gaining insight into

a new baseline
in talent expectations.

randstad china
2025 workmonitor

randstad

partner for talent.

The Randstad Workmonitor, now in its 22nd year, explores the views of working people in 35 markets across Europe, Asia Pacific and the Americas. It aims to provide an inside look at their attitudes, ambitions and expectations as the world of work continues to transform.

Launched in 2003, our flagship thought leadership is one of the longest-running and largest studies of its kind.

It surveys 27,000 talent across 35 markets in Europe, Asia Pacific and the Americas every year.

In 2023, the 20th edition gathered key insights from the last two decades of research.

Since 2020, the Workmonitor saw a 732% increase in top-tier coverage.

This year, personalization, community and skilling have emerged as key areas of focus.

content.

key findings.

workmonitor 2025: key findings.

A new workplace baseline is emerging — where success is defined not just by what we do, but by why we do it, how we do it and who we do it with.
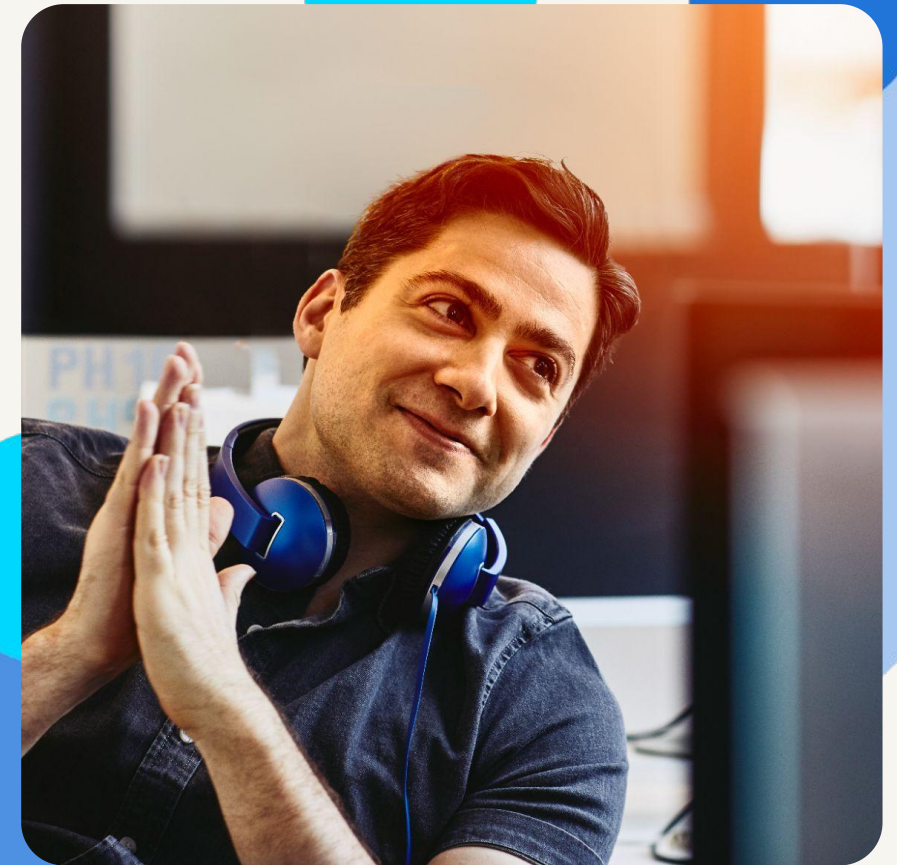
- **why: motivated by personalization.**

Talent increasingly expect work to align with their personal values, ambitions and life circumstances.

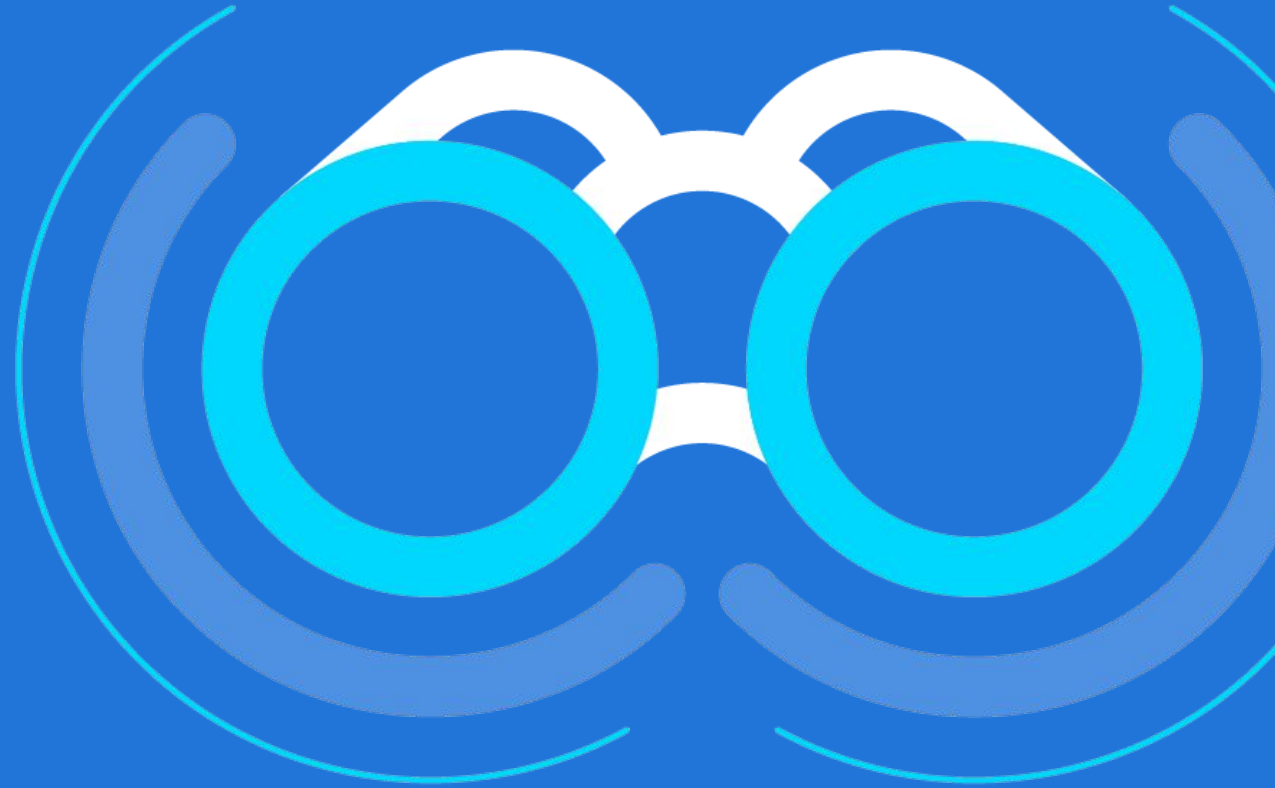- **who: fostering a sense of community.**

