals prioritise this when considering a new role. Close to half (43 per cent) of staff rated their work-life balance as average or poor.

This is becoming much more of a priority for candidates looking at new roles, and, for employees in their current job. It's probably one of the biggest trends, and one that has a significant impact on engagement and retention.

According to the professional body for HR and people development, the CIPD, [presenteeism hit a record high in 2018](#) and stress and mental ill-health at work are on the rise. One of the ways employers combat this is by offering flexible and remote working to promote a better work-life balance.

In today's world, if you're not promoting work-life balance and some sort of flexibility from an attraction and retention point of view, then you're definitely missing a massive trick. Whilst that's what your staff want, employers often struggle with how to initially shift their culture to encourage work-life balance, and how they manage that as effectively as they can.



2. Soft skills

The next trend is how organisations are prioritising soft skills. Technical skills and qualifications are always going to be important, but they're easy to assess. Other skills like people management and leadership are harder to learn; and soft skills like critical thinking, communication and emotional intelligence are tougher to benchmark.

The challenge is how employers adapt their recruitment and HCM strategies to find the right people with the right skills, and develop them, so their workforces have the right balance; especially in this age of rapid change and digital transformation.

If you've got people with a willingness to learn and a good attitude, you should you be investing the time to develop them. If you are only hiring on qualifications and experience, you are going to miss an awful lot of people that could add massive value.

3. Diversity and inclusion

Newer generations want diversity in careers and study, and most want to work for a company that values diversity and inclusion (D&I). Forward-thinking organisations are tuning into this.

More and more candidates are now actively looking for the D&I policies and commitments when they're researching a potential employer. And if you've got that inclusiveness and diversity across your workforce, then you're more likely to create an innovative environment that's going to help people develop their skills. So, again if you're not promoting that, you are potentially missing out on a significant pool of candidates from an attraction point of view.

