

devire.

Employees, employers, the future of recruitment, onboarding, offboarding, project-based work, remote and hybrid work, AI, automation, outsourcing, security, wellbeing, leadership, engagement

# Trend Report 2026

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# Dear Readers,

## I am pleased to present our new report on trends for 2026 and beyond.

Our goal was to create a platform for the biggest market leaders and experts, where we share our predictions about the directions of change, upcoming innovations, and the most interesting business phenomena that are already shaping the new reality. Today, the world is changing at a pace we have never seen before. Technological and geographical developments impose new rules of the game every year. Of course, there is also a certain repetitive cycle, but both the new and the familiar will bring many opportunities and challenges.

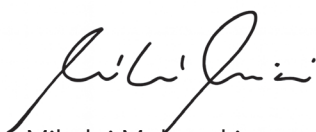
Phenomena such as automation (including the development of AI), the growing popularity of outsourcing, and freelancing as a lifestyle and work style are now reaching a scale that is permanently changing our understanding of how the market and business function, but also how do we find our feet again in this environment. A new generation of leaders is coming to the fore and the era of start-ups is coming to an end. Building value and innovation have become the responsibility of each and every one of us. Technological skills and an understanding of business relationships are becoming essential skills without which it will be difficult to survive. Those of us who do not use AI today or do not consider the challenges faced by customers, business partners, or suppliers will be left behind.

The market will strive for greater consolidation because the need to increase the efficiency of processes such as finance, HR, marketing, and sales must keep up with the pace of technological development, not to mention the need to modernize IT itself. This is a real challenge for both small and large organizations.

## So, in my opinion, what will tomorrow's market look like?

It will certainly be more human than one might expect. The pandemic has distanced us from each other, and technology has become not only a medium of communication, but also a guide for investments and business decisions. Development has brought us to a point where self-learning algorithms, robotics, and digitization really support us in our daily lives and make many things easier. But for technology and science to continue to serve humanity, we must consciously decide what we see as progress and what as a threat. In order to build the right strategy and take care of the development of our business and employees, we must remember the human element more than ever, not only within our own company, but across the entire market. And so as not to be accused of empty words, I wrote all this without the support of AI.

Overall, I look forward to the meetings and interesting discussions that await us, and I hope you enjoy reading.



Mikołaj Makowski  
Managing Director  
Devire



# The future and the present through the eyes of experts



**Agnieszka Zielińska, Director of the Polish HR Forum**, talks about the future of recruitment and the role of recruiters in the world of automation.



**Mariola Bitner, Head of Workplace Strategy and Technical Support Poland & CEE, Cushman & Wakefield**, explains how the office is changing its function in the era of remote and hybrid work.



**Magdalena Wiśniewska, Team Leader & National Practice Head at Devire**, believes that HR Tech is no longer an add-on, but has become the basis for building processes, analyzing data, and making decisions.



**Paweł Płocki, Head of TBS Europe**, argues that the more "invisible work" machines take over, the more valuable people who know how to ask them the right questions and draw conclusions will become.



**Magdalena Bluma-Schneider, Director of the HR Office for Recruitment and Employer Branding and the HR Office for Development and Training, Nest! Bank**, talks about building relationships with employees.



**Małgorzata Sułkowska, Senior Team Leader & National Practice Head at Devire**, emphasizes relationship building and clear communication in the recruitment process.



**Rafał Pisklewicz, Managing Partner at The Shire**, says that offices are no longer a necessity, but a product that needs to be designed to compete with the comfort of working from home.



**Magdalena Flera-Łapińska, Mental Health Specialist, Foundever Poland**, explains what overstimulation is from the perspective of psychology and neurobiology. She talks about what helps to regain balance.



**Dominika Opozda, Regional Manager, IT & Telecoms, Devire**, comments on the trend of remote working and explains what managing teams scattered across Poland looks like in practice.



**Piotr Nowosielski, CEO of the job portals rocketjobs.pl and justjoin.it**, talks about artificial intelligence and automation. He draws attention to the phenomenon of "unemployable juniors."



**Mateusz Kasprzak, IT Instructor at Kozminski University and Product Coordinator at CMS**, emphasizes that the future is not about replacing people with machines, but about creating new roles.



**Karol Karolkiewicz, CIO at RTV EURO AGD**, looks at AI from a retail perspective. He emphasizes that the digitization of stores is not meant to replace salespeople, but to "arm" them with knowledge and tools.



**Robert Tracz, Director of the Bielsko – Biała factory, Stock – Poland**, assesses AI from the factory's perspective and believes that in the future, every employee will have to "get along" with machines.



**Przemysław Sławiński, Head of Global Procurement Operations at PMI and Board Member of the Shared Service Center Europe**, claims that by 2035, digital skills will be standard.



**Adam Ajtner, Strategic Relations Manager, Devire**, comments on two trends in the report: the digital skills of employees and the need to find balance in a fast-paced world.



**Marcin Pawłowski, Executive Director Permanent Recruitment, Devire**, emphasizes that today, soft skills such as adaptability to change and quick learning are just as important as technical skills.



**Marcin Grzegory, Deputy Director, BSS sector, Invest in Pomerania**, comments on the trend related to outsourcing, pointing out the key conditions for its success.



**Rafał Nadolny, Managing Director of BPiON**, talks about HR, payroll, and accounting outsourcing, which, in his opinion, has undergone a transformation in recent years.



**Wiktor Doktor, CEO at Pro Progressio**, points out that in the coming years, we can expect the greatest growth in outsourcing in areas such as finance and accounting.



**Łukasz Strambowski, CEO at PSE Inwestycje S.A.**, comments on the trend related to security, which today is multidimensional. It encompasses infrastructure, technologies, supply chains, and people.



**Marek Szul, Vice President, Operations & Technology Transformation, Lionbridge**, advises on how to maintain balance at work when working in a global rhythm and teams are scattered around the world.



**Magdalena Kanclerz, Regional Director Permanent Recruitment, Devire**, comments on the trend related to the new era of leadership. She emphasizes that a good leader works together with their team.



**Joanna Niedzińska, Head of Talent, Learning and Development, Danone**, points out that a sense of purpose is now a key factor in building employee motivation and well-being.



**Izabela Kazimierska, Managing Director, Devire Global Solutions**, also comments on the trend of seeking meaning in work. She emphasizes the role of leaders who can reinforce this sense of purpose.

TREND 01 ♦ Care for the candidate



# 360° relationships: from candidate to alumni. The Employee Journey that never ends

The eRecruiter report entitled "Candidate Experience 2025" shows that 71% of candidates evaluate a company after the recruitment process.<sup>1</sup> That is why companies are increasingly looking at the experiences of candidates and employees not as individual stages, but as a **continuous journey**: from the first contact, through onboarding, everyday employee experience, to conscious offboarding and alumni relations.

The first test of this relationship is recruitment. Meanwhile, candidates today encounter barriers that are surprisingly easy to improve. A survey by Devire and SW Research shows that the most irritating factors for candidates are:

- Lack of feedback (26.8%)
- Too many stages of recruitment (19%)
- Not enough specifics during the interview (18.1%)
- Too long wait for a decision (16.1%)
- Excessive automation of the process (7.7%).

Devire's findings are confirmed by the eRecruiter report: over 90% of people do not receive any information after their application is rejected, and as many as 84% of respondents indicate that this is a recurring situation. Interestingly, from the employers' perspective, the most common reason for not providing feedback is... lack of time and too many applications (59%).<sup>2</sup>



**As many as 71% of candidates form their opinion about a company based on the entire hiring process. That is why recruitment, onboarding, offboarding, and post-departure relations should be part of an organization's strategy.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://erecruiter.pl/centrum-prasowe/rekrutacja-pod-lupa-kandydatow-71-ocenia-firme-po-procesie-zatrudnienia-raportcandidate-experience-2025>

<sup>2</sup> <https://erecruiter.pl/centrum-prasowe/rekrutacja-pod-lupa-kandydatow-71-ocenia-firme-po-procesie-zatrudnienia-raportcandidate-experience-2025>

### What irritates candidates in the recruitment process?



Opinion poll conducted by SW Research on behalf of the Devire recruitment agency in November 2025. The survey was conducted among people who are professionally active or looking for work. Methodology: CAWI. N=300.

However, 360° relationships do not end with employment. That is why it is worth thinking about the Employee Journey more broadly: about what happens on the first day, in the first quarter, during everyday cooperation, and at the moment of departure. It also means caring about **how a former employee will remember the company after months or years**. A survey by Devire and SW Research shows that **only one in three Poles maintains any contact with their former employer**, and most often it is accidental. In turn, **57.7% see no need for this**, which may indicate that the experience of cooperation did not leave a positive impression. If there is no need for contact, there is no relationship, trust, or alumni value. And that is untapped potential today.

Modern organizations are beginning to treat offboarding as seriously as onboarding. They understand that former employees become brand ambassadors or critics, and in the world of review sites and social media, a single negative comment can reach more people than even the best-planned employer branding campaign.

360° relationships are a strategy, not a trend. It is a way of thinking in which the candidate is a customer, the employee is a partner, and the former employee is an investment that can work for the company's brand in the future. In a world of increasing transparency and growing expectations of HR teams, the organizations that will succeed are those that can build authentic, consistent relationships based on communication, empathy, simple standards, and employee experience that is visible at every stage of the collaboration.

## We are moving away from linear thinking about recruitment and employment



**Magdalena Bluma-Schneider**

Director of the HR Office for Recruitment and Employer Branding and the HR Office for Development and Training, Nest! Bank

Today, relationships are the foundation of competitive advantage. This is especially true in a market where candidates are increasingly scrutinizing organizations and employees are increasingly making career decisions based on their experiences, values, and the quality of their interactions with the company. 360° relationships are a departure from linear thinking about recruitment and employment in favor of a comprehensive, **cyclical** approach to people's experiences at every stage of cooperation.

**We can clearly see that candidates today expect transparency, regular communication, and respect, regardless of whether they receive an offer or not.** From my perspective, organizational culture, communication, and empathy are key to building these relationships in a consistent and authentic way. Relationships should be based on the values, processes, and behaviors of leaders. That is why we attach so much importance to ensuring that positive employee experiences are not just a declaration, but a practice that is visible at every stage of cooperation.

At Nest! Bank, we have created a complete, consistent path of contact with candidates and new employees: from the first email to an evaluation after a few months of work. Each person invited for an interview receives a short, visual recruitment leaflet that clearly explains the strategy, organizational culture, internal initiatives, and the entire process. Managers remain in constant contact with the candidate even before their first day of work, and new employees are accompanied by a dedicated Buddy who supports them in their adaptation.

**The first days in the organization are not just about formalities. They also include a carefully planned onboarding process based on training, meetings with key teams, and a two-day Induction module, which is also attended by a member of the management board.** Each employee receives a Welcome Book, implementation materials, an eco-friendly welcome package, and Implementation and Development Cards, which organize the adaptation process and support dialogue with the manager. It is this consistency in action that has increased retention from 93% to 97%, reduced departures in the sales network during the trial period by 70%, and achieved an NPS Candidate Experience score of 77 points. Our goal is to create an organization where everyone (from candidates to new employees to those leaving) experiences consistency, respect, and care.