Talent are clear they want a community — a space where they can belong, thrive and bring their full selves to work.

- **how: opportunities through skilling.**

As technological change accelerates, talent increasingly prioritize skills development — especially in areas like AI.

# why:
motivated by
personalization.

value alignment
is more important than ever.

Talent are increasingly likely to leave their jobs if they do not feel comfortable sharing personal viewpoints at work without judgment or discrimination. Job seekers are increasingly valuing the alignment between their personal values and corporate culture. They are more inclined to choose companies that actively fulfill social responsibilities and are committed to environmental protection and sustainable development. They are more willing to join teams that align with their values and follow leaders who can guide them and grow together.

I have quit a job because I didn't feel comfortable sharing my personal viewpoints and stances at work without judgment or discrimination

16% 2024

33% 2025
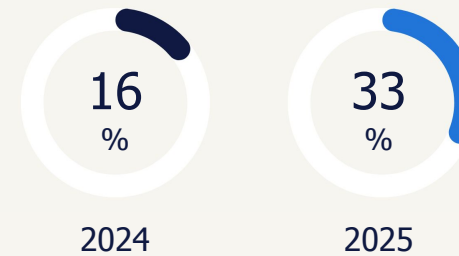
I will not accept a job that conflicts with my social and environmental values

51%

66%

● 2024   ● 2025
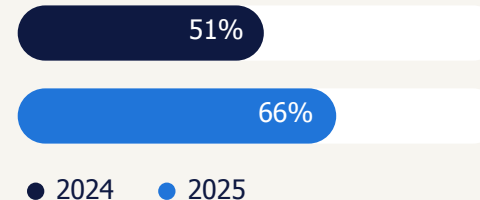
I have quit a job because I didn't agree with the viewpoints or stances of the leadership at my organization

51%

58%

● 2024   ● 2025
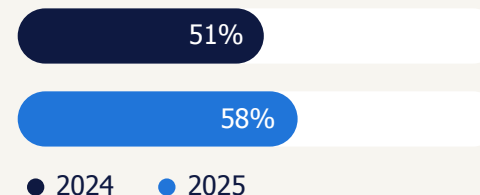
motivated by personalization.

While traditionally highly regarded salary factors remain important, they have been superseded by a broader range of priorities. These priorities encompass multiple dimensions, including work-life balance and job stability, reflecting talent's comprehensive pursuit of a well-rounded workplace experience.

top 3 most important factors
when thinking about employment

work-life balance	89%
	88%
job security	87%
	86%
pay	90%
	82%

● 2024   ● 2025
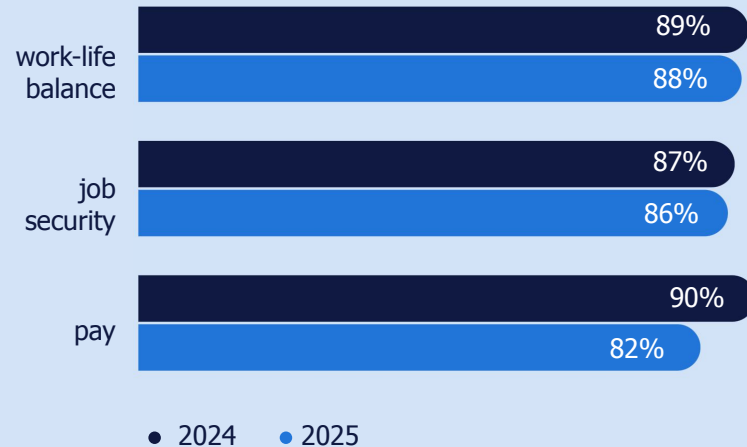
top 3 most important factors
when thinking about employment (by generation)

	post - 2000 (age 18-24)	post – 1990 (age 25–34)	post–1980 (age 35–44)	post–1970 (age 45–54)
work-life balance	93%	88%	91%	90%
job security	91%	90%	84%	88%
pay	90%	76%	84%	92%

