

# The world at work in '23

 By [Kerry Morris](#)

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Work as we know it is changing, fast. With global challenges such as rising inflation, companies restructuring for efficiency and recruiting for skills, and shortages in skills that include talent being scarce, expensive and increasingly mobile, the recruitment industry has no choice but to adapt to thrive in 2023 and beyond.



Kerry Morris, CEO, The Tower Group

Alongside investments in people and technology, cultivating a positive work culture, and transforming HR to be more automated and digital, HR leaders' main focus in 2023 will zone in on how to find ways to attract and retain new employees. These include millennials and an emergent Gen Z that have a different set of expectations when it comes to what they want from work.

## The future of work involves tech

The new work is global, hybrid, remote and, along with skills and talent, shifting quickly. 'Employability' is no longer just about soft skills such as communication, critical thinking and EQ, but also digital skills such as working collaboratively and remotely in global teams and, increasingly, being able to use tech such as AI applications, robotics, and the internet of things at work.

In line with this, certain skills and roles will become obsolete in the next few years, with no ways of predicting future ones. The needs of millennials and rising Gen Z in the workplace have shaped a new work culture where the reasons why an employee will sign on or stay in a company are contingent on core elements such as shared purpose, flexibility, connectedness and well-being. And, as a result, the need for a new leadership has emerged.

## Human-centric leadership

The top-down, manager-employee leadership style no longer has a seat at the boardroom table in the new world of work. Demands for flexible work arrangements, work with a sense of purpose, and the prioritisation of employee well-being has created a new human-centric model for business.

Culture is led from the front and, when it comes to employee happiness within an organisation (a key factor in whether they'll sign, stay or stray), adopting a leadership style that is connected, flexible and human becomes paramount. Today, leadership qualities such as authenticity, empathy and adaptivity are no longer "nice-to-haves". Employees expect them. Seeing employees as humans first, showing genuine care, respect and concern for their well-being as well as being agile and supportive when it comes to meeting their individual needs is what is required in being a leader, not a boss.

## Shifting tides of talent

Today, talent is scarce, remote and increasingly mobile. What this means is that, in addition to a global shortage of skilled talent, people are now able to work from anywhere and collaborate with teams online, meaning huge opportunities to move across jobs, industries and continents; even to hold multiple jobs at a time. To put this mobility in perspective, research predicts that many Gen Z entering the workforce will hold 12 to 15 jobs in their lifetime. That's a lot of movement!

With regards to the ongoing "Great Resignation", it's becoming increasingly difficult for companies to retain talent. Beyond a lack of culture fit, sense of purpose and personal happiness, professional reasons for leaving a job include seeking better pay, better professional development opportunities, and better career trajectories. The key to retaining talent for HR and organisations is to provide compelling careers within an organisation, where employees can understand how and where they can grow, and to upskill and guide them in achieving their professional goals.

## The skilled new recruit

In line with a global talent shortage, companies are restructuring for results and, as such, there is a shift towards hiring more for skills (backed with experience) and less for potential or how great a degree looks on a CV.

Additionally, an increasingly hybrid- or remote-driven labour market means that recruiting high-quality talent needs a new, non-traditional approach. As examples, recruiters in 2023 will need to identify alternate skills, locations and roles that may be able to do the job; seek potential within organisations first; and get buy-in from managers to move employees into different positions.

The onboarding process becomes all-important too as it presents an opportunity to create a sense of connection to the company's mission and culture, as well as to listen and meet individual needs in an effort to make their entry into the company as easy and enjoyable as can be.

## ABOUT KERRY MORRIS

Kerry Morris is the CEO of South Africa's award-winning recruitment and labour services agency, Tower Group. A recognised leader of trade and industry, spanning a career of 20 years, Kerry's extensive experience in human capital engagement sets her apart as one of South Africa's leading front runners for key-quality human resources, and an advocate for empowering women in business.

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