**It is important to ensure that the employee's experience is not just a declaration, but a practice that is visible at every stage of cooperation.**

## A partnership approach to recruitment is key to attracting talent



**Małgorzata Sułkowska**  
Senior Team Leader &  
National Practice Head,  
Devire

**We talk to a Devire expert about how candidates' expectations are changing and the importance of relationships in the hiring process.**

### **What is the role of relationships with candidates today? Have they really become one of the key elements of the recruitment process?**

From the perspective of the executive search market, I can clearly see that relationships with candidates are no longer a "nice extra" but have become a real indicator of an organization's maturity. When I talk to candidates – both those actively looking for work and those who are passive – I most often hear two things: the expectation of a partnership approach and the need for transparency. These are not the demands of idealists, but signals from the most valuable talents, who today carefully choose where they want to work.

The differences between companies are visible from the very first minute of the process. Organizations that treat their relationships with candidates as a strategy rather than a slogan gain access to candidates who, just a few years ago, would not have been willing to consider a change. Why? Because they feel that they are partners, not just another "resume in the system." This approach pays off especially in the market for specialists and managers, where recruitment decisions are increasingly made not on the basis of the offer itself, but on the quality of contact with the organization.

### **Employment is just the beginning. What role do onboarding and offboarding play in the context of building candidate and employee experiences?**

We are seeing the growing importance not only of well-planned onboarding, but also of high-quality offboarding, which has become particularly important for headhunters in recent years. Candidates who leave a company on good terms are much more likely to return to the market as brand ambassadors. In practice, this means that they recommend their former employer, speak positively about the organizational culture, and sometimes return themselves after years as boomerang hires. This is one of the most underrated sources of talent and, at the same time, one of the most important areas influencing a company's reputation.

It is becoming increasingly common for candidates to ask not only about business goals, job responsibilities, work atmosphere, and culture during the initial interviews, but also about how the company communicates decisions, whether the organization engages in dialogue with alumni, and what employee well-being support programs it has in place, including during times of crisis. Just a few years ago, such questions were rare. Today, they are the norm.

### **Finally, where does the employer brand begin and why are relationships so important here?**

From my perspective, the market is entering a stage where building partnerships with candidates will be one of the most important elements of employers' competitive advantage. Recruitment is no longer a procedure, but an experience – multidimensional, memorable and, most importantly, comparable between organizations. Companies that consciously build communication, care about responsiveness and consistently create positive experiences at every stage of cooperation attract not only more candidates, but above all the right candidates.

In summary: employer branding does not begin with a job advertisement, but with the way a company treats people when no one is thinking about employment yet. And it ends... well, never. Because the relationships we build with a candidate or employee today may determine tomorrow whether the best talents knock on our organization's door or pass by indifferently.

TREND 02 ♦ Work Anywhere



# Remote and hybrid work as the norm

The latest opinion poll by Devire and SW Research shows that if employees could choose their own working model, **only one in ten** (10%) would opt to work exclusively in the office. The rest would choose remote or hybrid working, in various configurations.

**As many as 70% would choose solutions with a large proportion of work outside the office:**

- **19.7%** would work exclusively remotely
- **28.7%** would choose a model with a predominance of remote days (2-3 days a week)
- **15.8%** would like to work remotely at least one day a week.

But what if, after a year of successful remote work, the employer suddenly ordered a return to the office? Only 19.4% of Poles would return without resistance. For the rest, it would be a violation of their sense of balance.

- **34.2%** would try to negotiate a hybrid model
- **16%** would start looking for a new job
- and **9%** would simply leave immediately.

**In total, one in five employees would treat the order to return as a reason to change jobs.**

Devire's data also shows why. Remote work improves well-being, productivity, and daily organization.

## What do Poles value in remote work? Respondents participating in the Devire and SW Research opinion poll were able to select several answers.



Opinion poll conducted by SW Research on behalf of the Devire recruitment agency in November 2025. The survey was conducted among people who are professionally active or looking for work. Methodology: CAWI. N=300.

It is the office space that Poles feel most overwhelmed in: as many as 56.7% indicate it as the main source of overstimulation. These employee preferences coincide with market data. According to the EY report "Remote work in Poland 2024," 88% of companies that have implemented remote working now operate in a hybrid model.<sup>1</sup> In turn, Colliers' report "Hybrid and Beyond 2024" indicates that as many as 96% of organizations in Poland currently operate in a hybrid model, confirming its position as the dominant working standard.<sup>2</sup> However, it should be remembered that hybrid working brings not only benefits, but also challenges. JLL research shows that Polish offices today operate according to **their own weekly rhythm: from Tuesday to Thursday, they are often crowded, while on Mondays and Fridays they are empty.** This can result in logistical chaos: a shortage of desks on "high attendance days," unused space on other days, pressure to book space, and inconsistent teamwork.<sup>3</sup>

Companies are therefore increasingly looking for ways to tame the hybrid model. Experts point out what works:

- Setting specific days of mandatory attendance for teams
- Creating multifunctional zones instead of classic open spaces
- Transforming spaces so that they can be quickly adapted to needs
- Fewer open spaces.

## Hybrid work requires a change in leadership style



**Mariola Bitner**  
Head of Workplace  
Strategy and Technical  
Support Poland & CEE,  
Cushman & Wakefield

In recent years, we have seen remote and hybrid work evolve from an experiment to a cornerstone of the labor market. It seemed that after the pandemic, everything would stabilize for a while: companies had developed models, employees had found their rhythm, and offices were to become just one of many options. Meanwhile, global corporations have once again set off a wave of change. Decisions made in the United States, such as increasing the number of days worked from the office at Microsoft, Google, and Amazon, immediately reverberated in Poland.

However, the reality is much more complex. During and immediately after the pandemic, the office market slowed down and new investments were postponed due to risk and rising costs. As a result, companies that want to return to the office today... do not always have a place to do so. **This is the paradox of the modern hybrid: organizations are increasing their expectations for employee presence while operating in spaces that are not prepared for this. In addition to this is the so-called office logistics, i.e., managing space to avoid days when it is completely empty and days when it is severely overcrowded.**

The psychological aspect is also important. Many companies still haven't figured out how to manage teams in a hybrid model. Over the years, we've gotten used to thinking that "visibility" is synonymous with efficiency. That's why it's harder for managers to trust employees when they work from home, and harder for them to turn off the "control switch". Hybrid requires a change in leadership style, a different approach to responsibility, greater transparency, and new communication habits. This means that the challenge is not remote work itself, but the organizational culture that is not keeping up with it.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ey.com/pl\\_pl/newsroom/2024/03/ey\\_praca\\_zdalna\\_po\\_polsku\\_2024](https://www.ey.com/pl_pl/newsroom/2024/03/ey_praca_zdalna_po_polsku_2024)

<sup>2</sup> [https://docs.colliers.pl/reports/Colliers\\_Report\\_Hybrid\\_and\\_Beyond\\_2024\\_PL.pdf](https://docs.colliers.pl/reports/Colliers_Report_Hybrid_and_Beyond_2024_PL.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://xyz.pl/dzieje-sie/75-proc-pracownikow-chcialoby-pracowac-z-biura-maksymalnie-trzy-dniw-tygodniu-to-logistyczne-wyzwanie-1307/?utm\\_source=piano&utm\\_medium=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=dziendobry&pnespid=Aacr70ZX7DQPmISZ68zACk1a\\_Bhim7l0qVhQA6EZac7KMxPIN9d3zwUBzxD7VfPI6vh9hGZR](https://xyz.pl/dzieje-sie/75-proc-pracownikow-chcialoby-pracowac-z-biura-maksymalnie-trzy-dniw-tygodniu-to-logistyczne-wyzwanie-1307/?utm_source=piano&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=dziendobry&pnespid=Aacr70ZX7DQPmISZ68zACk1a_Bhim7l0qVhQA6EZac7KMxPIN9d3zwUBzxD7VfPI6vh9hGZR)

## Remote and office work from a psychological perspective



**Magdalena**

**Flera-Łapińska**

Mental Health Specialist,  
Foundever Poland  
& Training Manager EAP24

The “office versus remote work” debate often overlooks the most important aspect – our nervous system. Home gives us something that the office often does not: a sense of control. We can adjust the temperature, open a window, go for a walk, make a healthy meal, adjust the lighting, turn on music, or take a short break to recharge. These are small things, but they stabilize the nervous system. When working remotely, it is easier to maintain balance, a quiet rhythm of the day, and micro-breaks that allow the brain to function effectively for many hours.

When working in an office, many of these elements disappear. We don't always have control over noise, temperature, light, air conditioning, or open spaces where other people's conversations accompany us throughout the day. From the perspective of the nervous system, this makes a huge difference, because overstimulation is not a matter of “comfort” but of biology.

At the same time, remote work has its own pitfalls. **At home, we often compensate for the lack of physical contact with greater online activity. We are present on all messengers at once, we respond quickly, we feel the pressure to be “visible” virtually. Many people work more because the line between work and rest is blurred.** This is where the role of organizations and leaders comes into play – they should set rules that protect employees from constant availability.

From a psychological point of view, remote work works best when it is part of an organizational culture based on trust and clear rules. We need specific communication channels, set hours, meeting hygiene, and the awareness that “do not disturb” status is not a lack of commitment, but a way to work deeply. Hybrid doesn't work well where there is still a culture of control and a belief that effectiveness is measured by how much time someone spends in the office.

Ultimately, it's not about choosing one model. It's about understanding that different people work best in different conditions, and a stable organization is one that can create a space that supports their nervous system – whether they're sitting at a desk or in a home office.



**Rafał Pisklewicz**

Managing Partner, The Shire

## Flexible coworking models are winning

Hybrid working has established a new order. With only 10% of employees wanting to work exclusively from the office, returning to company premises must make sense – and it must be attractive. Offices are no longer a necessity, but a product that must be designed to compete with the comfort of working from home. Premium locations, great design, and flexible coworking models that allow companies to pay for actual usage and employees to want to return are winning.



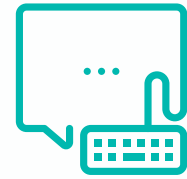
**Dominika Opozda**  
Regional Manager,  
IT & Telecoms, Devire

## How to manage a distributed team?

As someone who manages a distributed IT recruitment team, I can see very clearly that hybrid working is no longer a benefit – it has become a prerequisite for competitiveness. The candidates we interview treat flexibility as an absolute standard, and teams expect an environment that supports efficiency rather than limiting it.