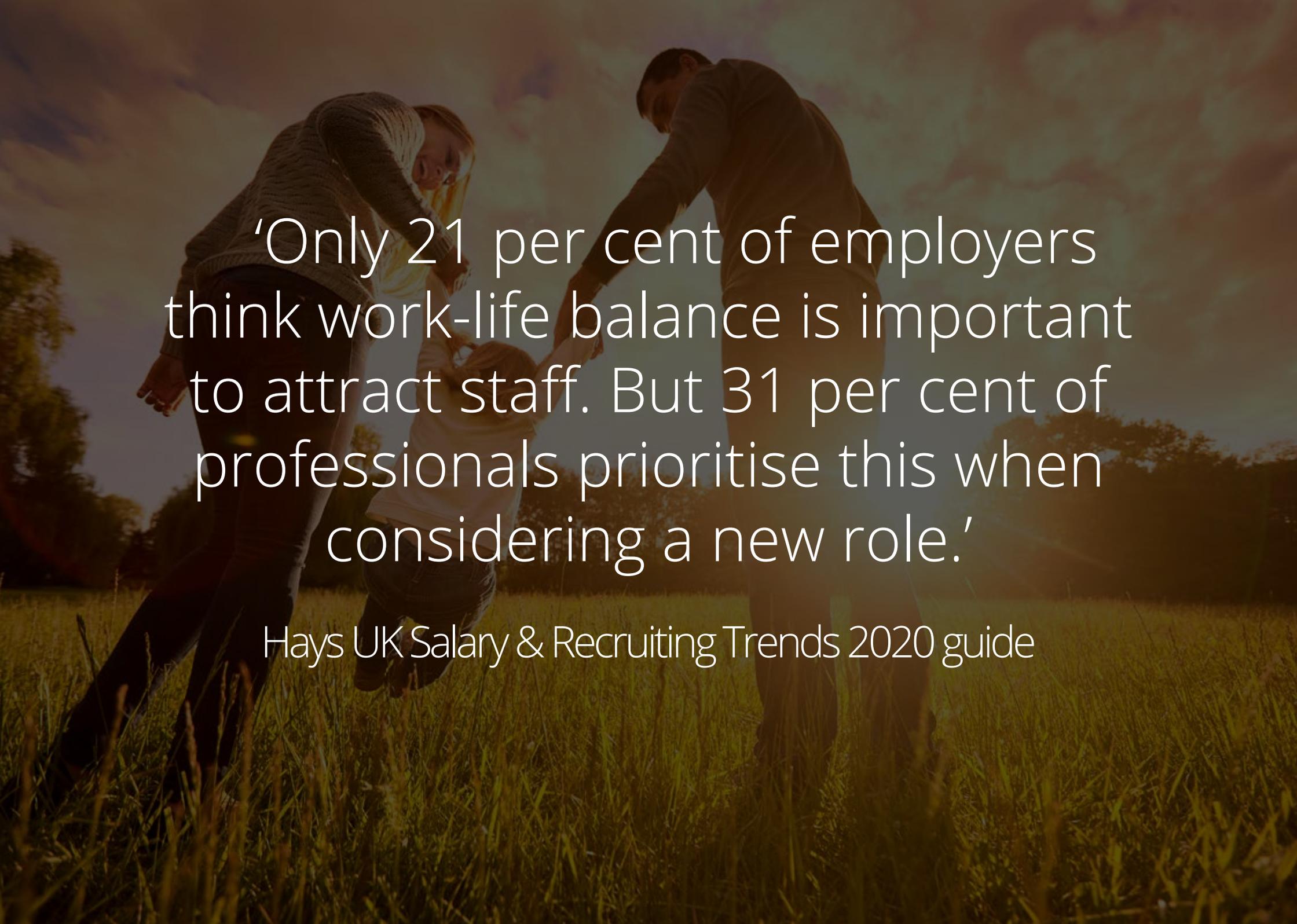
4. Learning and development

According to the Hays Salary Guide, over a third (37 per cent) of employees feel there is no scope for career progression at their current organisation. And over a fifth (21 per cent) say the top reason for wanting to move job was a lack of future opportunities. The report says: 'Employers continue to face niche skills shortages, causing salaries to grow. However, salary rises in isolation are ineffective as many seek career progression, future opportunities and flexibility.'

Salaries are always going to be a motivator for people to move jobs, but today they want more than that; if you're not promoting your commitment to learning and development (L&D) for somebody's career progression, and actively supporting it, you're not helping yourself. The trend around lifelong learning, and the idea that 'learning is the new loyalty', is more relevant today than ever before. But you would be surprised how many employers don't promote basic things like career progression and L&D.

According to [2019 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends](#), learning is the 'top-rated challenge' and employers are taking steps to deliver learning in a 'more personal way, integrating work and learning more tightly with each other, extending learning beyond the HR organisation'.

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Hays UK Salary & Recruiting Trends 2020 guide



The challenge of changing expectations

Employees and candidates are selective about who they work for, how they do their work and what the future holds for them within an organisation.

Underpinning all this is an expectation that employers will provide the same levels of seamless digital interaction at work as they experience at home. This is especially true for younger generations because of the way technology has impacted them throughout their entire lives.

There's an expectation from the future talent that these things are going to be there; that an organisation is able to provide the technology that makes them as efficient as they possibly can be at work — and why wouldn't they? The Hays What Workers Want 2019 report says automation projects are 'likely to change the world of work as we know it, impacting tasks and helping people deliver greater human value'.

Employers that provide all this in the right balance will reap the rewards. Those that don't will find it harder to attract the best talent

compared to their peers, or lose that talent to newer start-ups that are promoting these things.

According to the Hays Salary Guide, almost half (47 per cent) expressed concern about competition from other employers. Nine out of ten employers (88 per cent) have experienced skills shortages, and 65 per cent say their top recruitment challenge for the year ahead will be a shortage of suitable applicants. The report adds that employers will need more 'creative' approaches to overcome the challenge of recruiting top talent.

Employers continue to be challenged by skills shortages and stronger competition for talent. In this competitive and fast-changing market, it is more important than ever for employers to understand how to stand out from the crowd to attract the talent they need to deliver amidst a challenging and changing market.



