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Market Burst

Latest Workforce Trends

March 2024

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AI in job interviews: What employers should know

In an increasingly digital world, the pervasiveness of [Gen AI](#) is undeniable. With many students and candidates leveraging this technology regularly, the implications for employers and recruitment leaders are far-reaching and profound.

Gen AI extends across various sectors, with recruitment being no exception. Our comprehensive Global Workforce of the Future report underscores this fact, indicating that [61% of workers](#) endorse AI as a potent tool for enhancing productivity. Furthermore, 76% of degree-educated employees say they already use Gen AI professionally.

Although AI undoubtedly enhances efficiency and speeds up the hiring process, it also introduces fresh challenges for employers. Recent [research](#) reveals a startling 50% surge in the use of Gen AI during interview assessments over the past four months alone. This emerging trend among job seekers is seeing the tactical use of AI tools to augment candidate performance during virtual interviews, potentially providing them with an unfair advantage in securing employment.

This raises a critical question: should employers prohibit the use of AI during an interview due to concerns about potential imbalances in candidate advantages? [The "Big Four" firms](#), including EY and PwC, have already initiated measures to curb this practice. Their actions underline the crucial need for authenticity and integrity in the recruitment process, further emphasising the importance of maintaining a level playing field in talent acquisition.

As an employer, it's essential to stay informed and take action to protect the integrity of your interview and recruitment process.

Here are some key considerations for future action:

1. **Awareness and education:** Inform your recruitment team about the possibility of candidates using AI during interviews. Knowledge is power, and awareness of this potential issue is the first step in addressing it.
2. **Clear communication:** Inform candidates that AI assistance during interviews is acceptable or is not permitted. This could be communicated in the job posting, the interview invitation, or at the start of any interview.
3. **Use of Gen AI detection software:** Consider implementing software that can detect the use of AI during interviews. This can help ensure that all candidates are evaluated fairly and authentically.
4. **Revisiting interview techniques:** Traditional interview techniques may need to be revisited. Consider incorporating tasks or questions that require spontaneous responses, making it more difficult for AI tools to notify interviewees in real time.

Authenticity and human connection remain at the heart of successful recruitment as we move forward in this digital age.

Creating supportive work environments for menopausal workers

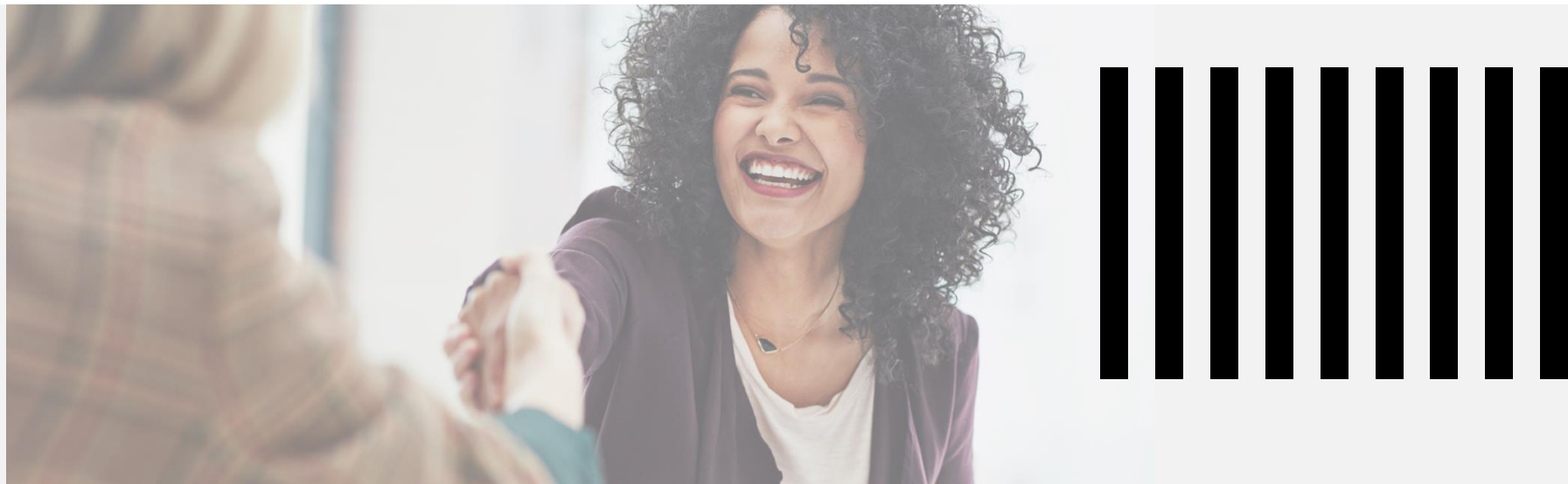
As we approach 2030, employers should expect to see a significant surge in the global population of menopausal workers. With an anticipated increase of [47 million](#) each year, the total number of menopausal individuals is predicted to hit 1.2 billion before the end of the decade. Firms need to adapt proactively to cater to the evolving needs of their [mature female workforce](#). Inaction or inadequate response can jeopardise the retention of valuable talent, a risk businesses cannot afford to take. Also, with new legislation and worker protections emerging, firms must adjust to create supportive environments for this demographic.

