

HIRING & JOB SEARCH

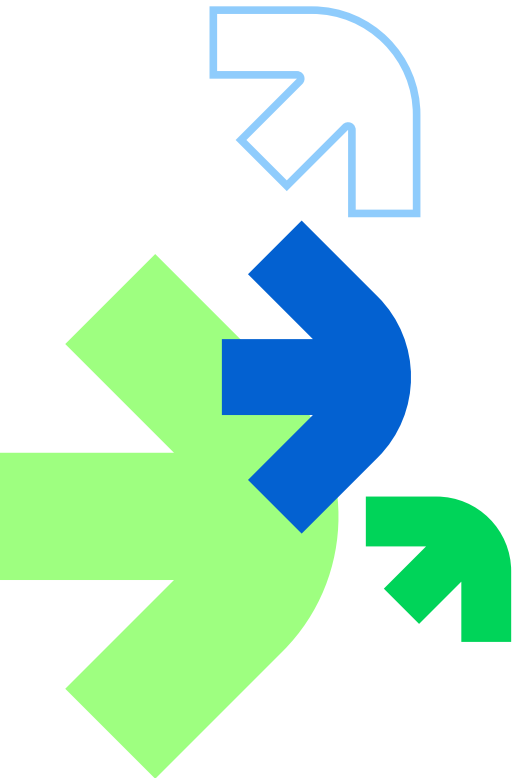
OUTLOOK REPORT

2024



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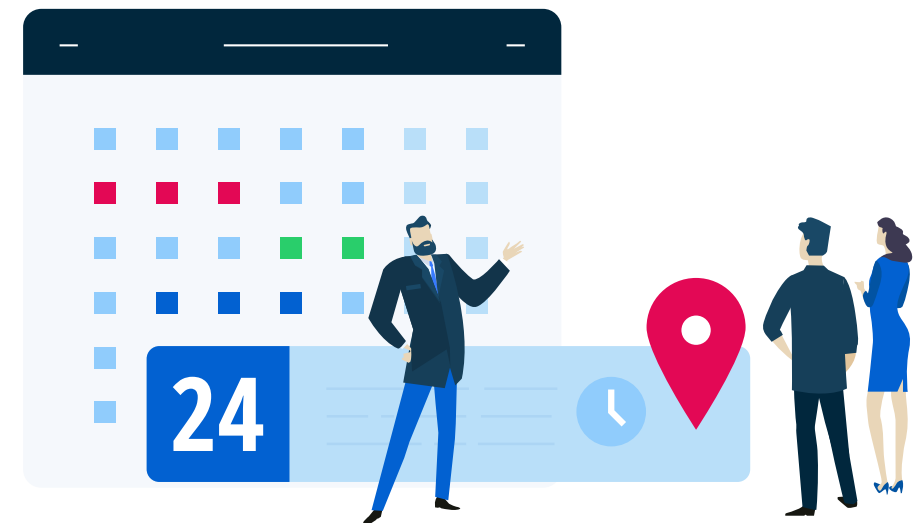
Goodbye, 2023 – hello, 2024!

iHire is kicking off the year with our **2nd Annual Hiring & Job Search Outlook Report**, giving employers a sneak peek at the candidates who are hitting the job search scene in 2024.

We surveyed **1,327** job seekers from **57** industries to provide hiring and HR professionals with actionable advice for recruiting and retaining top talent in the coming months. As with last year’s report, we’ve prefaced our findings with historical data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and iHire’s job and job seeker databases.

Inside, you’ll discover:

- Job seekers’ “must-haves” for their next role
- Candidates’ career growth plans and professional development goals
- Employees’ concerns and challenges for the new year
- Actionable tips for effective recruitment in 2024



2023 Recap: By the Numbers



BLS Data

In 2023, the U.S. unemployment rate gradually rose but remained relatively low (Figure 1), while the number of job openings declined slightly throughout the course of the year (Figure 2). But with 8.8 million job openings in November 2023, it is evident that a talent shortage will persist in 2024.