- **From the perspective of managing a remote or hybrid team, however, it is crucial to note that this type of work organization requires a completely different leadership style.** In a distributed model, old habits based on control and visibility no longer work. Effective management is based on trust, clearly defined goals, transparent communication rules, and real autonomy. In practice, this means establishing a rhythm of meetings, clear channels of information exchange, and ensuring “online work hygiene” to avoid excessive availability or communication overload.
- **When creating and scaling nationwide teams, the greatest advantage of remote or hybrid work – carried out from different company locations – is the ability to recruit talent regardless of where they live.** This allows you to build diverse teams of expertise, speed up recruitment processes, and tailor the composition of the team to the needs of the business – without being limited to a single city. At the same time, the role of the manager as the person responsible for cultural cohesion, a sense of belonging, and real cooperation despite geographical dispersion is growing. Because despite the many benefits of remote work, one thing remains unchanged: people want to be part of a team. It is up to the manager to create an environment that enables them to do so.
- **Hybrid works great when the organization invests in clear rules, the right tools, and a culture based on trust.** When this is lacking, problems arise with communication, feelings of isolation, and overload. From my perspective, the biggest challenge for the coming years is not where we work, but whether we can create an environment where people can be effective and at the same time take care of their well-being – regardless of location. It is not a question of the number of days spent in the office, but of the quality of the organizational culture and building a sense of responsibility and commitment to achieving common team goals.
- **At the same time, I have no doubt that face-to-face work remains a huge asset, especially in the context of building relationships, rapid knowledge exchange, and strengthening cooperation.** Today’s challenge for managers is to skillfully combine the best of the remote model with the value of face-to-face meetings. This conscious balancing act between flexibility and F2F contact allows teams not only to work effectively, but also to truly feel part of the organization.

TREND 03 ♦ Task-based work



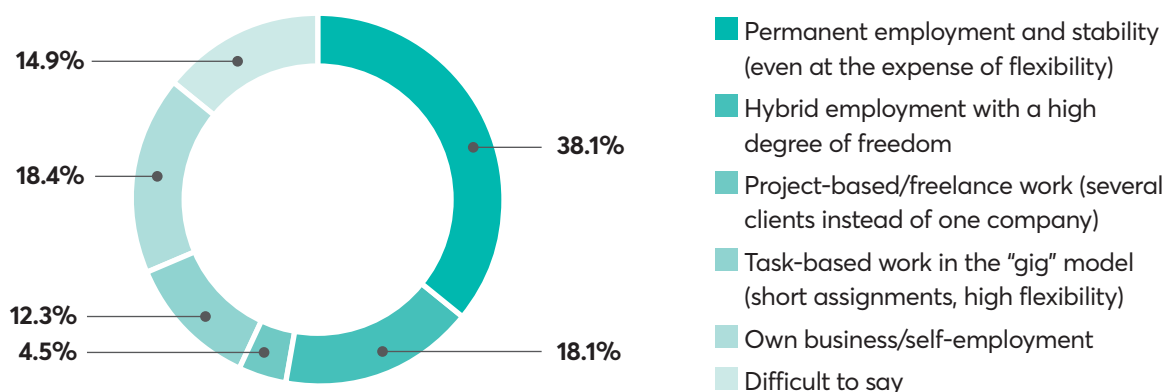
# The gig economy and project-based work. Flexibility is becoming the new currency of the labor market

Flexible forms of work are no longer an alternative to full-time employment. They are slowly transforming into a parallel, fully mature market model. On the one hand, the number of freelancers and project-based workers is growing, while on the other, companies are reorganizing their structures to make more frequent use of external specialists and contractors "on demand." The result is a systematic shift of the labor market towards the gig economy.

According to the report "Freelancing in Poland 2023" (Useme), there are already about **330,000 active freelancers** in the country, which means an increase of over 8% year-on-year. The latest edition of the 2024 survey shows that this trend is continuing to accelerate – the number of orders, freelancers' revenues, and the share of companies that use their services are all growing. Freelancing is no longer the domain of the creative industries; it is increasingly being chosen by specialists in IT, marketing, HR, finance, and analytics.<sup>1</sup>

The scale of the changes is confirmed by the **GIGbarometer 2024 (EY + Giglike)**, according to which the labor market flexibility index in Poland has reached a record **5.1 points** and has been growing steadily for three years. This means a gradual shift away from the rigid model of permanent employment towards project-based work, B2B cooperation, and the employment of specialists who are available when the company needs them, rather than on a permanent basis.<sup>2</sup>

Preferred forms of work for Poles in the coming years



Opinion poll conducted by SW Research on behalf of the Devire recruitment agency in November 2025. The survey was conducted among people who are professionally active or looking for work. Methodology: CAWI. N=300.

<sup>1</sup> <https://useme.com/pl/blog/freelancing-w-polsce-raport-2023/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://pracodawcydlazdrowia.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ey-raport-gig-2024-final-2.pdf>

However, a survey conducted by Devire and SW Research shows that Poles have mixed feelings about flexible working models. If they could choose their form of employment for the coming years, in most cases (38.1%) they would choose full-time employment, even at the expense of flexibility. These results show that not everyone wants to work on a project basis, but companies are starting to work on a project basis.



**Mikołaj Makowski**  
Managing Director  
Devire

Faced with talent shortages, rising labor costs, and a volatile business environment, organizations are increasingly forming task forces composed of internal experts and external specialists. Globally, the project-based, temporary, and talent platform labor market is already estimated to be worth several trillion dollars annually.

In Poland, companies are increasingly operating according to this logic – they need to quickly scale resources, shorten processes, reduce costs, and acquire competencies that are lacking in full-time positions. Specialists are responding to this need just as dynamically, choosing greater autonomy, the opportunity to work for multiple clients, and an escape from rigid structures. At the same time, the labor market faces a key question: how to build organizational culture, commitment, and continuity of knowledge in a world where a “team” increasingly consists of people who may be seeing each other for the first time in their lives or working together for only a few weeks?



**Project work is a good solution for companies that need to quickly scale resources, shorten processes, reduce costs, and acquire skills that are lacking in full-time employees.**



## TREND 04 ♦ Artificial intelligence and automation



# AI is reshaping the job market. A new map of professions is emerging.

A study conducted by PARP as part of the Human Capital Balance project shows that Polish companies implement artificial intelligence mainly in five areas: customer service, sales, product and service development, planning/logistics, and risk management. Entrepreneurs use AI primarily in processes where tasks are repetitive, easy to standardize, and do not require complex supervision.<sup>1</sup>

Large and medium-sized organizations are developing advanced AI-based solutions integrated with management systems. This is natural: they have their own IT teams, budgets, and competencies that allow them to design tailor-made tools. Micro and small enterprises, on the other hand, choose plug & play applications such as chatbots, marketing automation tools, and data analysis systems. In this model, the adoption of technology is not financially burdensome and saves time, better tailors the offer to customer needs, and increases efficiency. It also reduces the workload on employees.<sup>2</sup>

How do employees perceive AI? According to SD Worx data, nearly 40% of Poles fear that AI will lead to the elimination of their jobs in the long term.<sup>3</sup> **Indeed, the latest "Future of Jobs 2025" report from the World Economic Forum shows that up to 92 million jobs could disappear by the end of this decade, but at the same time, thanks to the development of artificial intelligence, 170 million new roles requiring digital or analytical skills will be created.**<sup>4</sup> Among the professions of the future are chief artificial intelligence officers (CAIOs), data analysts, AI and cloud system architects, AI ethics and security experts, and RPA engineers.<sup>5</sup>

Which jobs may become obsolete? According to the LiveCareer report, the greatest risk concerns professions based on patterns, rules, and repetitive processes that can be easily automated and accelerated thanks to new technologies, including proofreaders, editors, translators, data entry specialists, junior market research analysts, basic customer service employees, cashiers, and warehouse workers.<sup>6</sup>

As the Allianz Trade report points out, a key element of adaptation will be the development of a true culture of lifelong learning in companies: continuous education, reskilling, and upskilling.<sup>7</sup> AI will not eliminate humans from the labor market, but it will force them to redefine their role. Machines will take over routine tasks, leaving humans with tasks that require emotion, responsibility, and strategic thinking. In this sense, technology will become a supporting tool rather than a competitor.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.parp.gov.pl/component/content/article/88956%3Apolskie-firmy-a-sztuczna-inteligencja-kto-jest-gotowy-a-ktowciaz-czeka>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <https://focusonbusiness.eu/pl/raporty/pracownicy-boja-sie-zastapienia-przez-ai-a-ich-szefowie-ze-zabraknie-im-rak-dopracy/36427>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.forbes.pl/praca/najlepiej-platne-zawody-w-polsce-nawet-75-tys-zl-miesiecznie-ranking/eb2hmhc> oraz <https://www.forbes.pl/rankingi/nawet-45-tys-zl-miesiecznie-te-zawody-ai-to-zyta-zlota/2q4by6r>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.livecareer.pl/zycie-zawodowe/jakie-zawody-zastapi-ai-raport>

<sup>7</sup> Allianz Trade, „Autonomiczna gospodarka z AI – polskie miejsca pracy mniej zagrożone”. 30 września 2025 oraz <https://aiobserwator.pl/ai-rynek-pracy-polska-relatywnie-mniej-narazona/>



**Piotr Nowosielski**  
CEO of the job portals  
rocketjobs.pl and justjoin.it

AI is already having a significant impact on the job market, especially in industries based on routine work such as customer service and accounting. Marketing is also vulnerable to change, where we are seeing a marked slowdown in the number of job ads and a sharp increase in applications per position. Instead of hiring, companies are opting for task automation or flexible forms of cooperation.

**This fact is particularly painful for people entering the labor market.**

**The phenomenon of “unemployable juniors” – especially in IT – is an unprecedented challenge for an entire generation.** New solutions based on so-called AI agents and agentic workflow – i.e., chains of tasks performed by interconnected intelligent systems – are taking over the processes that were traditionally handled by novice employees. The competence bar has risen to an unprecedented level.

At the same time, new roles are emerging and will continue to emerge. According to the Future of Jobs 2025 report, in 10 years, due to AI, approximately 110 million jobs will disappear, but at the same time, as many as 170 million new jobs will be created. **For example, specialists in ethical system design and experts in well-being in hybrid environments will be needed.** However, competencies that AI cannot replace will remain key – above all, emotional intelligence, problem-solving skills, and empathy.

Will AI take our jobs? In my opinion, no, but it will help us automate wisely, relieve us of routine tasks, and free up resources for more strategic activities.



**Mateusz Kasprzak**  
IT Instructor  
at Kozminski University,  
Product Coordinator  
at CMS

Artificial intelligence is changing the job market, but not by eliminating people, but by moving them to places where value is created differently than before. Today, juniors have a higher threshold for entering the profession because they used to gain experience by performing simple and manual tasks, but today such tasks are handled by models, so the first steps in their career will require more analytical thinking, understanding of the business context, and, above all, the ability to work with AI tools. Will we give artificial intelligence full control in the long run? In my opinion, no. Even the most advanced models have no purpose, responsibility, or awareness of consequences. **They can perform tasks, but they do not make decisions. The role of humans will not disappear, but will shift towards supervision, interpretation, setting risk limits, and assessing when and how to use technology.**

The future of the labor market is not about replacing people with machines, but about the creation of new roles. Some repetitive jobs will disappear, but at the same time, areas related to supervision, integration, security, and the ethical implementation of AI will grow dynamically. So this is not a story about technology “taking away jobs,” but about shifting value from performing tasks to understanding processes, interpreting, and creating tools that will take over those tasks. In the distant future, we will not live in a world where artificial intelligence will take away jobs, but one where it will change their nature. This will free up space in us for what is creative, empathetic, and strategic—and that is where human value will grow.