● work-life balance   ● job security   ● pay
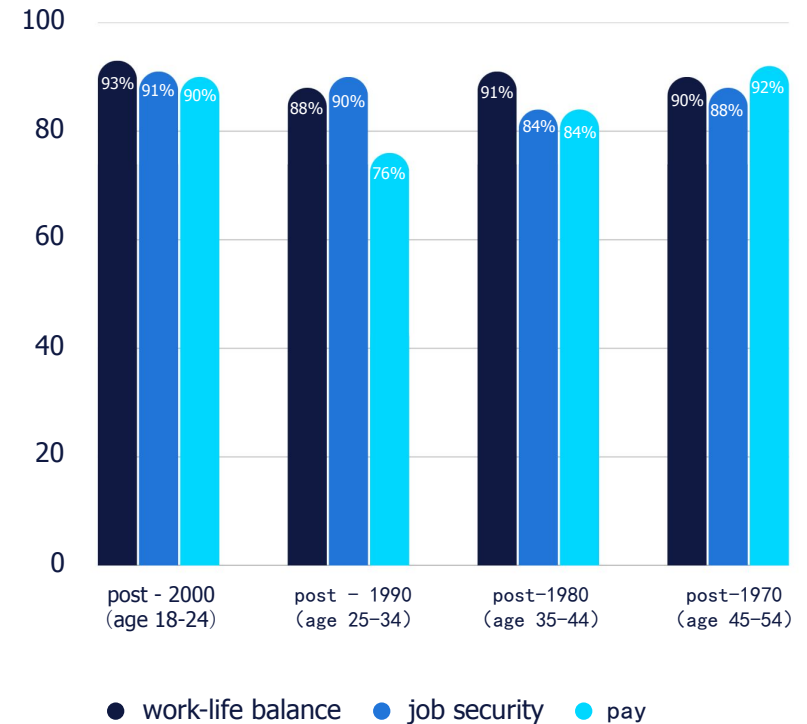
pursuit of career advancement never ceases.

Despite external uncertainties, persistent economic pressures, and the occasional voices advocating for "lying flat" or "quiet quitting," professionals' relentless pursuit of career development remains unwavering.

I have quit a job because
there was a lack of career progression opportunities

55
%

2024

60
%

2025
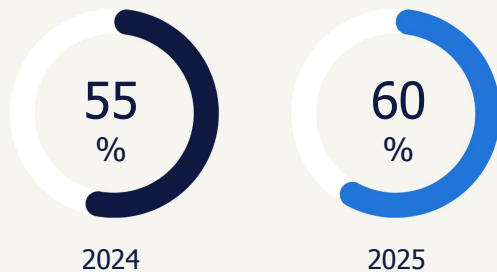
flexibility has become the new benchmark.

With the faster pace of life and increasing work pressures, people are increasingly demanding flexible work arrangements. They're no longer satisfied with the traditional nine-to-five and being tied to a specific office. Instead, they prefer work arrangements that can adapt to their personal lives. This trend reflects working professionals taking a more holistic view, considering their health, family, and personal interests.

I have quit a job because
a lack of sufficient work flexibility

16 %
2024

27 %
2025

talent's preferred number of days in the office compared with number mandated by employer policies

	0 days	1 day	3 days	4 days	5 days
talent's preferred days	2%	1%	20%	27%	50%
employer-mandated days	2%	2%	10%	19%	53%

● talent's preferred days   ● employer-mandated days

注:14% 的雇主没有针对该问题制定相关政策

key learnings.

- ## motivated by personalization.
  A broader baseline of expectations. [cite: 5, 6] Talent have reinforced their search for jobs that align with their individual values and life circumstances.

- ## talent are willing to draw the consequences.
  Chinese talent aren't just prepared to leave jobs that don't align with their priorities; they're also increasingly likely to walk if their expectations are consistently unmet.