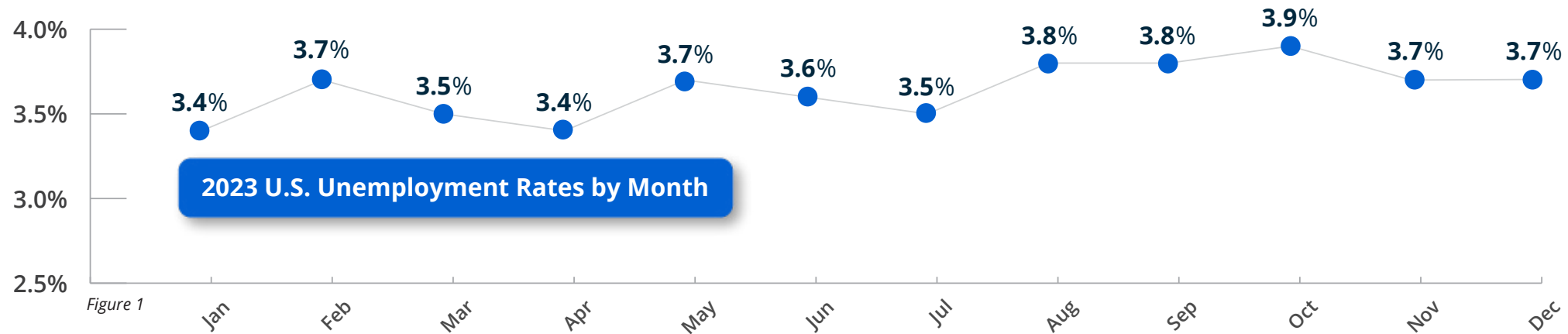


Figure 1

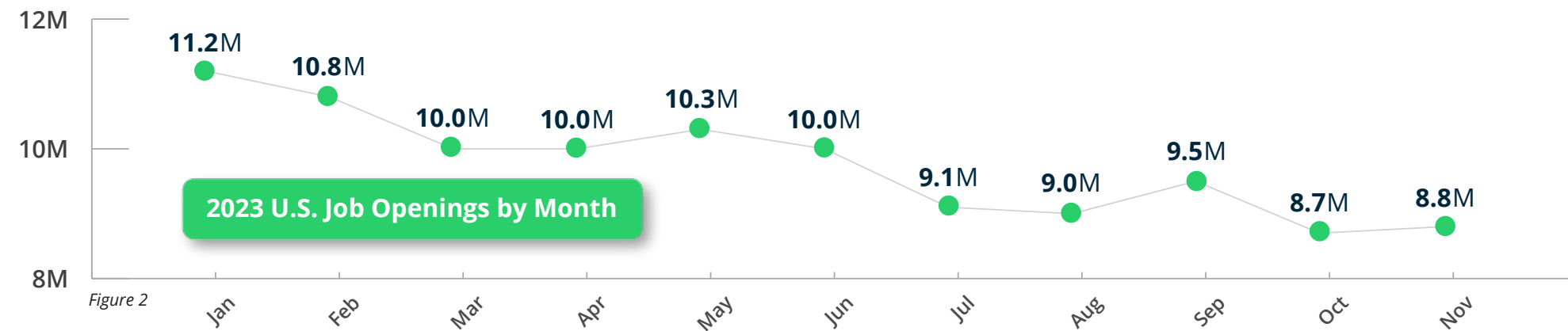
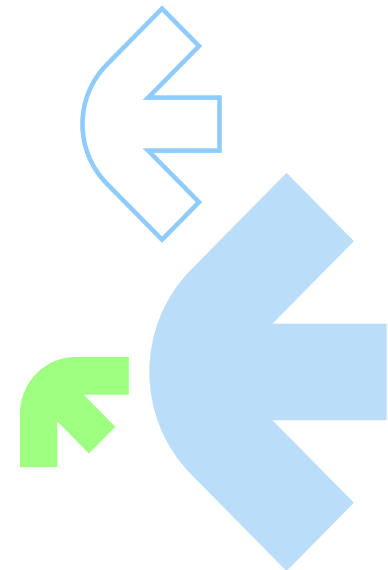
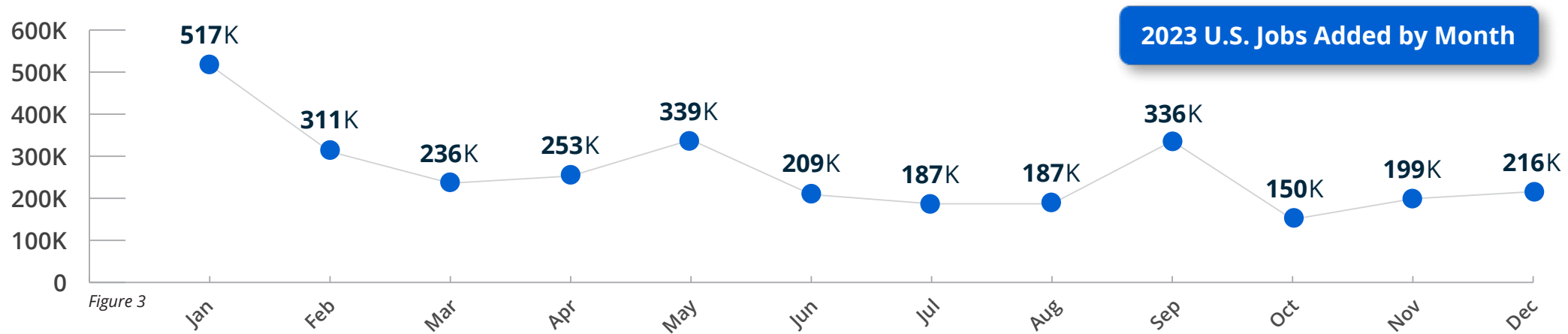