**Importantly, even the most advanced models cannot replace human empathy. They can imitate it, but they do not feel or understand emotions. And it is empathy – alongside creativity and strategic thinking – that will become one of the most valuable competencies in the AI era.** Soft skills will be key, and they cannot be automated.



**Karol Karolkiewicz**  
CIO at RTV EURO AGD

## How to use AI in commerce?

At RTV Euro AGD, we divide AI into two areas: operational efficiency (where we are already active) and sales growth (where we are entering more strongly). Currently, our greatest success is not media chatbots, but the “titanic work” of algorithms in the background.

- **We have implemented predictive models in logistics** that estimate the time it takes to deliver goods to the customer – thanks to this, the error in route planning has fallen from an average of 3 hours to just 30 minutes, which has really taken the pressure off drivers.
- **We also use Generative AI to work with product data.** The language model completes the parameters of new products based on EAN codes – it does this 20 times cheaper than manual work, while maintaining very high quality.
- **Our plans for 2025-2027 include shifting the focus to the front end:** dynamic pricing, hyper-personalization of e-commerce offerings, and advanced demand forecasting models that will allow us to better manage inventory.

**It is often mistakenly assumed that store digitization is intended to replace the salesperson.** The opposite is true – it is intended to “arm” them with knowledge. With the current breadth of the product range, no human being is able to know the parameters of thousands of products. AI tools on employees’ mobile devices become their handy expert. The system can instantly suggest a complementary product, check availability in another store, or compare technical specifications in seconds. As a result, employees no longer waste time being “search engines” and can focus on what AI cannot do – empathy, consulting, and building relationships with customers. Technology in stores serves to remove the operational burden from people.

**In retail, AI will take over repetitive processes that “tire” people. We already use language models to categorize customer emails, which has freed up resources in the Customer Service Division for more demanding tasks.** I see a future in which roles based on simple data processing disappear, but the demand for analysts and AI system operators grows. Our strategy assumes that AI will become a lever for generating specific financial results (ROI), rather than a tool for reducing jobs for the sake of reduction. People will manage the decisions suggested by machines.



**Paweł Płocki**  
Head of TBS Europe

The discussion about AI usually revolves around “job losses” and task automation. Meanwhile, in many organizations, the biggest problem is work that... no one does. Continuous risk monitoring, full contract review, and analysis of all deviations are often too expensive in a model based solely on people. And yet someone has to decide what we check, how we interpret the results of the models, and when and how we respond based on them.

That is why the job map is shifting from performing individual tasks to roles that can design and supervise new, continuous work streams handled by AI agents. Paradoxically, the more “invisible work” machines take over, the more valuable people who can ask them the right questions and draw meaningful conclusions from this work will become.

## In the future, every employee will have to be able to “communicate” with the machine they will be working with



**Robert Tracz**  
Director of the  
Bielsko-Biała factory,  
Stock – Poland

In an era when we carry devices in our pockets with 3,500 times more computing power than the computer that controlled the Apollo 11 project, which provide us with real-time information from around the world every morning and allow us to keep in touch with friends from many countries via instant messaging, the question arises: what does digital development give us in our professional lives?

Looking at technological progress, at the market for solutions that automate work both in production and in the office, the development of new solutions that digitize data collection, provide complete analyses in seconds, and predict future events, we can see that the world of production is changing irreversibly. **On the one hand, simple manual work is being replaced by robots and automatic devices, which helps to meet the challenge of a shortage of workers interested in simple jobs on the labor market. On the other hand, we are creating new opportunities for graduates of technical, IT, mechatronics, and automation schools.**

In the future, every employee will have to be able to “communicate” with the machine they will be working with, whether it is an automatic trolley, a cobot, a database, or a set of IT tools for prediction. It is important to ensure that the right skills are in place now and to make sure that employees go through the next digital revolution we are witnessing as smoothly as possible. In my opinion, machines will not be able to replace humans. In order to achieve effective operations, full cooperation between these two worlds in the workplace will be necessary to take full advantage of the synergy between humans and machines. **With the appropriate and thoughtful integration of automation and digitization into production, we can achieve previously unexpected results. Examples supporting management with the use of digital tools include accelerating and enabling decision-making at every level of the organization, based on reliable, real, and real-time data.** At the same time, prediction can be used to reduce machine downtime and minimize process inconsistencies in order to stay ahead of events that cause efficiency losses and additional costs.

However, even the best machine is unable to predict and respond to the volatility we have been experiencing in recent years, which is why I believe that companies that invest in digitalization now, while building the right skills among their employees and working on the synergy between these two worlds, will gain a competitive advantage in the future.



# Technology shapes the future of recruitment

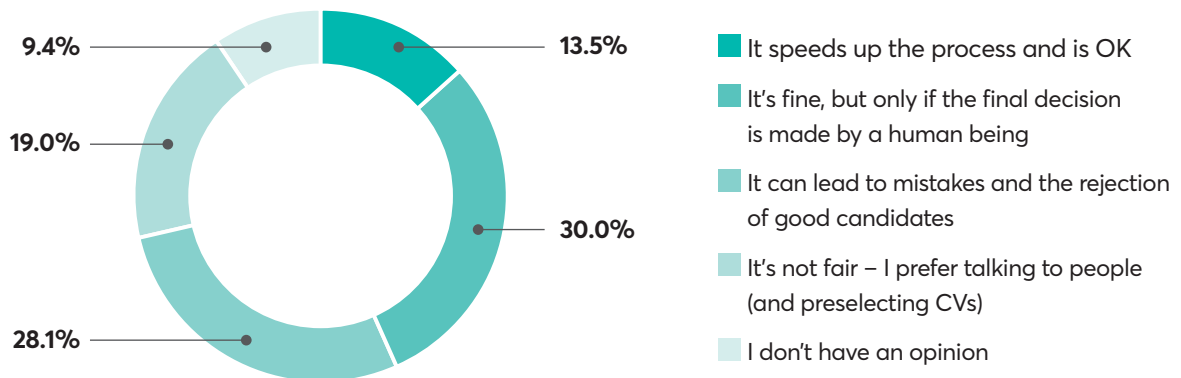
Will robots ever recruit us? Automation is increasingly entering the HR industry, and the transformation of recruitment processes is happening here and now. An example? There are plenty, but let's start with the simplest one. Just a few years ago, sourcing meant hours of manually searching LinkedIn, networks, and databases. Today, various AI models complement human work in this area, and in the near future, they may replace it entirely. Algorithms analyze resumes in seconds, classify applications, identify keywords, assess a candidate's suitability for a role, and soon they will also be independently "hunting" for talent online.

But before we declare a revolution, it is worth starting with the most important thing: the candidates. The latest opinion poll by Devire and SW Research shows that candidates are not keeping up with the acceptance of AI as quickly as HR Tech is developing. As many as 47% of Poles have a rather negative or skeptical opinion about the use of artificial intelligence in recruitment, especially when algorithms are responsible for pre-selecting CVs or extracting key information from documents. **One in three respondents (28%) fears that a "cold algorithm" may make a mistake and reject excellent candidates. And 19% say outright that this form of pre-selection is "unfair" because, in their opinion, it should be a human who makes the initial decision to invite someone to the process. Only 13.5% of respondents believe that AI is completely okay in recruitment because it speeds up the process. And 30% accept it, but only on the condition that a human makes the final decision.**

This is an important signal: the technology is ready. The candidates are not quite there yet.

At the same time, the market is growing at an impressive rate. According to the HR TECH CHANGER 2024 report, as many as 88% of respondents indicate the automation of routine HR tasks as the greatest benefit of implementing new technologies. 55% already use ATS and candidate acquisition tools, 40% use them in pre-selection, and 26% in competency assessment.<sup>1</sup>

Companies are boldly implementing AI into HR processes, but a survey by Devire and SW Research shows that candidates remain cautious. What do they think about the use of AI in recruitment?



Opinion poll conducted by SW Research on behalf of the Devire recruitment agency in November 2025. The survey was conducted among people who are professionally active or looking for work. Methodology: CAWI. N=300.

<sup>1</sup> <https://polskieforumhr.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/RAPORT-HR-TECH-CHANGER-2024.pdf>

## Does the technological revolution in HR have a dark side? What will shape the future of recruitment, and why is automation not enough?



**Michał Młynarczyk**  
CEO at Devonshire  
Investment Group

We are seeing changes in recruitment. The classic image of the recruiter as a “CV hunter” who spends hours reviewing applications and scouring the internet for candidates is disappearing. In its place, a new role is emerging: data analyst, candidate experience designer, strategic consultant, and technology ecosystem operator. More and more initial interviews are being conducted by chatbots, automatic CV analysis is becoming standard, and predictive models can now estimate not only a candidate’s suitability, but also the risk of them leaving in the first few months of employment.

However, this is only one side of the technological revolution. The other is much less obvious and much more ruthless. As part of the Polish HR Forum, we have been recognizing the most innovative startups in the HR industry for several years. And we see up close how difficult this market is. Nearly 100 companies entered the first edition of the competition. Three years later, the number of entries dropped to 67, and when I analyzed the companies competing in 2023, it turned out that half of them no longer exist or are building a completely different product. I think it was AI that verified many of these ideas. **And it should be remembered that today, 63% of HR Tech solutions available on the Polish market are based on artificial intelligence components.** This means that startups that were unable to keep up with the changes: technologically, financially, or in terms of competence, simply fell behind.

HR Tech is developing rapidly, but it is also a market that does not forgive weak business models. Therefore, the future of recruitment is not only about automation and new tools, but also about the courage of organizations to invest in competencies, strategies, and ecosystems that will allow them to truly harness the potential of AI.



As part of the Polish HR Forum, we have been recognizing the most innovative startups in the HR industry for several years. And we see up close how difficult this market is. Nearly 100 companies entered the first edition of the competition. Three years later, the number of entries dropped to 67, and when I analyzed the companies competing in 2023, it turned out that half of them no longer exist or are building a completely different product. I think it was AI that verified many of these ideas.

## HR Tech. Tools that change the rules of the game



**Magdalena Wiśniewska**  
Team Leader  
& National Practice  
Head (Manufacturing,  
Engineering & Supply  
Chain), Devire

The recruitment market is currently undergoing one of the biggest changes in years. HR Tech is no longer an add-on, but has become the basis for building processes, analyzing data, and making decisions. Companies are investing in tools that organize information and shorten recruitment times, while improving the accuracy of candidate selection. This is no longer a trend - it is the new standard of competitiveness.