- ## employers have pivoted but not enough.
  Heightened talent pressures and ongoing skills shortages will drive the need for even greater calibration between talent expectations and business needs.
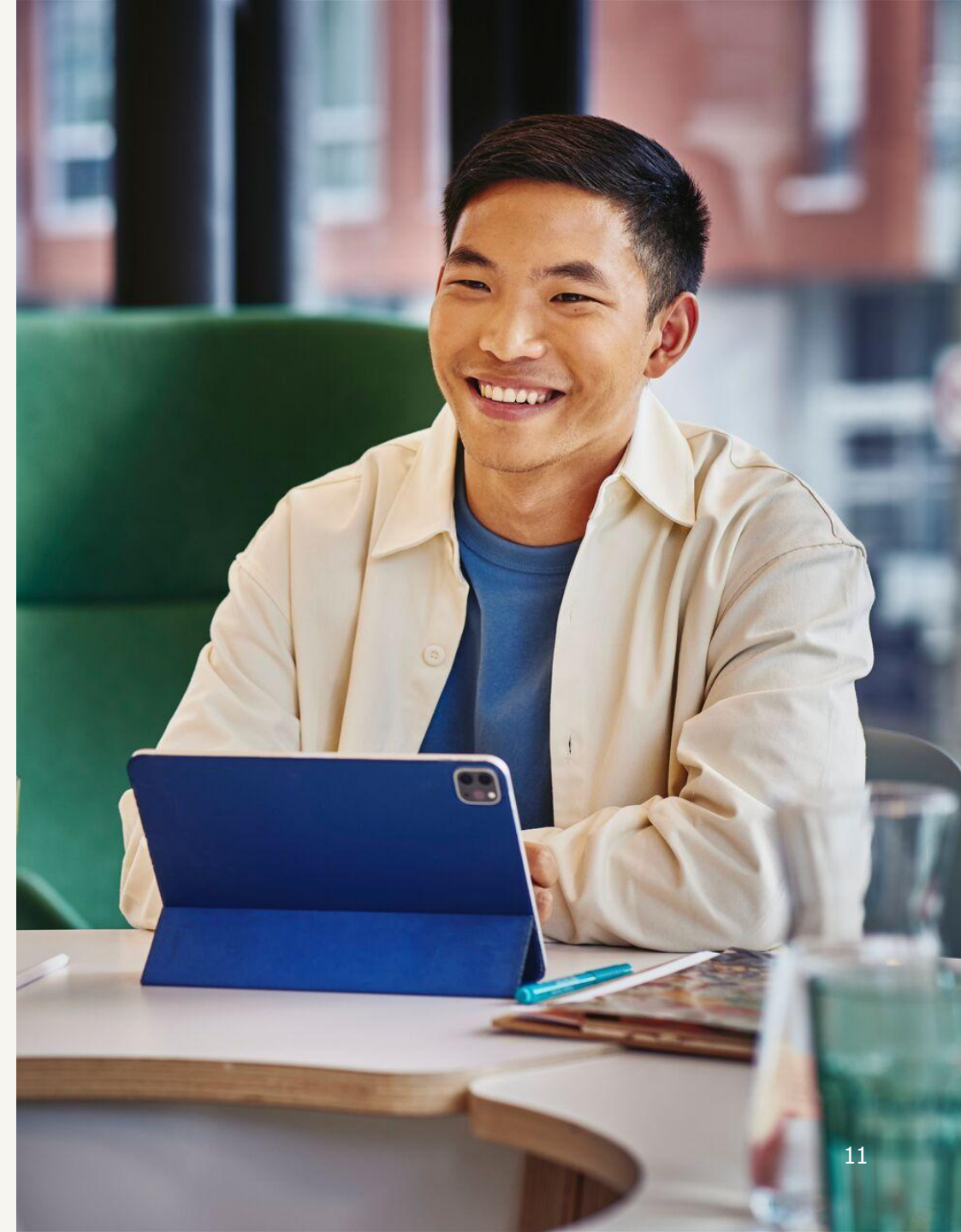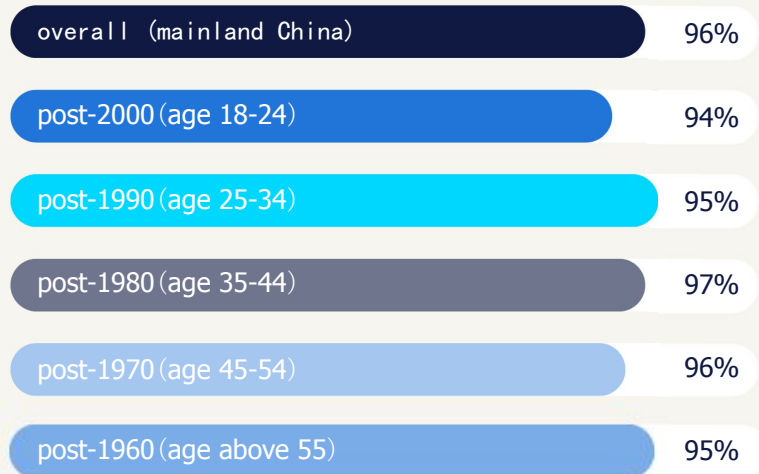
who: fostering a sense of community.

employee voice, yearning for a sense of "community belonging" in the workplace".

Talent want more than just a workplace, they want a community. As societies place more emphasis on the individual, people may now look to their workplaces to fulfill their need to belong.

94%

of respondents state that they perform better when there is a sense of community

64%

I will quit if I don't feel a sense of belonging at the company

I want my workplace to feel like a community

overall (mainland China)	96%
post-2000（age 18-24）	94%
post-1990（age 25-34）	95%
post-1980（age 35-44）	97%
post-1970（age 45-54）	96%
post-1960（age above 55）	95%

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fostering a sense of community.

While most talent globally feel that their workplace provides them with a sense of community, some sectors are fostering this feeling more successfully than others.
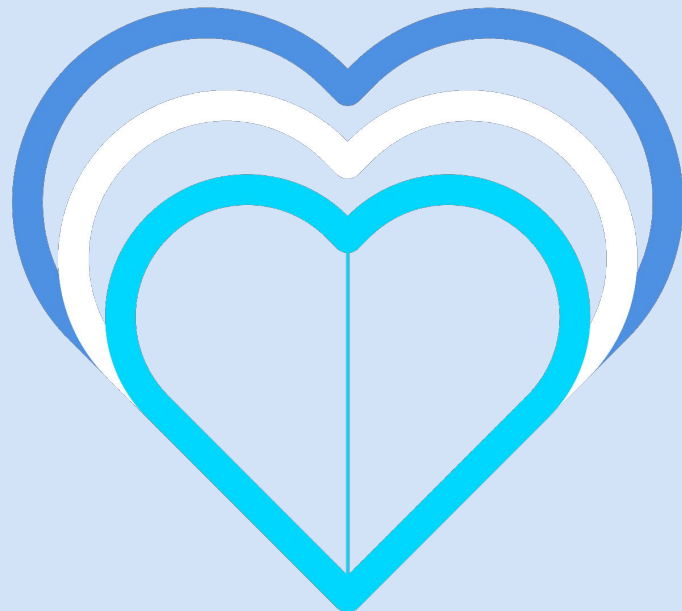
my workplace provides me with a sense of community