Figure 2

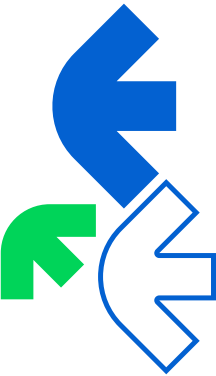
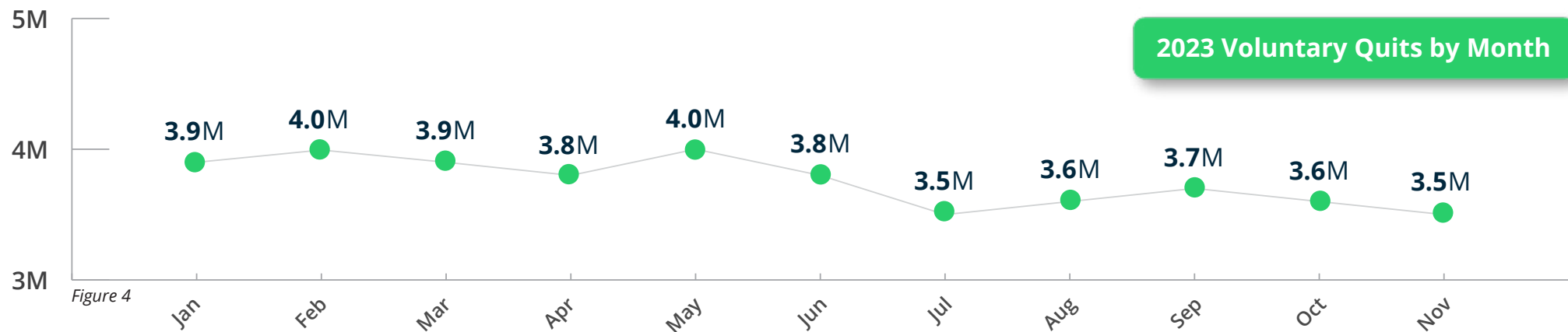
Data Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\)](#)



After adding more than half a million jobs in January 2023, the U.S. saw fewer – but strong – numbers through the remainder of the year (Figure 3). Will that momentum continue in 2024?