- **The most visible change is the transition from classic ATSs to full recruitment platforms** – ecosystems that combine sourcing, competency assessment, communication automation, and market analytics. Solutions such as Greenhouse, Lever, SmartRecruiters, and SuccessFactors show that recruitment can be much more effective when data and technology work in a single system. Added to this is the growing talent intelligence segment – tools such as Eightfold, SeekOut, and HireEZ, which predict turnover, analyze competencies, and help reach passive talent before they become active candidates.
- **HR Tech is also changing how we look at competencies. Companies are moving away from analyzing “positions” in favor of a skills-based approach** – what counts are real skills, project achievements, and work results. AI models can assess this faster and more broadly because they analyze resumes, portfolios, publications, results, and professional activity – often from multiple sources at once.
- **There is also a clear increase in the importance of tools that automate pre-selection, CV language analysis, and operational communication.** HireVue, Harver, TextKernel, and Paradox Olivia support companies in quickly screening applications, and in large processes, they reduce the work of teams by up to several dozen percent. At the same time, they take care of the basics that companies often struggle with – timely contact, status updates, reminders, and scheduling interviews.
- **However, it is important to remember that technology does not solve everything.** Candidates are cautious about automation, especially in the early stages of the process. They still want to be sure that their CV has been read by a human being and that the decision does not depend solely on an algorithm. That is why the best results are achieved with a human-led, tech-enabled model – technology organizes and speeds up the process, but the key moments remain in the hands of consultants.
- **We see one thing on the market: AI frees up recruiters’ time.** It relieves them of repetitive tasks and, in return, gives them space for what is really difficult: interviews, assessing cultural fit, understanding the context of the organization. And it is this “space for consulting” that will be the recruiter’s greatest value in the coming years. At Devire, we observe a similar dynamic – technology supports both mass and specialized processes, but it is still the consultant’s experience that determines the quality of the entire project. When recruiting for production, engineering, or supply chain positions, this human layer is essential because it requires knowledge of the realities of the plant, the culture of the organization, and the specifics of the industry.
- **Looking ahead, HR Tech will go one step further. Within the next 2-3 years, the following will become standard: generative models that build competency profiles, job simulations involving AI, predictive market analytics, tools that act as “continuous sourcing,” monitoring the market 24/7, and hyper-personalized candidate experience paths.** The future will not belong to tools that impress in presentations, but to those that really help: they shorten the process, improve matching, and provide comfort to both sides. Technology and human experience are not competitors here – they are a duo that is just beginning to show its potential.

## The future of recruitment will be hybrid. The key is the synergy of technology with human intuition, empathy, and experience



**Agnieszka Zielińska**  
Director of the Polish  
HR Forum

Whether we like it or not, automation will continue to advance, because it is the only realistic way to increase work efficiency, including in recruitment. However, contrary to the fears of many people, recruiters will not disappear. Their role is simply evolving. Technology will take over repetitive, time-consuming, and error-prone tasks: pre-selection, initial CV analysis, scheduling, administration, and basic communication.

This will allow recruiters to focus on what really determines the quality of the process: building relationships with candidates and clients, understanding the business context, assessing potential and motivation, i.e., areas where humans surpass algorithms and will continue to do so for a long time to come.

Equally important, candidates will also gradually get used to technology being a natural part of the recruitment process. Just as no one is surprised today by ATS, video calls, or online tests, intelligent pre-selection, automatic profile analysis, and chatbots conducting initial contact will soon be the norm. Acceptance will grow along with the quality of the tools, the transparency of the rules, and the growing confidence that technology supports the process rather than dehumanizing it.

Therefore, the future of recruitment will be neither fully automated nor exclusively analog. It will be hybrid, combining the power of technology with human intuition, empathy, and experience. And it is in this synergy that lies the greatest opportunity for the entire industry.



**Candidates will gradually get used to technology being a natural part of the recruitment process. Just as no one is surprised by ATS, video calls, or online tests today, intelligent pre-selection, automatic profile analysis, and chatbots conducting initial contact will soon be the norm.**

**TREND 06** ♦ Continuous change and technological competence as a standard



# The employee of the future is a digital employee

The line between “technical” and “non-technical” employees is becoming increasingly blurred. Today, everyone, regardless of their position, industry, or age, should be able to navigate the digital ecosystem of tools, data, and automation with ease. A survey by Pracuj.pl shows that **37% of Poles consider digital skills to be the most important for career development**, and **62% say that without developing these skills, it will be difficult to keep their job or find a new one**. Importantly, as many as **two-thirds** of respondents rate their digital skills **positively**.<sup>1</sup>

When ChatGPT was just breaking into the mainstream in 2023, few companies treated AI skills as a key competency. Today, the situation is different. Data from the largest recruitment portals (Just Join IT, No Fluff Jobs, Pracuj.pl) show that the number of job offers containing (in the title or description) phrases related to AI has increased from a dozen or so in 2023 to 200-300 per month in 2025, which means an increase of over 2000% in two years.<sup>2</sup>

On the one hand, Poles declare their readiness to develop and learn. A survey by Pracuj.pl shows that: **69% consider the ability to learn quickly to be a key competence for the future, and 60% want to be trained in tools based on artificial intelligence**. At the Digital Skills Summit 2025, the government presented a plan according to which as many as 85% of Poles are to have digital skills by 2035.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, employees often feel overwhelmed by the pace of change and the flood of new developments. The latest opinion poll by Devire and SW Research shows that the biggest challenge in working with new technologies is:

- The pace of change is too fast – 20.3%
- Fear of making mistakes – 17.7%
- Lack of training from the organization – 16.8%
- No one to ask questions “live” – 11.6%
- No time to learn – 12.3%.

When tools are updated weekly and AI systems change every few months (or faster), the traditional “training once every six months” model no longer makes sense. Companies that can organize a continuous learning environment will gain an advantage.



**20.3% – a Devire opinion poll shows that one in five Poles cannot keep up with the technological sprint and feels overwhelmed by the pace of change.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.proto.pl/aktualnosc/kompetencje-cyfrowe-najistotniejsze-dla-rozwoju-kariery-badanie-pracuj-pl/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.polskaszkoła.ai/artykuly-ai/ai-na-rynku-pracy-od-chatgpt-do-prompt-engineeringu-jakie-kompetencjeb%C4%99d%C4%85-kluczowe-w-2025-roku>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.pl/web/cyfryzacja/wzmacnianie-kompetencji-cyfrowych-jest-priorytetem--digital-skills-summit-2025>



**Przemysław Sławiński**

Head of Global Procurement Operations at PMI and Board Member of the Shared Service Center Europe

The pace of technological change can be overwhelming, which is why organizations need to create a culture where learning is a natural part of the job, not an additional responsibility. At PMI, we believe in “learning in the flow of work” – short, contextual content, community support, and mentoring that allow you to learn in the rhythm of your daily tasks. It is also crucial to foster openness to experimentation and acceptance of mistakes as part of the development process. **By 2035, digital skills will be standard, and AI will become an everyday tool.** Project managers will cease to be “task managers” and become innovation leaders who connect people, processes, and technology to create value in a responsible, sustainable, and ethical way. This is a future where technology supports people, not the other way around.



**Adam Ajtner**

Strategic Relations Manager Devire

We live in a reality where knowledge acquired on Monday may already be outdated by Friday. That is why today, knowledge of a specific tool is less important than the ability to learn it quickly. Unfortunately, our research shows a dangerous mix of barriers. On the one hand, employees rightly complain about the lack of training and the overwhelming pace of change, but on the other hand, there is a strong psychological barrier. **As many as 17.7% of respondents are simply afraid of messing something up. This fear, combined with a lack of substantive support, is a silent killer of innovation, because an employee who has not been trained and is afraid of making mistakes will always choose old, safe methods over new solutions. For us, the conclusion is clear: buying expensive technology is the easiest part of the transformation, but without investing in people, it is simply a waste of budget.** The role of managers today is to bridge this gap through concrete actions. The key is to create a safe testing environment for teams—let’s call it a digital sandbox—where mistakes are part of learning, not a reason for punishment. It is equally important to appoint internal digital ambassadors who can be approached for help and, most importantly, to include learning in the official work schedule. Expecting employees to make up for technological gaps after hours and without support is a strategy doomed to failure in today’s reality.



**Marcin Pawłowski**

Executive Director Permanent Recruitment, Devire

The modern market, which follows customer expectations, is in a state of constant change, both in terms of technology and related competencies. Technology has begun to play an increasingly important role, ceasing to be an add-on and becoming the foundation of business operations. What was once seen as a competitive advantage is now becoming a minimum requirement. This also entails changes in the area of competencies, **where the line between soft and hard skills is becoming increasingly blurred, as both can be considered essential nowadays.** Today’s employees must have knowledge in the field of technology, using many tools, while at the same time keeping up with changes in the market, constantly updating their skills, being in a continuous learning process, and adapting to new realities. Therefore, we can place hard, or technical, skills on an equal footing with soft skills, such as adaptability to change or the ability to learn. At the organizational level, the continuous process of change and development means that agility plays a much greater role than ever before.



# Offices that regulate the nervous system

Today's employees are neurodiverse. They differ in terms of their pace of work, sensory sensitivity, sensitivity to sound, light, temperature, and smells, among other things. It is important to remember that sensitivity to excessive stimuli is heightened in people with ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, and HSP, but also during periods of low mood, chronic stress, migraines, burnout, depression, menopause, and andropause. Every body reacts differently. It needs different light, rhythm, and acoustics.

A Devire opinion poll shows that as many as **56.7% of employees feel overstimulated in the office. They are most often disturbed by noise (36.1%), lack of privacy (31.3%), lack of natural light (22.6%), lack of fresh air, windows that can be opened, or even a terrace where they can get some fresh air (22.6%), and the classic open space, which is a source of distraction for 16% of respondents.** Surprisingly high on the list is also... the **kitchen**, which in many companies still has one refrigerator, a few microwaves, and during lunch hours turns into the most crowded place in the building. For **12.3%** of employees, this is a real source of stress.

Well-being reports show that employees in Poland are in poorer mental health than ever before. As many as **47%** of respondents in the "Well-being of Poles 2024" report rate their level of well-being as "average," and only **31%** as high.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, awareness of one's own sensory needs is growing. Working from home, which allows people to go for a walk, work in silence, open a window, and regulate the temperature, makes the return to closed, air-conditioned spaces difficult for many.

There is increasing talk of offices that support the nervous system, and their most important roles could also include reducing tension, providing a sense of security, and greater control over one's own work environment. This is why the importance of WELL certification, which focuses not on the energy efficiency of buildings (such as LEED or BREEAM) but on people, is growing. The key factors here are:

- **Air** – quality, filtration, exchange, humidity, smell
- **Natural light** – access to windows, working in daylight, high luminosity, avoiding "dark rooms" in the middle of the building
- **Acoustic comfort** – construction and design, not just soundproofing panels
- **Thermal comfort** – flexible temperature control
- **Movement** – promoting activity, microbreaks, changing positions
- **Materials and colors** – limiting excessive visual stimuli
- **Ergonomics** – workstations that do not cause fatigue after an hour.