Finding a new mindset

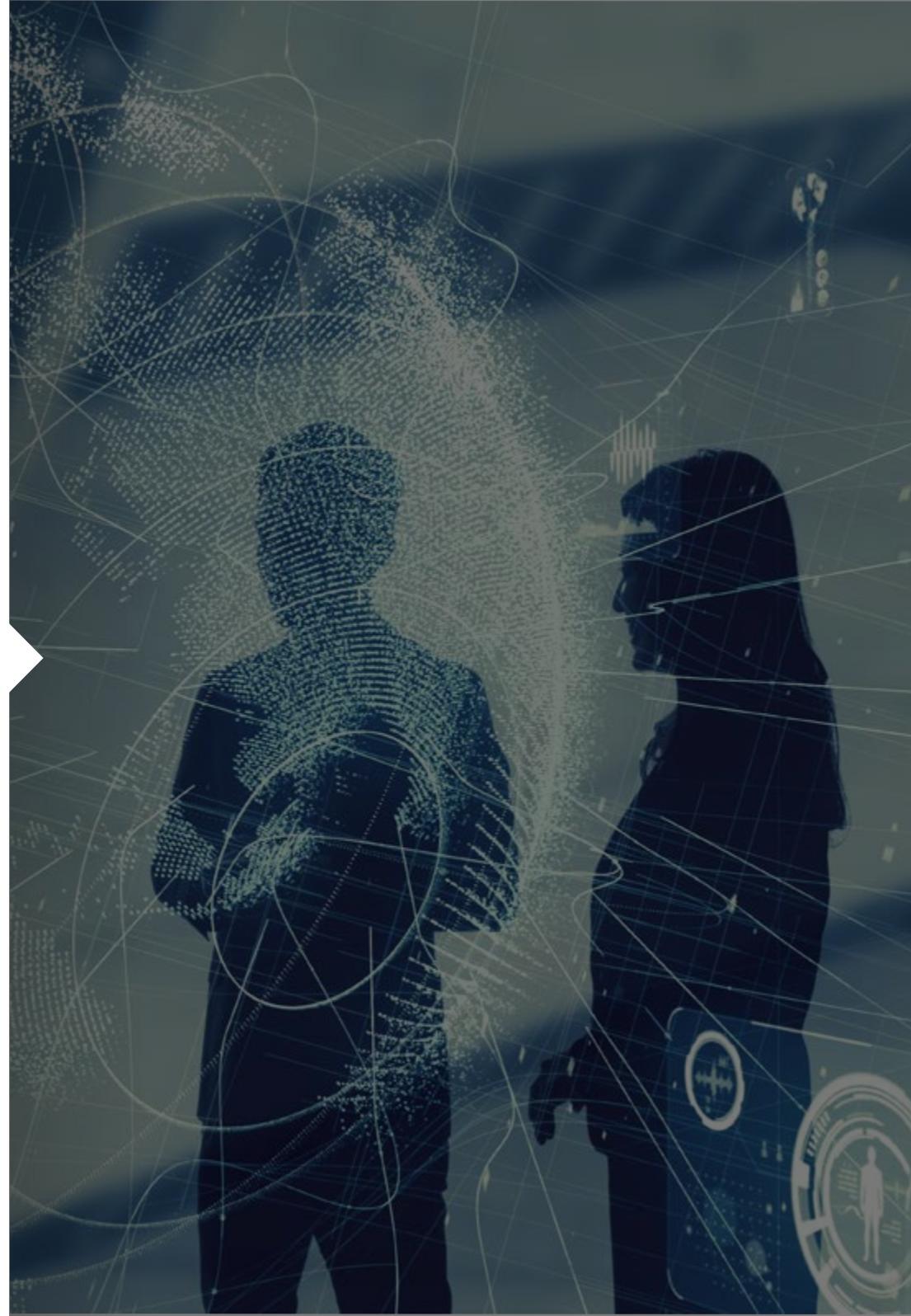
Today, no conversation about HCM and recruitment is complete without discussing productivity. And no discussion about productivity would be balanced without including automation and digital transformation.