Recent legal developments focus on safeguarding the rights of workers going through menopause. For instance, the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published new guidelines to help employers create [more inclusive and supportive](#) workplaces for women experiencing menopause symptoms. According to the updated guidelines, women undergoing menopause are shielded from unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 due to their age and sex. The EHRC further warns that firms could face legal action for disability discrimination if they fail to make "reasonable adjustments" for menopausal workers when requested.

While strides are being made in the UK, the legal landscape in the United States remains unclear. Despite an increase in employer-provided benefits for menopausal workers, U.S. labour law still leaves these workers at risk of workplace discrimination. In pursuing an inclusive and understanding workplace, employers must take active steps to educate themselves and their teams about menopause and its effects on employees. By establishing a culture of empathy and awareness, firms can create a more supportive environment for all workers. Promoting open dialogue is another crucial aspect. Companies are encouraged to facilitate conversations around menopause in the workplace. This openness can help dismantle existing stigmas and pave the way for employees to feel more comfortable seeking their required support. Finally, staying abreast of legal developments is a non-negotiable responsibility for employers. Firms can ensure they follow the law by keeping up to date with relevant legislation and guidelines.

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Strengthening talent pools with long-term contingent labour

Employers are continually grappling with talent scarcity in the rapidly changing business landscape. One effective solution gaining momentum is the strategic use of long-term contingent workers.

The [shift towards extending contracts](#) and tenure for contingent workers is a global trend influenced by several factors.

Firstly, the pandemic increased the use of the contingent workforce as companies sought flexible labour solutions and leveraged remote work capabilities. This flexibility allowed businesses to adapt to unpredictable market conditions, maintain operations, and even expand in some cases.

Secondly, industries are witnessing rapid growth and quick industrialisation, increasing the need for flexible workers. As businesses expand and evolve, they realise the value of having experienced contingent workers who already understand their operations, hence extending their contracts.