Voluntary quits in 2023 did not hit the record numbers we saw during the Great Resignation, averaging 3.8 million per month (Figure 4) versus 4.2 million per month in 2022. However, workers did not hesitate to job-hop or pursue greener pastures, challenging employers' retention efforts.



36.2 Million
Jobs on iHire



14.8%
42.5M in 2022

Top **HIRING INDUSTRIES**

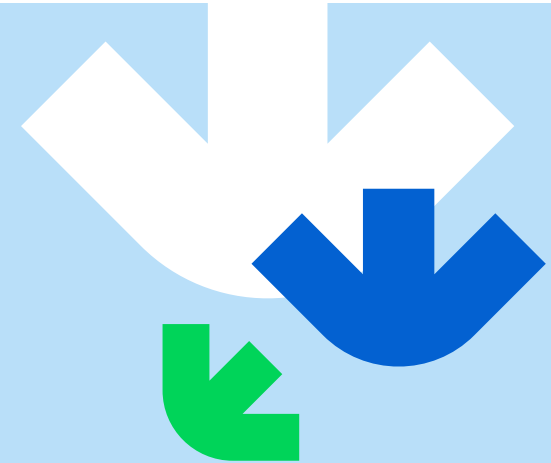
The following industries had the most job postings on iHire in 2023:

1. **Nursing**
2. **Retail**
3. **Technology**
4. **Sales**
5. **Transportation**
6. **Hospitality Services**
7. **Therapy**
8. **Construction**
9. **Engineering**
10. **Logistics**
11. **Admin**
12. **Manufacturing**
13. **Radiology**
14. **Accounting**
15. **Customer Service**

Popular **CAREER TITLES**

The following career titles appeared in the most job postings on iHire in 2023:

1. **Registered Nurse (RN)**
2. **Sales Representative**
3. **Sales - Associate/Clerk/Cashier**
4. **CDL Truck Driver**
5. **Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)**
6. **Nurse Assistant (CNA)**
7. **Warehouse Associate/Yard Driver/Material Handler/Forklift Operator**
8. **Customer Service Representative**
9. **Software Developer**
10. **Engineer**
11. **Maintenance Mechanic/Maintenance Technician/Installer**
12. **Wait Staff**
13. **Speech-Language Pathologist**
14. **Security Guard/Security Officer/Patrol Guard/Special Police Officer**
15. **Line Cook**



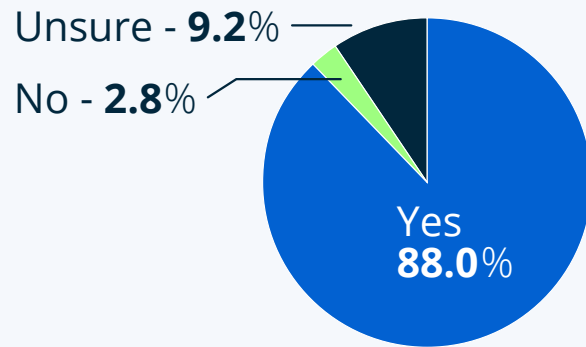
Meet 2024's Talent Pool



iHire's candidate base is already on the hunt for their next career opportunity – 88.0% of survey respondents plan to search for a new job in 2024, and 73.8% are looking *right now* (Figures 5 and 6).

Do you plan to search for a new job in 2024?

Figure 5



How soon into the new year will you begin your search?