Automated, integrated software powered by artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML) and other emerging technologies is fast-becoming ubiquitous, especially in areas like HR admin. Modern tools, such as self-serve learning apps and conversational chatbots to help staff fill in timesheets, save time by removing admin blocks. This allows staff to focus on the work they were hired to do, so they can devote more time to adding human and creative value to their organisation.

Three out of four (75 per cent of) employers today say digital transformation is the primary or secondary focus in their organisation, according to the What Workers Want 2019 report. Yet a similar proportion (72 per cent) say they have not made, or don't intend to make, any changes to their recruitment strategy as part of their investment in automation.

Four recommendations

Tuning into the human capital trends and providing what today's workers want, while embracing automation, is a tall order. To do it, employers need to think differently and act more creatively. Here are four recommendations from Hays:





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What Workers Want 2019 report

1. Build awareness of the technical journey

Only 37 per cent of employers promote their investment in digital transformation during interviews. The evidence shows that promoting your activity and investment in digital transformation and automation will make you a more attractive employer — the What Workers Want 2019 research shows that three quarters (73 per cent) of professionals already have an open mindset towards it.

2. Hire based on attitude, mindset and soft skills

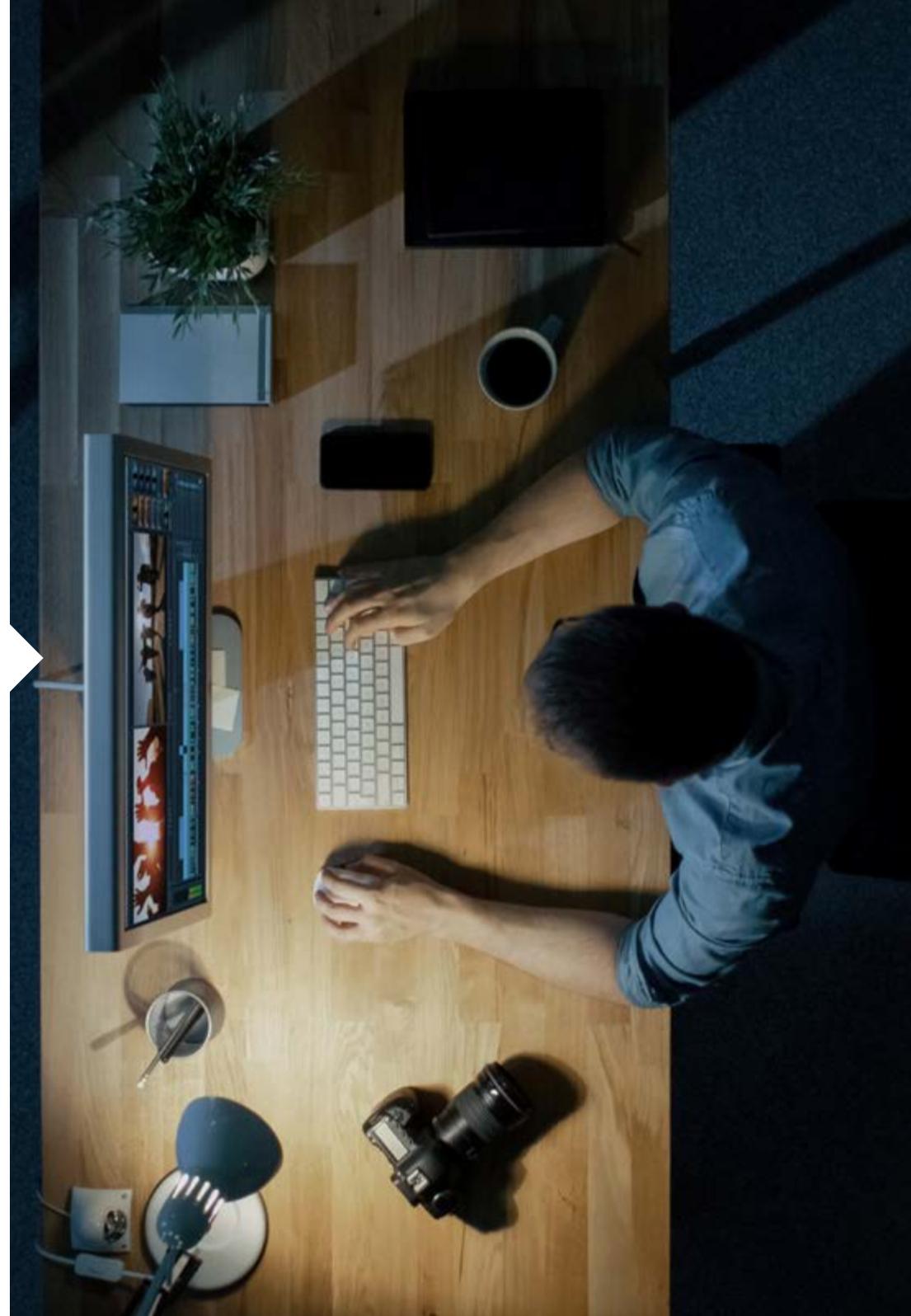
Create a new balance between technical and soft skills, which will stand professionals in good stead to adapt to technological change. Finding candidates with an open mindset towards change is also essential. To do this may mean shifting your hiring tactics, perhaps by looking to new talent pools, considering different recruitment channels and deploying new techniques.