sector	%
professional services	97%
financial services	97%
energy, mining and utilities	94%
IT services & telecommunications	93%
manufacturing	90%
CPE	89%
retail	83%
automotive / aviation	63%
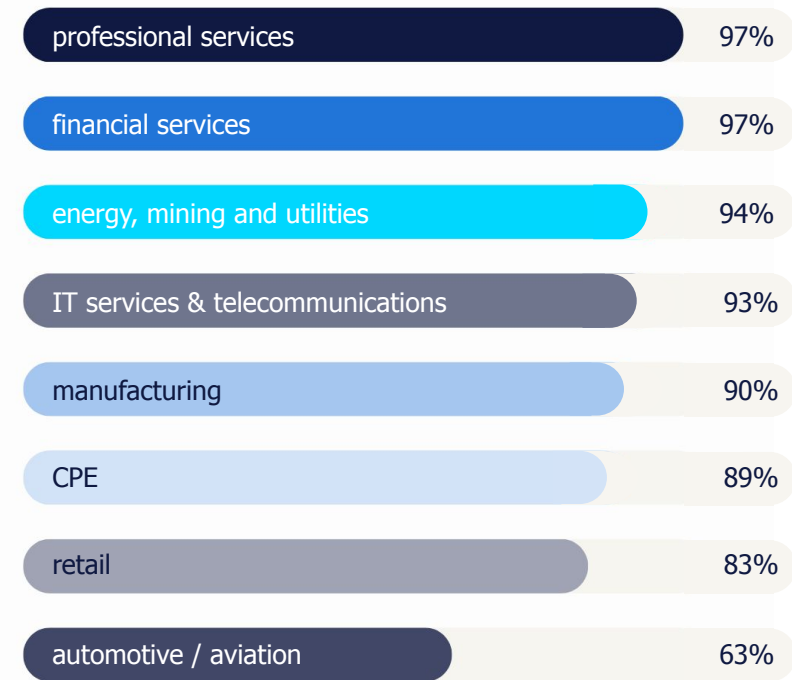
"toxic" workplace environment affects employee retention.

In today's fiercely competitive business landscape, corporate culture, as a form of soft power, is increasingly becoming a crucial factor influencing employee retention and overall work efficiency. Data shows that 38% of respondents left their jobs due to a 'toxic' work environment.