**36.1% of employees indicate that noise in the office bothers them, and another 31.3% complain about the lack of privacy.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://infuture.institute/raporty/dobrostan-polek-i-polakow/>

The growing importance of nature in offices is not a visual trend, but a biological one. In a study by 4Nature System, 86% of employees feel that plants have a positive impact on their comfort at work, and **92%** would like to have more of them.<sup>2</sup> Greenery stabilizes stress levels, improves the microclimate, lowers the temperature in hot weather, and increases the sense of security. Companies are therefore increasingly investing in biophilic design—plant walls, winter gardens, terraces, areas with natural light – because they know that this has a greater impact on productivity and retention than other benefits.

At the same time, there is a growing awareness that even the best office design will not work without one key element: **space usage etiquette**. Introducing rules for using phone booths, a culture of silence in open spaces, planning breaks, and using the kitchen at different times than other teams are solutions that do not require investment but do reduce employee frustration. In many companies, the problem is not the lack of a booth, but the fact that everyone uses it at the same time, or that half of the rooms are occupied by people who have not said a single word on the call.

In a world where more than half of employees feel overstimulated and well-being has become a competitive currency, it is the office, if designed wisely, that can become one of the most important strategic tools of an organization.

## WELL certification focuses on people



**Mariola Bitner**  
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Support Poland & CEE,  
Cushman & Wakefield

As a society, we are becoming increasingly aware of our sensory sensitivity. We have different levels of resistance to sound, light, movement, temperature, and smells. More and more employees are being diagnosed with ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, or high sensitivity, but equally important are those who have not been diagnosed but still face overload. Added to this are the effects of menopause, andropause, migraines, burnout, or simply chronic stress. Our resilience changes in monthly cycles, in life cycles, and even within a single day. Office design must keep up with these dynamics.

This is why the importance of WELL certification, which focuses on people, is growing so rapidly. Offices designed to this standard take into account air quality, natural and artificial lighting, acoustic comfort, ergonomics, access to movement, as well as microelements such as materials, textures, and colors, which are intended to reduce sensory overload rather than increase it. **But even the best design cannot replace something that is often overlooked in Polish companies: office usage etiquette.** We can create ideal quiet zones, but if an employee has a loud conversation right next to them, the effect will disappear. We can plan a modern kitchen, but if everyone lines up at the microwaves at the same time, the feeling of chaos will immediately return. Office etiquette costs nothing, but it can change more than an additional conference room. It requires discussion, agreement, and constant reminders during onboarding, team meetings, and work planning. It is a tool that can dramatically improve work comfort and reduce stress levels at the same time.

**The future of offices is a conversation about how to support people in a world that is becoming louder, faster, and more demanding. It is about diversity and spaces that must respond to the biological, sensory, and emotional needs of employees.** And it is about the fact that an office, if designed consciously, can really help us function, think, regenerate, and collaborate.

<sup>2</sup> [https://dobrywzor.com.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/4Nature-System-Wertykalni-WP%C5%81YWRO%C5%9ALINNO%C5%9ACI-NA-PRACOWNIK%C3%93W-BIUROWYCH\\_25.04.pdf](https://dobrywzor.com.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/4Nature-System-Wertykalni-WP%C5%81YWRO%C5%9ALINNO%C5%9ACI-NA-PRACOWNIK%C3%93W-BIUROWYCH_25.04.pdf)



# Cooperation, not subcontracting. Outsourcing in a new era

Outsourcing is changing. Companies no longer want subcontractors “for tasks,” but partners who can enter their organizational culture, take responsibility for the process, people, quality, and business results. This is a departure from the simple “we provide people – we perform the task” model. Increasingly, it is the supplier who manages the entire process: independently organising the team’s work, implementing procedures, monitoring quality, ensuring SLAs are met, reporting results and responding to risks as if they were an internal part of the organisation.

The scale of the changes is clearly visible in market data. Poland is one of the fastest-growing business services hubs in Europe. The entire BSS (Business Services Sector) already employs over **488,700 people** (as of the end of Q1 2025).<sup>1</sup> It also includes BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) centers, which are responsible for increasingly complex processes. The industry attracts talent from all over the world: over 80% of employees speak at least one foreign language fluently, and about 40% speak two or more.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the value of the IT market in Poland has already reached **PLN 74 billion**, growing by **5.7% year-on-year**. This shows the scale of demand for high-class specialists and partners who are able to take responsibility for entire processes, not just for performing individual tasks.

We are seeing a similar shift in the business services sector: more and more shared service centers in Poland are developing a managed services model, in which the partner is responsible for the outcome and continuity of operations. Industry research indicates that already **about one-third of BPO/SSC** centers operate in a model where the provider takes full responsibility for the process and the results of the team’s work.

**The way companies assess the value of outsourcing is also changing. Cost is no longer the most important criterion, replaced by the quality of cooperation, cultural fit, transparency, and the supplier’s ability to integrate with the client’s teams.** More and more often, clients expect their partner to be present at daily stand-ups, joint workshops, provide real feedback, maintain constant communication, and share responsibility for the results. Outsourcing is thus becoming a tool for building operational resilience, not just a way to reduce costs.

In the new model, companies that are able to co-create value win. Not alongside the customer, but together with them; in partnership, process-orientedly, and transparently.



**Nearly half a million people are already employed in the entire BSS (Business Services Sector) (data as of the end of Q1 2025).**

<sup>1</sup> <https://absl.pl/pl/news/p/raport-absl-rosnie-wartosc-polskiego-sektora-uslug-biznesowych>

<sup>2</sup> <https://grupaprogres.pl/polska-liderem-outsourcingu-w-2025-jak-wykorzystac-potencjal-ryнку-it-i-bpo>

## What direction will outsourcing take?



**Mikołaj Makowski**  
Managing Director  
Devire

This approach also has its roots in market changes. Companies are facing talent shortages, rising costs, a volatile business environment, and the need for rapid scalability. More and more often, they need competencies “here and now,” not in three months. Outsourcing allows them to operate in an agile, flexible, and predictable manner, provided that the cooperation is based on partnership rather than the lowest price.

But that’s not all. Expectations for operational quality are also growing. **An outsourcing company must not only “deliver results,” but also ensure data security, quality control, compliance with procedures, business continuity, substitutability, and operational standards**, which in many organizations are more important than the cost of the project itself. That is why suppliers who act as an extension of the client’s team build the most lasting relationships and achieve the highest retention rates.

**Today’s outsourcing is increasingly a model of trust and shared responsibility.** The external team acts as if it were part of the company: it solves problems, proposes solutions, streamlines processes, educates managers, introduces new tools, and does not shy away from responsibility. Companies expect partners who will not only perform tasks, but will stand by them in crisis situations, help them through restructuring, support growth, and even take over entire business functions.

## What must the supplier and customer deliver for outsourcing to really work?



**Marcin Grzegory**  
Deputy Director,  
BSS sector, Invest  
in Pomerania

One of the key conditions for successful outsourcing is process maturity on the customer’s side. Companies very often want to transfer responsibility for the entire area to their partner, but their own processes are described in a fragmentary or outdated manner, which makes it difficult to implement a managed services model. The second pillar is trust – the organization must not only make the decision to outsource the process, but also consistently maintain that trust by allowing the partner to work according to agreed standards. Today, suppliers are required not only to have technical competence, but also mature, transparent reporting, constant communication, and the ability to integrate with the client’s team. It is the combination of process readiness on the part of the company and the experience and maturity of the supplier that determines whether outsourcing actually brings value and does not just become a transfer of chaos to the outside.

## Not only end-to-end service, but also modern technologies that improve the quality of the entire process



**Rafał Nadolny**  
Managing Director  
BPION

HR, payroll, and accounting outsourcing has undergone a transformation in recent years. Today's customers expect partners who will not only handle the end-to-end process, but also improve its quality through modern technologies. **More and more often, changing suppliers is an opportunity for organizations to implement technological solutions that automate tasks, streamline workflow, develop employee self-service, organize document circulation, support work time planning and accounting, and enable advanced reporting.**

In the vast majority of our projects, the starting point was to solve technological challenges on the client's side. The line between technology and implementation companies and HR, payroll, or accounting service providers is becoming increasingly blurred today. More and more often, it is the right choice and skillful implementation of technology that becomes the main competitive advantage – both for the outsourcer and for the organization that uses the services.

**At the same time, the quality of external services always depends on the quality of the client's processes. That is why true partnership begins at the input stage: recruitment, onboarding, offboarding, benefits management, and work schedule planning.** It is crucial to jointly design processes so that they are consistent, resilient, and minimize risks. In practice, this means conducting lean workshops, integrating local and regional systems, and building uniform HR standards.

Working across the Central and Eastern European region, I see similar trends: the market is moving away from a model where outsourcing was mainly a way to achieve cost savings. Increasingly, the outsourcer acts as a partner responsible for the client's digital transformation and strategic change in HR and finance.

Outsourcing is becoming a tool for the development and modernization of organizations, not just a method of cost optimization. The winners are those partners who are able to enter the client's culture, take joint responsibility for business results, and co-create the process. Not alongside, but together with the client's team.

## In which industries will outsourcing develop?



**Wiktor Doktor**  
CEO at Pro Progressio

Outsourcing in Poland, in the area of business services, has its origins in the 1990s, which means that the market has already matured significantly in many respects. Looking at the evolution of business process outsourcing, now referred to as modern business services, we can see that it has been characterized by ups and downs.

We are currently witnessing several trends. These include those related to a smaller number of people in the labor market, rising labor costs, process automation, experiments with artificial intelligence, and market acquisitions in various industries. We can describe the whole situation as a "period of dynamic transformation supported by technology." Such a climate requires quick decisions and the building of business partnerships, which leads to increased interest in outsourcing.

**Areas where we can expect growth in the search for outsourcing partners include finance and accounting, due to, among other things, KSeF; Call Contact Centers, due to ongoing legislative changes in many industries; IT, in relation to the creation of AI-based solutions and the adaptation of systems to new legal requirements; Cybersecurity, due to the growing responsibility of management boards and the increasing number of cybercrime incidents.**

However, it is worth remembering that particularly large organizations have developed and will continue to develop internal competence centers, which will likely result in SMEs and large entities being the main organizations using outsourcing, while corporations will choose between developing competence centers and using outsourcing partners.





# Security in an uncertain world: energy, cyber, people

In a world of growing uncertainty and rapid geopolitical change, security is no longer the domain of specialist services. Today, it is the foundation of business strategy: a prerequisite for business continuity, operational stability, and the resilience of the entire organization.

**The scale of the threats is clearly visible in the data.** According to the latest CERT Polska report for 2024, the national security incident response team received over **600,000 reports of suspicious events on the network**: from phishing attempts, through malware, to attempts to hack into company systems. **Over 100,000** of these were classified as real incidents, which represents an increase of approximately **23% year-on-year** (Source: NASK / CERT Polska – Report 2024). Every day, an average of **300-350 new cases** are reported, many of which involve attacks targeting companies, local governments, the medical sector, and industry.

**Threats are not only more frequent, but also more sophisticated. Attacks are perfectly planned, targeted, and often difficult to detect.** The implementation of modern cybersecurity solutions is no longer a luxury – it is an operational necessity. At the same time, the problem is becoming hybrid: threats affect not only IT systems, but also critical infrastructure—energy, logistics, physical security, and supply chains. In practice, companies must increasingly combine strategies for protecting data, infrastructure, and people.