3. Create an open culture for change

Digital transformation and scaling are constant challenges for all organisations because they're driven by culture. It ties back to your people, and how you develop them - software is an enabler but not in isolation. Building an open culture that supports the adoption of new technology in the workplace is vital for the successful implementation of automation.

4. Support lifelong learning to develop skills

Foster lifelong learning through the delivery of self-service training apps and bite-sized resources, so staff can learn anytime, anywhere, but also support and guide them so they don't feel isolated.



A man in a blue suit is sitting at a white table, writing in a notebook. He is looking down at the notebook. A woman with red hair is sitting across from him, looking towards him. A tablet is on the table in front of the man. The background is a blurred office setting.

'Only 37 per cent of employers promote their investment in digital transformation during interviews.'



Removing the admin burden

The right infrastructure and tools help organisations attract, nurture and retain talent and manage the entire lifecycle of employees, from candidate to retiree. Karen Young, Director of Hays Accountancy & Finance, says: “Automation allows organisations to reduce the workload of administrative tasks and frees up people to add more human value, analysis and insight.”

At the start of the process, for example, chatbots can communicate with hundreds of candidates to analyse data like availability, skills, rates and locations then automatically populate databases. This replaces manual phone calls, and reduces a laborious, week-long process to just 30 seconds. Hays is already using this technology across many parts of its business.

Once employed, modern Cloud tools remove the admin burden to help staff become more efficient and achieve their potential (such as training apps as part of learning management systems) and anytime-anywhere, self-serve HR admin apps to do manual tasks like booking leave, scheduling training or filling in company policy FAQs.

HR staff can also use the right software to support staff members' end-to-end journeys. During this journey, they can use AI, ML and predictive analytics to track employee engagement, spot trends and anticipate (and mitigate) risks, such as forecasting when staff are likely to expect internal mobility, promotion or even leave the company. HCM tools can also help teams reduce the time they spend on compliance with employee legislation changes.

HCM is just one example of crucial software which helps skilled staff get on with the work they were hired to do, and which allows organisations to focus on people instead of admin.

KPMG's survey of global HR executives, [The future of HR 2019](#), focuses on how forward-thinking organisations 'reinvent themselves around a human focus'. It finds that 36 per cent of HR functions have started to introduce AI, and 14 per cent have invested in AI over the past two years. The vast majority (88 per cent) of these organisations that have invested in AI for HR, describe the investment as 'worthwhile', with the focus primarily on learning (35 per cent) and analytics (33 per cent).





What workers want

In today's competitive and technology-rich world of work, employers need to tune into the trends and commit to automation so they can provide what workers want.

This may involve redefining how they think and changing how they act throughout the entire employee lifecycle. But it will result in more engaged, loyal and productive people - and a workforce that adds more human value to the organisation. And this can only lead to an increase in competitiveness, agility and innovation



To talk to an expert about how we can help your organisation, contact us on 08451 605 555.
Alternatively, leave us a message [here](#) and we will be in touch shortly.

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