'Toxic culture' often manifests in forms such as workplace bullying, excessive competition, communication breakdown, unfair treatment, and management misconduct. These negative phenomena not only erode a harmonious work atmosphere but also severely harm employees' physical and mental health, diminishing their job satisfaction and sense of belonging. Prolonged exposure to such environments leaves employees feeling overwhelmed, demotivated, and even experiencing professional burnout.
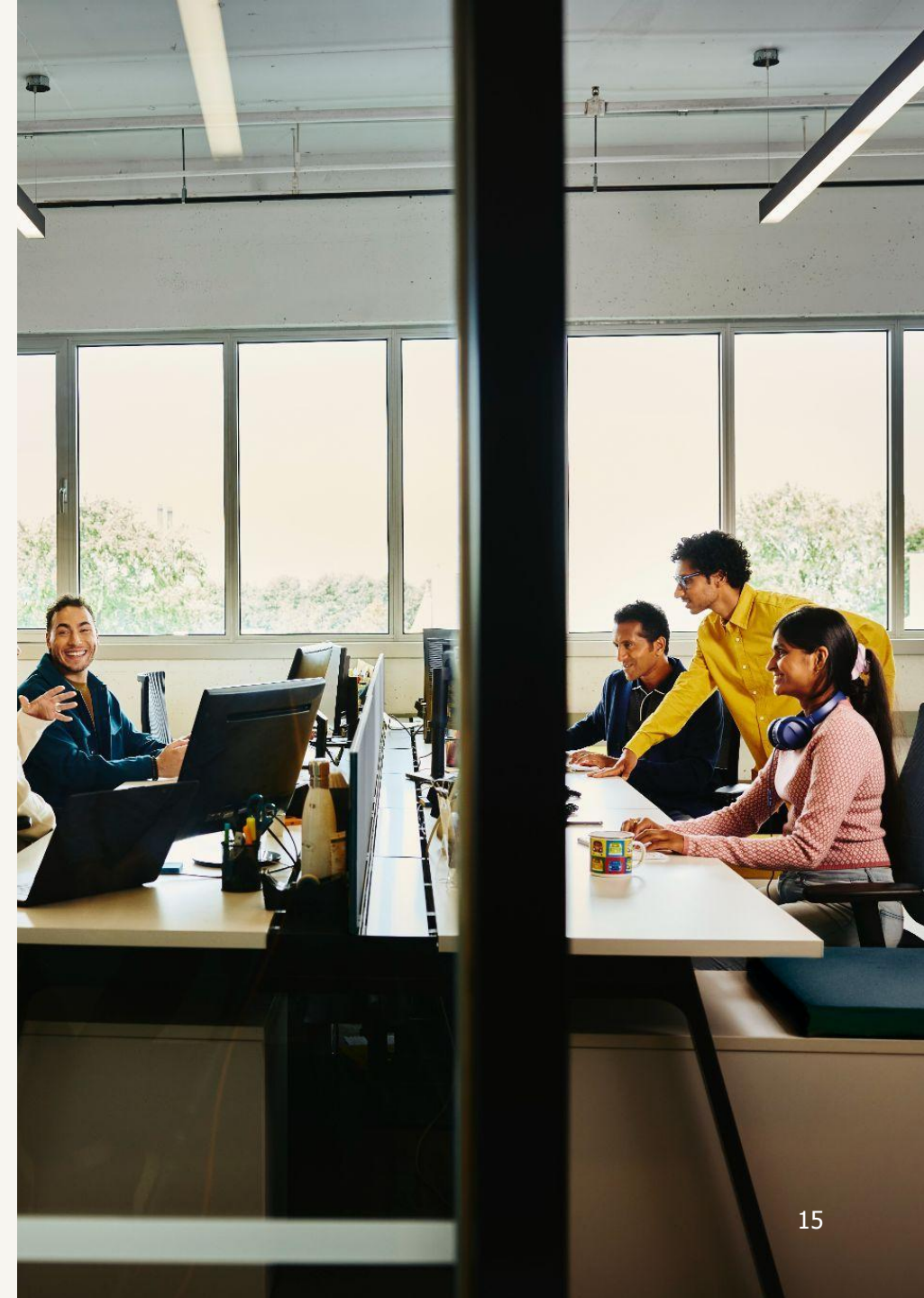
I have quit a job because of a "toxic" work environment
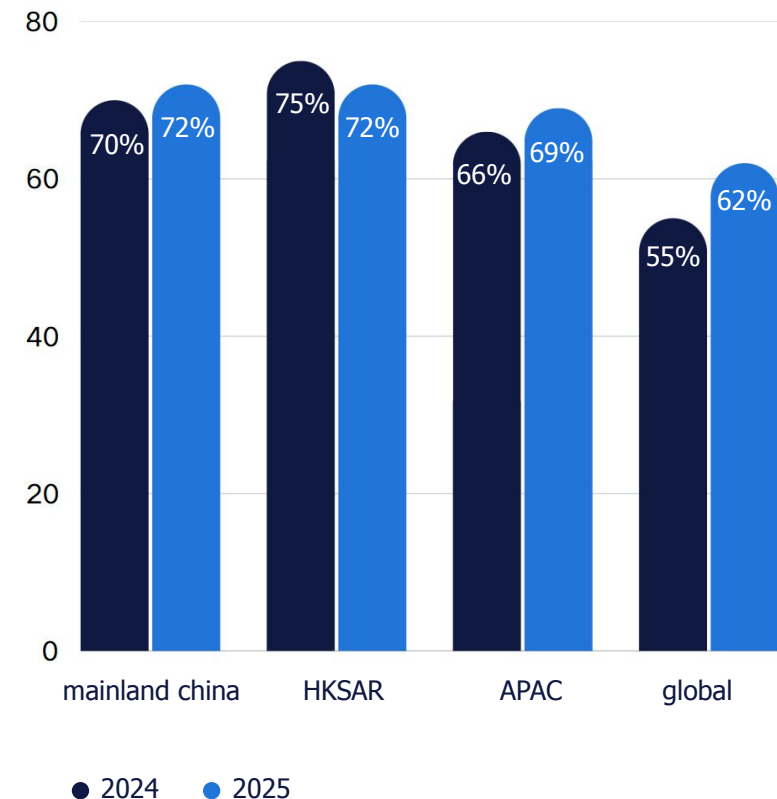
17
%

2024

38
%
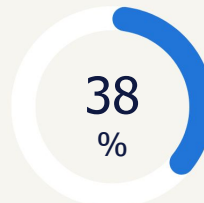
2025

unlocking hidden talent: cultivating open cultures.

Despite the widespread promotion of open and inclusive cultures by corporations, survey data reveals that a staggering 72% of respondents still choose to conceal their authentic selves at work.

Self-expression is a crucial avenue for individuals to showcase their true selves and realize their personal value. However, in the workplace, for various reasons such as fear of rejection, apprehension about conflict, or pursuit of career stability, many employees opt to hide their genuine thoughts. This concealment can lead to internal suppression and dissatisfaction, and it may also impede their ability to fully utilize their potential, affecting work efficiency and creativity.

I hide aspects of myself at work

Bar chart showing percentages for "I hide aspects of myself at work" by region, comparing 2024 and 2025:
- mainland china: 70% (2024), 72% (2025)
- HKSAR: 75% (2024), 72% (2025)
- APAC: 66% (2024), 69% (2025)
- global: 55% (2024), 62% (2025)

● 2024 ● 2025

key insights.

- **workplace craving for sense of belonging.**
  Talent want a community at work. As societies place more emphasis on the individual, people may now look to their workplaces to fulfill their need to belong. By creating a culture of community, trust and belonging, employers can expect talent to perform better and be more productive.

- **"toxic" culture jeopardizes the sustainable development of enterprises.**
  This culture not only inhibits innovation, but also leads to talent loss.