**For leaders, this means one thing: security must be holistic and continuous.** It is not just about firewalls and business continuity plans. It is about the ability to respond quickly, anticipate, adapt, and build organizational resilience. In the future, the advantage will lie not only with organizations that have fast protection technologies, but also with those that can integrate them with a culture of security, employee awareness, and flexible process architecture.



Today, security is viewed multidimensionally, from infrastructure and technology, through the supply chain, to people. The perspective is also changing: from responding to individual incidents to proactively anticipating risks.



**Łukasz Strambowski**  
CEO at PSE  
Inwestycje S.A.

## Security will be treated more and more holistically

In recent years, companies' approach to security has undergone a significant evolution, regardless of industry or scale of operations. Today, we no longer talk about security as a separate area or a response to individual incidents. Today, we are changing our perspective and talking about proactive risk prediction. We also view security itself in a multidimensional way, from infrastructure, technology, and supply chain to people.

**It is becoming increasingly clear that it is not only large entities or critical infrastructure operators that are investing in security.** Growing regulatory pressure, cooperation with large contractors, and real incidents are causing **small and medium-sized enterprises** to take a more responsible approach to security. It is often large companies that force their smaller partners to implement specific standards and procedures, ultimately increasing the resilience of the entire ecosystem. Awareness of threats in SMEs is growing not only because it is "necessary," but also because organizations see how it actually affects business continuity and stability.

**However, people remain the key area that determines the effectiveness of any security strategy.** True organizational resilience is built through a culture in which security is part of everyday life, not just a set of rules in documents. Regular training, reminding employees of procedures, familiarizing them with unusual situations, and building habits—these are the activities that reduce the risk of errors and strengthen team accountability.

We must remember that the geopolitical environment is very dynamic and technologies are changing faster than strategic actions can be planned. As a result, it is realistic to plan 2-3 years ahead today, and even that requires constant flexibility. **The direction is clear: security will be treated more and more holistically. It will move towards greater integration of all areas – from cybersecurity, through operational and information security, to infrastructure protection and supply continuity.** In future management models, there will no longer be a division between "IT," "operations," or "infrastructure" – all these elements, in my opinion, must function as a single coherent system.

**Another important trend will be the diversification and localization of supply chains, which in recent years have proven to be one of the most vulnerable points for companies.** Building stable local resources and partnerships – so-called local content – will be key to the resilience of companies, both in the energy sector and in other sectors. There will also be an increased focus on employee skills development, regular training, and education on risks and procedures, as these are what ultimately determine the strength of an organization. The role of artificial intelligence cannot be overlooked either. Although it is only just entering operational practice, it will be one of the key tools in building corporate resilience. AI already supports event monitoring, anomaly detection, and response process automation, and its importance will grow with each passing year.

TREND 10 ♦ Information overload



# The crisis of concentration in the age of noise, pings, and notifications

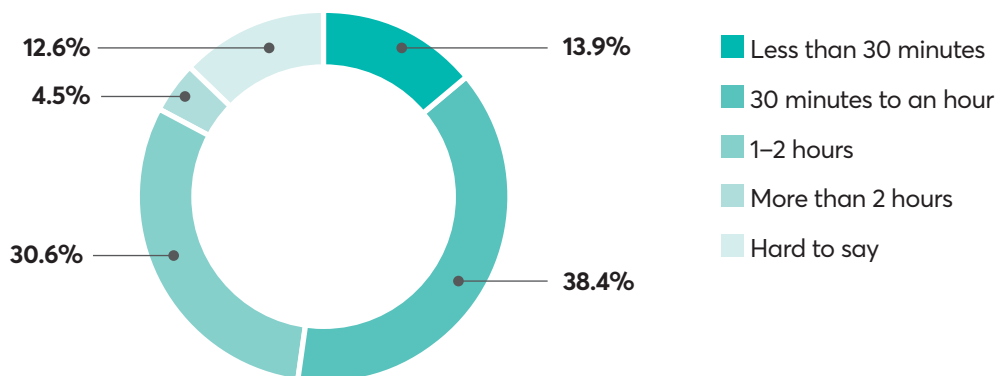
Office workers are facing an ever-increasing scale of overstimulation. The results of the latest Devire and SW Research opinion poll show this very clearly: as many as **85% of Poles believe that overstimulation reduces their productivity**, with one in three (32.9%) saying that it does so to a large extent, and 52.1% saying that it does so to some extent. Only a few, just 9.7%, believe that overstimulation has no impact on their effectiveness.

The Devire survey also shows a significant difference between work environments: **56.7% of Poles feel more overstimulated when working in an office, and only 8.7% when working from home.** At the same time, 23.6% say that the level of overstimulation is the same in both environments. This is an important signal for companies: the problem is not limited to digital tools. The work environment, management style, and task organization are also very important.

**What overstimulates Poles the most?** Respondents participating in the Devire opinion poll had the option of multiple choices. They indicated the following in particular:

- Many tasks "right now" – **46.8%**
- Noise and working in a distracting environment – **39.7%**
- Communication chaos and lack of priorities – **32.3%**
- Too many meetings – **26.5%**
- Social media – **19.4%**
- Constant online presence – **19%**
- Notifications (email, Teams, Slack) – **16.5%**

## Interruptions, pings, breaks – how much time (per day) do "micro-interruptions" take away from Poles, distracting them from work and reducing their efficiency?



Opinion poll conducted by SW Research on behalf of the Devire recruitment agency in November 2025. The survey was conducted among people who are professionally active or looking for work. Methodology: CAWI. N=300.

The conclusion is clear: it is not only the Internet, social media, and notifications that overstimulate employees. Typical organizational elements of work also play a large role: **the need for immediate response, lack of priorities, constant interruptions, and noise.**

It is also worth comparing this with other market data. They confirm that information overload has real consequences for employee well-being. More than half of the respondents participating in the Multi-Life survey (54%) experience stress at least once a week, and as many as 22% face it every day. These are not isolated episodes of tension, but a clearly chronic phenomenon. Importantly, among the most frequently cited sources of stress are excessive stimuli and information chaos, which were indicated by 47% of respondents.<sup>1</sup>



**85% of Poles believe that overstimulation reduces their productivity. One in three (32.9%) say that it does so significantly.**



**Michał Młynarczyk**  
CEO at Devonshire  
Investment Group

## Digital hygiene increasingly necessary

In a Devire opinion poll, as many as 86% of Poles believe that companies should implement digital hygiene rules. For 30.6%, it is a necessity, and another 45% see the need for at least partial changes. Only 12.3% of respondents believe that employees should regulate such issues exclusively on their own. This is a very clear signal – employees expect systemic solutions, not individual ways of dealing with overstimulation.

It is becoming increasingly clear that information overload is no longer seen as a “soft” HR issue. In the coming years, it may become one of the key indicators of organizational effectiveness. **Companies that learn to consciously manage attention, time, and the work environment will gain a real competitive advantage. Why? Because in a world where everything demands our attention, focus is becoming one of the most valuable currencies of productivity.**

Finally, it is worth asking a few key questions. How many companies today have actually implemented digital hygiene principles: not just in the form of declarations, but in everyday practice? Are leaders able to monitor the information load on their teams and do they have the right tools to do so? In a world driven by AI, is “digital minimalism” even possible? Or perhaps artificial intelligence will become our ally, taking over tedious, repetitive tasks and relieving the burden on employees?

<sup>1</sup> <https://biuroprasowe.benefitsystems.pl/422739-stres-postarza-polakow-40-proc-badanych-widzi-w-nim-czynnik-dodajacy-lat>

## How to maintain balance while working in a global rhythm



**Marek Szul**  
Vice President,  
Operations & Technology  
Transformation, Lionbridge

– Working in global structures is a completely different reality than the classic full-time model. Our tasks are not typical shift work, but rather the continuous coordination of activities carried out by teams scattered around the world – from China and India, through Warsaw, to Costa Rica and both coasts of the US. In practice, this means that it becomes natural to start work early in the morning and finish late in the evening. We cover all key time zones, which makes the contractual eight hours of customer support look like 24/7 work, says Marek Szul from Lionbridge. Here are some of the mechanisms developed by him and his team:

### 1. Delegating and transferring tasks

We don't try to do everything ourselves – we have learned to transfer responsibilities to people from other global teams to avoid overload and ensure continuity of work. This allows each region to operate in its own time, and responsibility is distributed evenly. This requires trust and clear communication rules, but it gives us space to regenerate.

### 2. The “no calls on Wednesdays” rule until noon

We have introduced a rule that we do not organize meetings or calls on Wednesday mornings to give ourselves time for deep work. This block of silence allows us to focus on tasks that require concentration and creativity, without being constantly interrupted by subsequent calls. It is a small change that significantly improves efficiency and comfort at work.

### 3. Meetings start 5 minutes after the hour and are limited to 20 minutes

We start each meeting 5 minutes after the hour to give participants a moment to breathe and prepare. In addition, we try to keep them to a maximum of 20 minutes – this forces us to be specific and focus on the essentials. This allows us to avoid “stretching” conversations and gain time to complete actual tasks.

### 4. Support from loved ones and adaptation of the environment

Our loved ones know and understand the nature of our work, and over the years they have learned to plan their activities in a way that is coordinated with our schedules. In exceptional situations, we can count on the support of other people from global teams, which gives us a sense of security and allows us to maintain a balance between our professional and private lives.

### 5. Flexibility and quick response

The market requires us to be flexible and, more than ever before, to respond quickly to changes and carry out the tasks entrusted to us. We are changing and adapting to the new reality, while maintaining the right balance and distance. It is not easy, but thanks to the principles and culture of cooperation we have developed, it is possible.

### 6. The labor code and the new reality

We are still bound by a fairly static labor code that does not keep pace with the dynamically changing work model. We hope that in the future, legal regulations will begin to keep pace, providing more universal solutions adapted to global, hybrid structures. It is important that the law supports a healthy work rhythm and does not hinder its achievement. Working in a global environment requires not only competence and speed, but also the ability to manage our own time and energy. This is a challenge that requires us to constantly adapt, but thanks to the principles and culture of cooperation we have developed, we can maintain the right balance – even in a world that never sleeps.



**Magdalena  
Flera-Łapińska**  
Mental Health Specialist,  
Foundever Poland  
& Training Manager EAP24

## Working in a world of stimuli from a neurological perspective. What overloads our nervous system and how can we deal with it?

Overstimulation is a real overload of the nervous system, which we can compare to a situation where the brain has to “read” a 300-page book every day. That is how much information, stimuli, and messages reach the average employee today. Meanwhile, contrary to what we like to think about ourselves, our brain still functions according to caveman logic. Stress response mechanisms have not evolved for thousands of years, while the world has accelerated at a pace that we are neurologically unable to cope with.