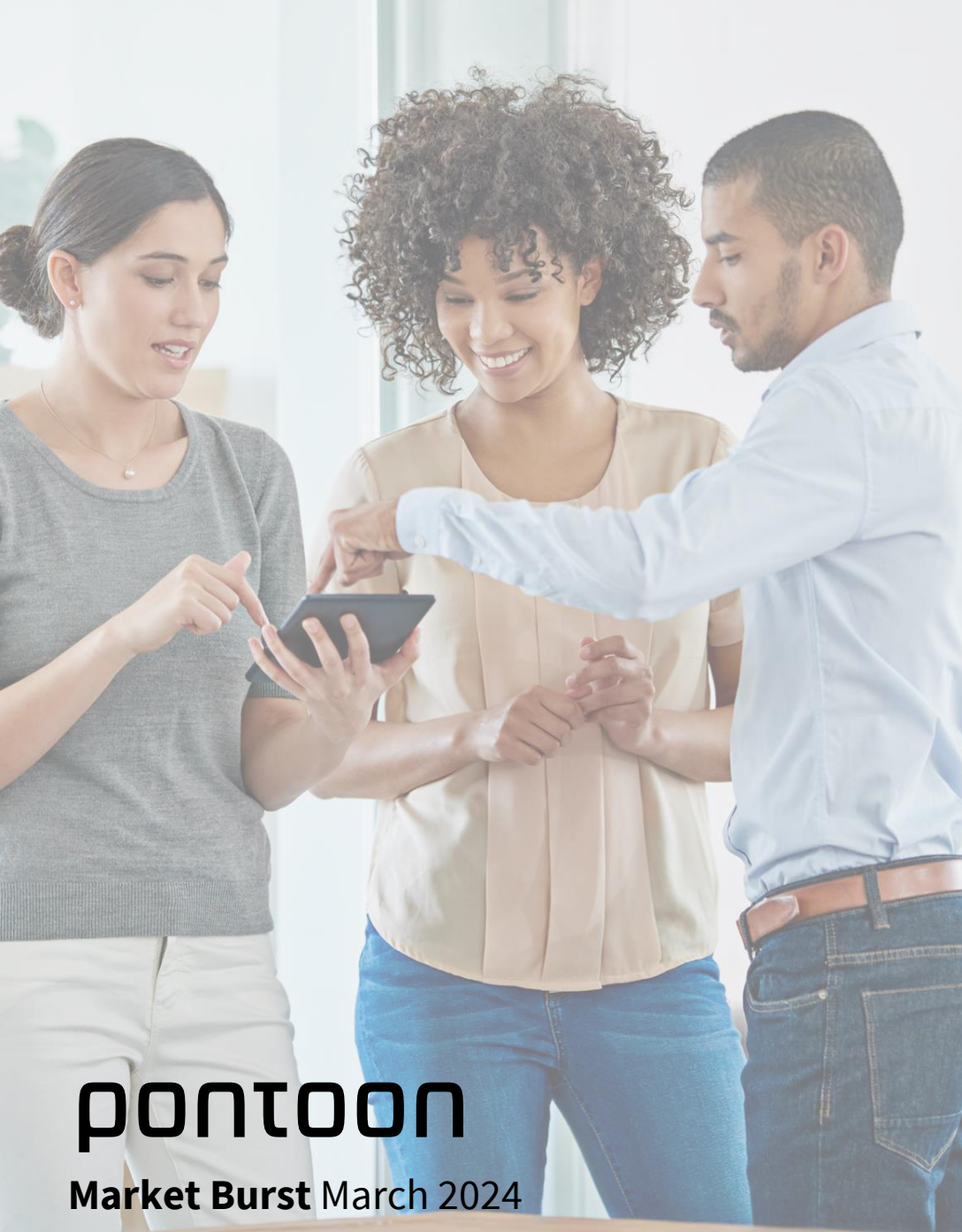
In 2023, the decrease in negative attrition rates from 15.8% in Q1 to 10.7% by Q4 highlighted a shift in retaining contingent labour, as shown by Pontoon MSP data. This trend can be attributed to engaging workplace environments and strategic extensions of temporary labour contracts amidst uncertain talent market

dynamics. Longer assignments offer job security and cater to project cycle completions, proving effective in reducing turnover, especially in contract-heavy sectors. This strategy underscores the value of adaptive talent management in changing workspaces, demonstrating a direct link between extended contract lengths and lower attrition rates.

However, while there are clear benefits to longer contractor tenures, businesses need to conduct periodic operational reviews of their contingent workforce strategies. This can help ensure that the deployment of contingent labour aligns with the business's objectives and remains cost-effective.

Employers must adopt a more fluid approach to talent management to attract and retain contingent workers. This includes consistent hiring, onboarding, training, and offboarding practices. By ensuring contingent workers receive a sufficient experience comparable to full-time employees, firms can garner brand loyalty and commitment, further enhancing contract worker retention rates.

Partnering with an [MSP](#) to help manage your contingent workforce can be pivotal. An MSP can identify and attract the right talent, manage suppliers of contingent workers, and supervise the entire hiring process.



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Bridging the social gap for in-office Gen Z workers

Knowing your workforce and their wants and needs is crucial when returning remote workers to the office. This is especially critical when dealing with younger employees. Since the pandemic, many workers have experienced the isolation of remote work, particularly those with less experience and new corporate employees.

Raised in a digital era, they bring innovative ideas and unique skills. However, transitioning back to an office environment and building close relationships with colleagues can be challenging.

A recent study highlighted a noteworthy trend: [individuals over 51 are twice as likely to form friendships](#) at work as those under 30. This suggests that while younger employees often maintain close connections from their high school and university days, forging new bonds in professional settings is less common yet crucially important.

HR leaders are pivotal in influencing onsite workplace culture to better accommodate and support Gen Z workers transitioning back to office settings. Beyond the conventional focus on financial benefits, there's a compelling need to cultivate environments that promote social well-being and stronger interpersonal connections among employees.

To bridge the gap in social interactions among younger employees, organisations should consider expanding their Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) or workplace benefits to enhance social health. This approach acknowledges that a thriving workplace is not solely about productivity and financial gain; it's also about creating a helpful environment where every worker feels valued and connected.

Effective talent management begins with comprehensive onboarding programmes that extend beyond job fundamentals, warmly integrating new hires into the team to promote a culture of inclusivity and belonging. Further, pairing Gen Z employees with experienced mentors and creating office layouts with communal spaces are strategic moves that bolster professional growth, cross-generational relationships, and collaborative engagement, reinforcing the workplace's community spirit.