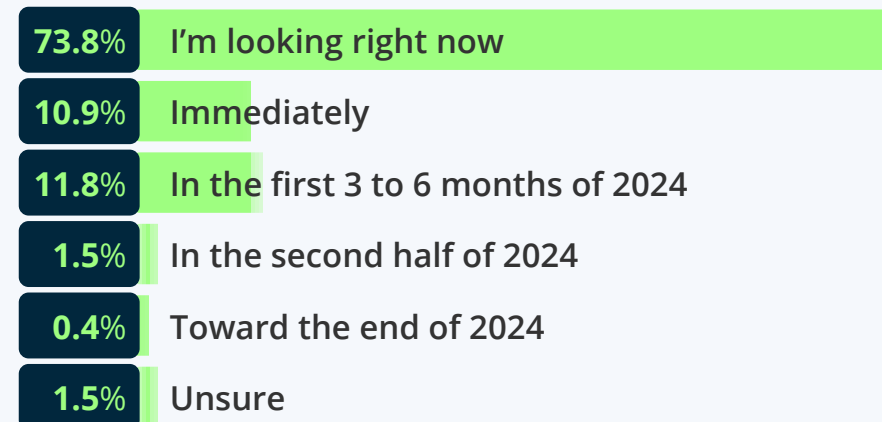


Figure 6

Desired Career Titles

The following were some of the most desired career titles among iHire candidates as of Jan. 1, 2024:



Top Candidate Skills

The following were skills most frequently found on iHire candidates' resumes as of Jan. 1, 2024:



New Job “Must-Haves”

If the job market continues to favor the candidate in 2024, employers who go the extra mile to cater to job seekers’ wants and needs will more readily attract the right talent. Aside from salary, a positive work environment (71.7%) was survey participants’ top requisite for their next job, followed by good relationships with managers and supervisors (57.3%) and benefits and perks (53.0%) (Figure 7).

Besides salary, which aspects are most important to you in your next job? (Select all that apply.)

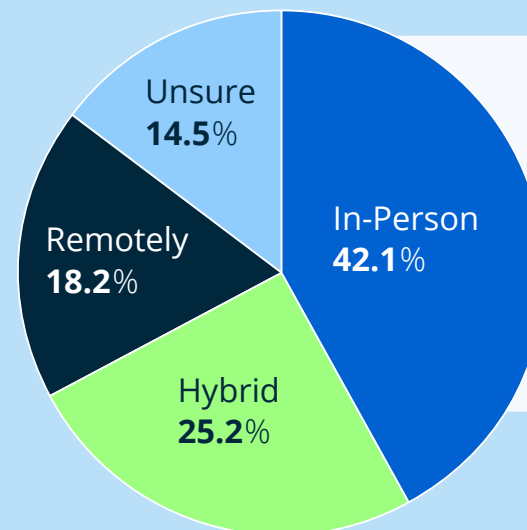


*Sample other responses: Flexibility, job location, work/life balance, age-friendly employer.

Figure 7

In-Person vs. Remote Work

The debate over in-person versus remote work persists: 42.1% of candidates said they plan to work in person, and 43.4% plan to work either remotely or in a hybrid setting in 2024 (Figure 8).



In 2024, do you expect to spend most of your time working remotely, in-person, or in a hybrid setting?

Figure 8

Job Search & Career Growth Goals

What's on candidates' career roadmaps for 2024? 15.8% of respondents expect to make a dramatic career change or switch to a new industry, and 12.7% plan to search for a *second* job (Figure 9). Surprisingly, just 10.4% plan to use AI to help in their job search (for example, leveraging ChatGPT to write a resume or cover letter) despite the proliferation of these time-saving tools.