- **employers must create the right framework policies.**
  Employers have made some progress toward creating the equitable and sustainable workplaces people are looking for. Yet, a noticeable perception gap remains, with organizations needing to do more to demonstrate they are committed to the causes important to talent.
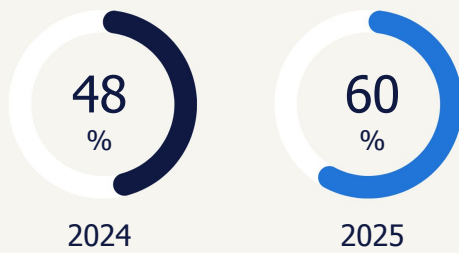
how: opportunities through skilling.

talent and employers are laser-focused on skills and career progression.

Future-proofing skills is more fundamental than ever for both employers and talent. This is driven not only by AI's anticipated transformation of the global economy but also by the likelihood that the next disruptive technology is already emerging, poised to push the boundaries even further.

I will not accept a new job if it does not offer learning and development opportunities.

48% 2024

60% 2025

my employer is helping me develop future-proof skills for my career

81% 2024

84% 2025

training or development opportunities at my organization have increased in the past six months

59% 2023

62% 2024

63% 2025

opportunities through skilling.

Learning and development is not always equitable. Over the past six months, post-00 and post-1980 appear to have received significantly more training opportunities than older workers. Compared to other industries, employees in the automotive, aviation, construction, financial services, manufacturing, and retail sectors receive richer training and development resources.

training or development opportunities at my organization have increased in the past six months

65%	55%	72%	59%	64%
post-00 （age 18-24）	post-1990 （age 25-34）	post-1980 （age 35-44）	post-1970 （age 45-54）	post-1960 （age above 55）

automotive / aviation	87%
CPE	77%
financial services	71%
manufacturing	64%
retail	63%
IT services & telecommunications	58%
professional services	54%
energy, mining and utilities	48%

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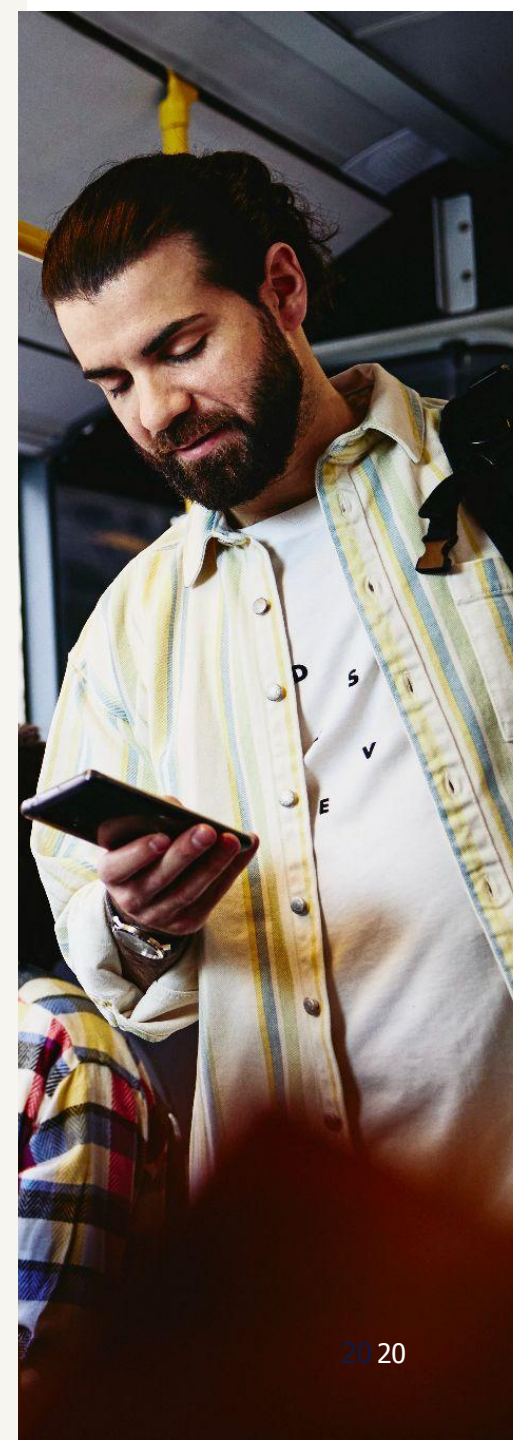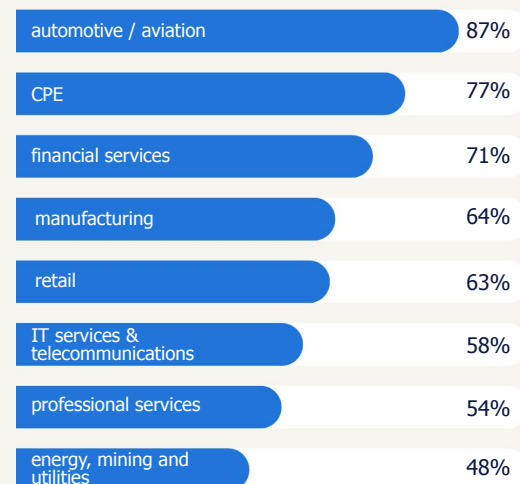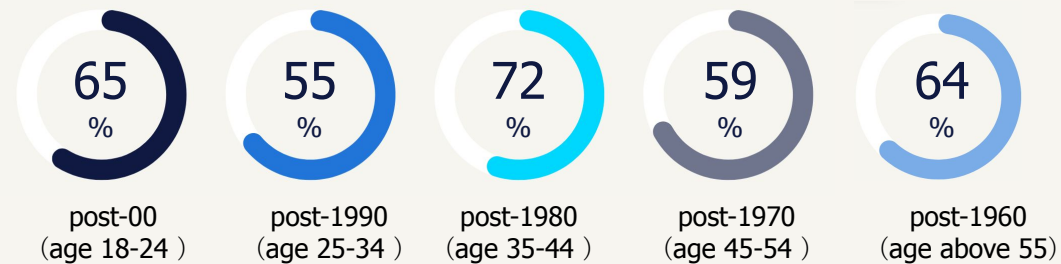
employers have pivoted but not enough.