In 2024, I plan to: *(Select all that apply.)*

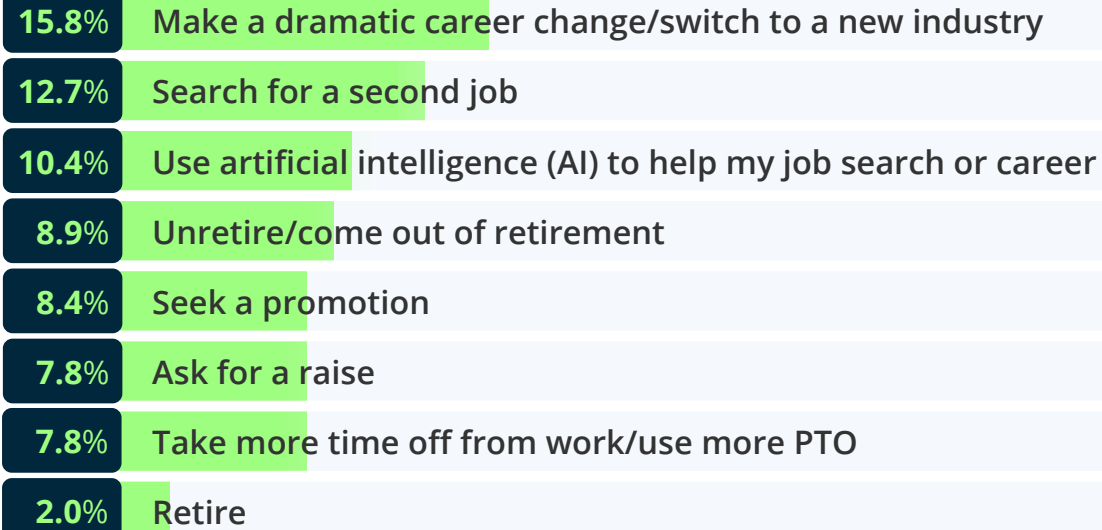


Figure 9



Professional Development Pursuits

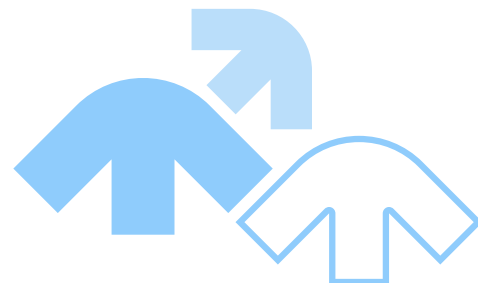
With more employers upskilling and reskilling their employees, we asked candidates which types of professional development initiatives they will pursue in the new year. Attending webinars, conferences, seminars, and other educational industry events (37.8%) and taking online courses (34.4%) were the top two responses. Interest in returning to school was low as fewer employers are requiring formal degrees, while 32.4% of respondents did not expect to pursue any of the noted professional development efforts (Figure 10).

Which types of professional development initiatives do you expect to pursue in 2024? (Select all that apply.)



*Sample other responses: Holding internships, pursuing apprenticeships, working with a career coach.

Figure 10



2024 Challenges & Concerns

The post-pandemic world of work has brought ongoing economic uncertainty. Although the labor market has remained solid, we've seen pockets of layoffs and hiring freezes in some industries. However, just 14.7% of respondents were worried about layoffs, and 30.0% were nervous about a recession (down from 42.1% who said the same in 2022's survey) (Figure 11). Their biggest concern? Ageism in their job searches or day-to-day work (42.0%).

In 2024, I am concerned about: *(Select all that apply.)*

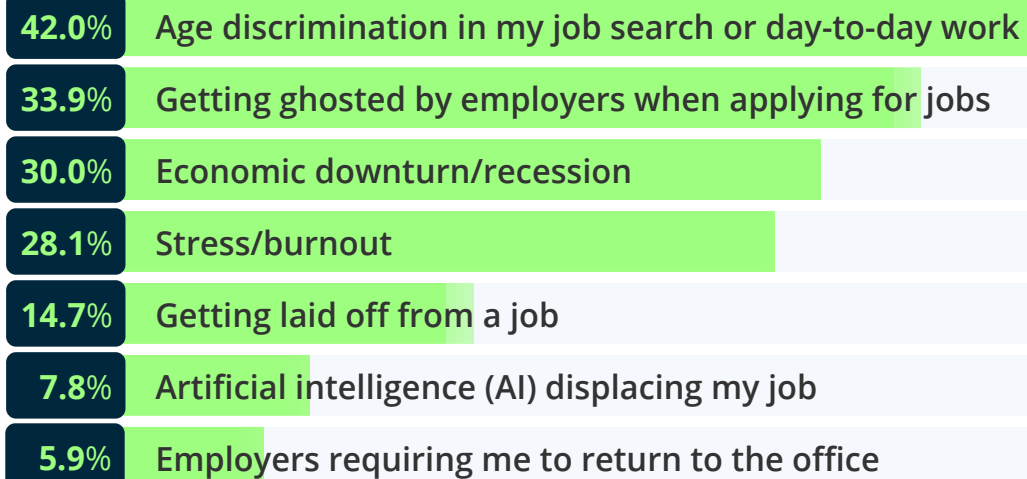
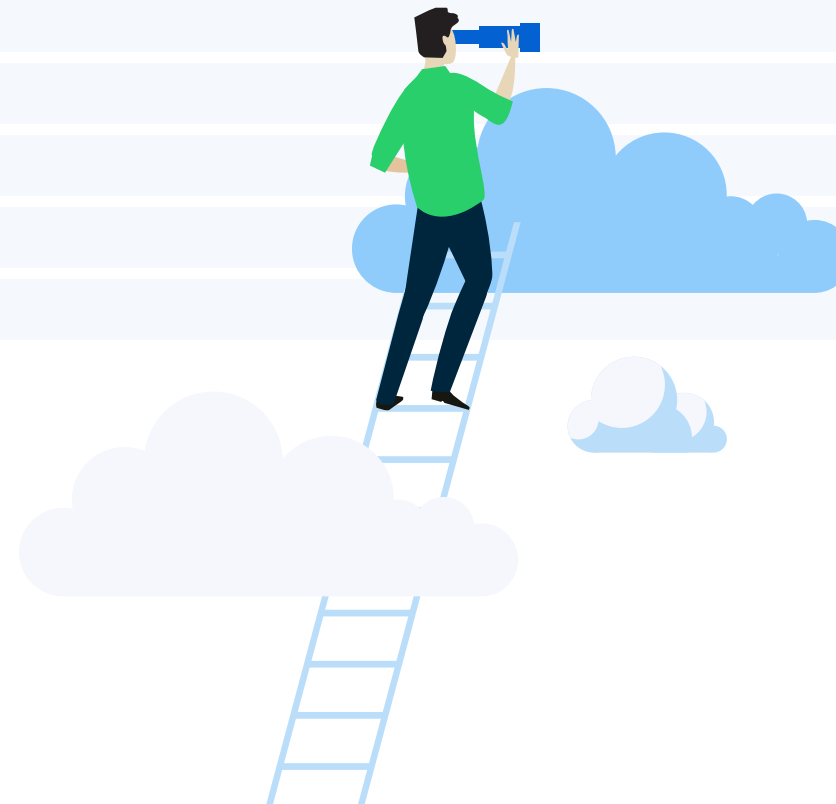


Figure 11



8 Ways to Recruit More Effectively in 2024



With these survey results in mind, consider the following tips for optimizing your recruitment efforts in the new year.



Zero in on the employee experience. Aside from salary, a positive work environment topped candidates' wish lists for new job attributes (71.7%), while respondents also valued good relationships with management (57.3%) and appealing company cultures (44.6%). These elements contribute to the employee experience and can make or break job satisfaction, staff engagement, and a business' ability to recruit.

In 2024, be intentional about building your culture and nurturing relationships rooted in trust and transparency, and you'll be more likely to draw in top talent that stays with your organization.



Embrace candidates of all ages. 42.0% of job seekers surveyed were concerned with experiencing age discrimination during their job search or in the workplace in 2024. In addition, 8.9% of those surveyed plan to come out of retirement to rejoin the workforce.

Expand your talent pool in 2024 by embracing candidates of all ages, including "unretirees" and those pursuing career changes later in life. Make age inclusivity part of your DEIB strategy, offer upskilling or reskilling opportunities for older workers, and apply for [age-friendly employer certifications](#).



03

Enable flexibility for how work gets done. 42.1% of candidates surveyed plan to spend most of 2024 working in person, and 43.4% plan to work either remotely or in a hybrid setting. At the same time, 31.9% of job seekers said it was important for their next employer to provide remote work options, and 24.1% said the same about hybrid work.