While more than two-thirds of talent surveyed for Workmonitor 2025 view training and upskilling as the employer's responsibility, Randstad's Talent Trends Report 2025 shows they are not always delivering.

Although 9 in 10 HR professionals accept it is the employer's responsibility to reskill workers, 58% state that while they want to make more of an effort to provide reskilling, there is a lack of organizational knowledge to make this happen.
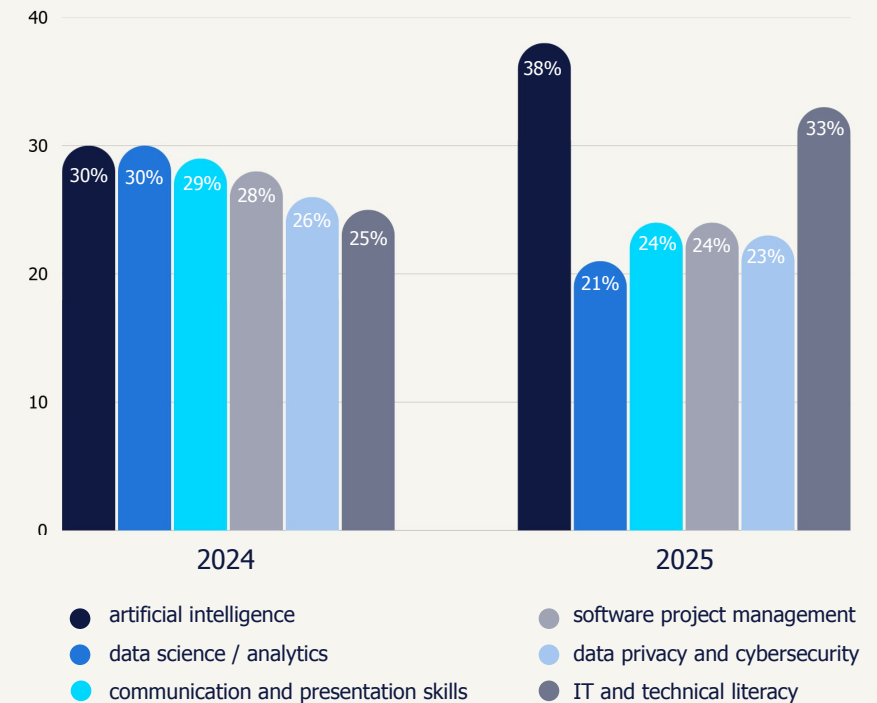
36%
of respondents state that employers should ensure that employee skills keep pace

the AI skills learning boom continues to heat up.

In the rapidly evolving digital age, the pivotal importance of AI and IT as future-shaping technologies cannot be overstated. A significant 38% of respondents expressed a strong desire to enhance their AI skills, marking a notable increase from the previous year. This surge not only highlights the widespread public interest in this domain but also signals a sustained rise in its demand within the future workforce.

top 5 skills employees want to improve

Chart: top 5 skills employees want to improve

2024:
- artificial intelligence: 30%
- data science / analytics: 30%
- communication and presentation skills: 29%
- software project management: 28%
- data privacy and cybersecurity: 26%
- IT and technical literacy: 25%

2025:
- artificial intelligence: 38%
- data science / analytics: 21%
- communication and presentation skills: 24%
- software project management: 24%
- data privacy and cybersecurity: 23%
- IT and technical literacy: 33%

Legend:
- artificial intelligence
- data science / analytics
- communication and presentation skills
- software project management
- data privacy and cybersecurity
- IT and technical literacy

opportunities through skilling: key learnings.

- **skilling is an opportunity employers can't miss.**
  Organizations that offer meaningful training and career development stand to succeed as competition for talent intensifies. Upskilling opportunities have become a clear priority for talent.

- **training must be equitably applied.**
  Employers must offer equitable access to skilling across all talent, empower them to adapt to fast-changing roles and create a future-ready workforce.

- **employers need to enhance their skill training capabilities.**
  Companies need to build systematic training capabilities and systems, or partner with third-party professional organizations, to accurately identify employees' skill gaps. They should encourage internal knowledge sharing and a culture of continuous learning to comprehensively improve employee capabilities, accelerate personal growth, and upgrade organizational effectiveness.

new mission for employers: delivering the why, how and who.

Building on the thematic threads of previous years, a new workplace baseline has emerged. It is built on three interconnected factors: the 'why' of personal motivations, the 'who' of a sense of community and the 'how' of sharpening job skills. All three are built on one common foundation: trust.

With talent scarcity challenges expected to increase, organizations that prioritize reshaping workplaces to reflect workers' expectations will be in the strongest position to attract and retain talent, and secure a sustainable foundation for long-term business success.

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