Allowing employees the freedom to choose where and how they work can go a long way in recruitment and retention. If remote or hybrid work is not feasible in your industry or for certain roles, offering other types of flexibility (e.g., four-day or compressed workweeks, flex time, and set-your-own-hours) can help. Simultaneously, flexibility can reduce stress and burnout (a concern of 28.1% of job seekers) and facilitate a healthier work/life balance.



04

Team up with marketing to promote your employer brand. 44.6% of job seekers said a company's culture was an important aspect of their next job. To attract those candidates, collaborate with your marketing team to get the word out that your company is a great place to work.

Marketing can help you gather and share employee testimonials and reviews online, announce company news and milestones, and even apply for (and hopefully win) awards recognizing workplace culture excellence.



05

Engage all candidates. Getting ghosted by employers when applying for jobs was candidates' second biggest concern going into 2024. Put an end to the resume "black hole" this year by communicating with all applicants.

Lean on automated messages to respond to candidates earlier in the process and let job seekers know when they are no longer in the running for a position. Personalize your communications later in the funnel when you narrow your pool to a few front runners. By engaging with all applicants, you show job seekers you value their time, which improves the candidate experience and boosts your employer brand.



Invest in professional development. 42.7% of respondents said it was vital for their next employer to offer growth and advancement opportunities, and 37.5% said the same about professional development opportunities. Provide plenty of upskilling and reskilling avenues for your existing staff (e.g., cross-training, cross-department collaboration, mentorships, and training on specific new tools and technologies). Map out their potential career paths and share what's needed to reach their goals.

Further, promote your commitment to the growth and development of your team members in your job ads and recruitment marketing materials to attract candidates who want to progress in their careers.



Build your talent pipeline with passive candidates. 12.0% of survey respondents were not planning to search for a job in 2024 or were unsure of their job search plans. However, that's not to say someone wouldn't be interested in making a change if the right opportunity came along.

Get ahead of the hiring game by sourcing passive candidates from resume databases, social media platforms, referrals from current staff, and other networking channels. Keep in touch with previous applicants who were qualified but did not ultimately get the jobs – they are often the best source for your pipeline. With these candidates on deck, you can hire fast when the time arises.



Experiment with AI. Just 10.4% of job seekers plan to use AI in their job search or career, but that doesn't mean employers should follow suit. Take advantage of all that AI has to offer to save time, maximize resources, and focus instead on more strategic recruitment initiatives. For example, some of the most impactful use cases for AI in recruitment include developing job descriptions, screening resumes, crafting candidate communications, scoring assessments, and simplifying onboarding. If you don't know where to begin, experiment with a generative AI tool like ChatGPT. Ask it to write a job ad or create a list of behavioral interview questions for your next hiring initiative.

Conclusion

No matter what 2024 has in store for the employment market, employers with strong strategies for recruiting, developing, retaining, and managing talent will be best positioned for a competitive edge. Whether hiring slows, picks up, or stays the same this year, organizations need an engaged, skilled, and productive workforce to keep them moving forward.



Prepare for 2024 by making iHire a part of your recruitment strategy.

[Get Started](#)

About iHire

iHire is a leading career-oriented platform that powers a family of 57 industry-focused talent networks, including WorkInSports, iHireVeterinary, iHireDental, iHireConstruction, and iHireChefs. For more than 20 years, iHire has combined advanced job matching technology with our expertise in the talent acquisition space to connect job seekers with employers in their desired sector. With an industry-specific, candidate-centric, and data-driven approach to recruitment, iHire helps candidates find meaningful work and employers find unique, high-quality talent – faster, easier, and more effectively than a general job board. Visit www.iHire.com for more information.

Survey Methodology

1,327 job seekers from 57 industries responded to iHire's Hiring & Job Search Outlook Survey in December 2023. Respondents came from iHire's job seeker database. All decimal points are rounded to the nearest tenth. For many questions, multiple answers could be selected so percentages add up to a sum greater than 100%. In some instances, survey questions were skipped by an individual respondent.