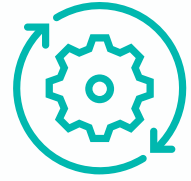
**The brain's response to a stressful notification from a messenger app is identical to its response to a real threat: a spike in cortisol, accelerated heart rate, “fight, flight, or freeze” mode. When this happens once in a while, the body returns to balance.** But when stimuli appear all day long (email, Slack, Teams, WhatsApp, Messenger, ping after ping after ping), we have no chance for cortisol to drop. We enter a state that in psychology is called chronic stress. This results in problems with concentration, irritability, decreased efficiency, difficulty in making decisions, and emotional overload.

**The prefrontal cortex, responsible for attention, working memory, planning, and creativity, is extremely susceptible to overstimulation.** When it is overloaded, we act like a manager sitting in their eighth meeting in a row, who hears a question and... cannot make a decision. Not because they don't know how. But because they have limited access to cognitive resources.

What can we do? Psychologically, the most important thing is to consciously limit stimuli, but taking into account your own style of operation. Not everyone can simply turn off notifications, because for some people, a lack of information is more stressful than an excess of it. However, you can set priorities: which channel is the “most important” and which are “background noise.” You can mute semi-private messengers, create windows for deep work, introduce a “do not disturb” status, shorten meetings, and limit the number of thematic groups. This alone reduces the load on the prefrontal cortex. It is also important to say out loud: multitasking does not exist. **From a neurological point of view, we are not able to listen to a meeting and write a report at the same time. We pretend that we can do it at the cost of fatigue, poorer decisions, and higher stress levels.**

Overload is therefore not a “personal problem of the employee.” It is the result of an environment that generates more stimuli than our brain can handle. And organizations that understand that digital hygiene is important will gain healthier and more effective teams.

TREND 11 ♦ Organizational culture in the world of AI



# Technology is accelerating, culture must keep up

Today, digitization and automation are changing not only processes, but the very foundation of how organizations operate. In companies that are increasingly bold in implementing data-driven technologies, organizational culture needs to be redefined. Trust, cooperation, responsibility, information flow, and a sense of purpose – all these elements are undergoing a profound transformation as algorithms begin to work alongside people and decisions are increasingly made based on data rather than intuition.

KPMG report "Artificial Intelligence in Poland. A landscape full of paradoxes" (2024/2025) emphasizes that companies in Poland are in a transitional phase: most companies declare an interest in the development of AI and are actively experimenting with its applications, but at the same time they lack mature standards, procedures, and competencies that would allow them to use the technology consciously and responsibly.<sup>1</sup> This discrepancy does not only apply to tools – it also applies to **organizational culture**, which often fails to keep pace with technological change.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from research conducted by the EY Academy of Business and the University of Łódź, as described by CRN Polska: leaders in Poland increasingly point out that the biggest barrier to the full use of technology is not a lack of equipment, but an **insufficient "culture of working with data"**, including trust in data, quality of cooperation between departments, openness to experimentation, and acceptance of mistakes as part of the learning process. In many companies, investments in systems are ahead of investments in habits and behaviors that make technology work.<sup>2</sup>

**The issue of culture also recurs in the context of ethics and responsibility. In an environment where some decisions are recommended by a model rather than a human being, the importance of trust is growing – both in algorithms and in the people who supervise them.** Industry media, including Rzeczpospolita, emphasize that organizational culture is becoming one of the key elements influencing a company's credibility in the area of ESG and its long-term image.<sup>3</sup> Organizations that want to effectively implement AI must build an environment in which technology reinforces values rather than replacing them.

People remain at the center of every technological transformation: their emotions, motivations, sense of purpose, and need for influence. Algorithms can speed up processes, but they cannot build trust within a team. They can support decision-making, but they cannot replace responsibility. They can reduce operational risk, but they cannot create a culture of cooperation or change the way people communicate.

Therefore, the most important question that every management board should ask itself today is not "How to implement AI?", but "How to preserve the human dimension of work in the age of algorithms?" Organizations that find the answer to this question will be leaders not only in technology, but above all in the culture of the future, based on consistency, responsibility, and conscious use of data.

<sup>1</sup> <https://kpmg.com/pl/pl/home/insights/2025/07/sztuczna-inteligencja-w-polsce.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://crn.pl/aktualnosci/przywodztwo-przyszlosci-a-nowe-technologie>

<sup>3</sup> <https://pro.rp.pl/esg-w-praktyce/art43224081-kultura-organizacyjna-kluczowy-kontekst-ktory-decyduje-o-sile-esg>



**Magdalena  
Bluma-Schneider**  
Director of the HR  
Office for Recruitment  
and Employer Branding  
and the HR Office  
for Development and  
Training, Nest! Bank

## Puchacz in action. How does the internal AI assistant support Nest! Bank employees?

The technological transformation we are witnessing today goes far beyond the digitization of processes or the implementation of new work automation tools. Artificial intelligence is beginning to have a real impact on organizational culture: on decision-making, communication, collaboration, and even on employees' sense of purpose and responsibility. Companies today face a unique challenge: they must simultaneously develop technology and a culture that will allow that technology to be used wisely, safely, and ethically.

**From my perspective, the key element in introducing AI is not the models themselves, but people: their attitudes, fears, expectations, and readiness to change.** Employees need a safe space to learn new tools, ask questions, make mistakes, and gradually become familiar with the technology. Leaders, in turn, must be able to guide teams through change so that AI is a source of support rather than anxiety. That's why, before we started thinking about implementing advanced solutions, we created a space for learning, testing, and familiarizing employees with new tools. We wanted everyone, regardless of their position, to feel that they could experiment, ask questions, make mistakes, and build their skills. This is how our AI ecosystem was born, consisting of Puchacz, an internal AI assistant, and NestStore, a platform where every employee can create their own bot to streamline their daily work. The results exceeded our expectations. Our employees have created nearly 500 bots in NestStore, send over 25,000 queries to Puchacz every month, and their engagement in building and actively using AI tools increased by 400% during the company's "Puchacz GPT Challenge." This example shows that technology only starts to work when people feel like they are its co-creators, rather than just recipients of tools imposed on them.

Most importantly, however, this cultural change has directly translated into value for customers. Thanks to the organization's readiness, we were the first bank in Poland to introduce an AI assistant for customers – N!Asystema, based on the GPT model, supporting natural communication, financial analysis, and automation of everyday tasks. This proves that innovation rooted in culture and people becomes a real competitive advantage and an element that builds a new standard of customer experience.

In our company, we are introducing AI not to replace people, but to free up their time and support their work, especially where thinking, relationships, responsibility, or customer contact are needed. A culture that supports courage and curiosity naturally becomes more innovative and adapts AI tools more quickly in everyday tasks. I think that in the coming years, organizations that understand that AI is not an implementation but a change in mindset will have an advantage. Algorithms can speed up processes, but it is people who give them meaning. And it will be up to people to decide whether AI becomes a competitive advantage or an untapped opportunity.

## TREND 12 ♦ Blurring the lines between work and private life



# Always available. When work consumes your private life

Flexibility seems to be an advantage of modern work. But it can also be an invisible trap. The latest opinion poll by Devire and SW Research shows how much work is now encroaching on private life: **as many as 80.9% of Poles perform professional duties outside working hours.** One in three do so several times a week (27.4%), another 41.9% do so sporadically, but regularly. In turn, 11.6% work overtime every day. Only 19% declare that they never perform professional tasks outside of working hours.<sup>1</sup>

Work does not end when the working day ends. It often moves to the garden, the sofa, a walk with children, or the kitchen during dinner. The boundary does not suddenly disappear – it simply blurs.

Data from the Microsoft Work Trend Index 2025 shows areas that have spiraled out of control.<sup>2</sup> One in three employees believes that the pace of the last five years has been so fast that they have been unable to keep up. Here are some of the most important findings and figures:

- **40% of people who use the Internet at 6 a.m. start their day by checking their emails and priorities.**
- **The average employee receives 117 emails a day** – most of which they read in less than a minute, which means that their attention is constantly being "hijacked".
- Over the past year, the number of mass emails to 20+ recipients has increased by 7%, while the number of 1:1 messages has decreased by 5%.
- **60% of meetings are unplanned and take place ad hoc.** Employees get caught up in conversations and arrangements that "came up suddenly," taking away time from their actual work.
- During peak working hours, employees are interrupted almost every two minutes. In practice, this results in up to **275 interruptions per day due to sudden meetings, emails, or chat messages.**
- **Finally, it is only on weekends that people have the chance to work with concentration, because only then does the digital noise subside enough to get something done "from A to Z."**

Work invades our privacy not only because we are always online, but also because the pace and organization of work force us to "catch up" after hours. Polish data only confirms this. According to the LiveCareer.pl survey "Work-life balance of Poles," only 21% of employees are able to find time to rest and regenerate after work, and one in eight has no time at all. Over 53% of respondents admit that they regularly take work responsibilities home with them, and as many as 65% feel pressure to respond to work messages after hours. The boundaries also blur during vacation: one in four employees does not feel that they can take time off without worry, and 27% admit that they work during their vacation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Opinion poll conducted by SW Research on behalf of the Devire recruitment agency in November 2025. The survey was conducted among people who are professionally active or looking for work. Methodology: CAWI. N=300.

<sup>2</sup> Microsoft Work Trend Index 2025 – Breaking Down the Infinite Workday. Źródło: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/worklab/worktrend-index/breaking-down-infinite-workday>

<sup>3</sup> <https://innpoland.pl/215837,zmeczenie-nawet-po-urlopie-i-weekendzie-nic-dziwnego-wyniki-nowego-badania>

## The turquoise work philosophy gives greater autonomy in how tasks are performed



**Michał Młynarczyk**  
CEO at Devonshire  
Investment Group

How to maintain balance in a world that never sleeps? Solutions that work in practice include: clear “offline” hours, blocking notifications after a certain time, introducing meeting-free days (e.g., Mondays), regular “reset” breaks, well-structured hybrid work, time and attention management training, and tools that limit multitasking.

At Devire, we are additionally supported in this by the teal work philosophy. In a teal organization, there is no traditional hierarchy, and people are evaluated through the prism of achieved goals and responsibilities, not by the number of hours spent “at their desk.” Employees can tailor their work to their needs and daily rhythm, while at the same time having a great deal of autonomy in deciding how to complete their tasks. As a result, it is easier to set boundaries and maintain balance.



**40% of people who use the Internet at 6 a.m. start their day by checking their emails and priorities.**

Microsoft Work Trend Index 2025

## Ad hoc culture and burnout



**Adam Ajtner**  
Strategic Relations  
Manager Devire

Reading the results of our study, I see confirmation of what I observe every day in conversations with our clients and business partners. We have fallen into the trap of ad hoc culture. The data clearly shows that employees log in in the evenings not because they have too many tasks, but because their attention is constantly fragmented during office hours. Real deep work has been pushed into the evenings or weekends. As a strategic partner to many organizations, I see this becoming a real business risk. An employee replying to emails over dinner is an alarm signal for the company – proof that internal processes are inefficient. **Often, the source of the problem is also the example set by those at the top. When a leader sends messages after hours, the team – even without explicit instructions – feels pressure to respond immediately.** That’s why my advice to managers is simple: model the attitudes you expect. If you work in the evening, use the delayed delivery function. Your flexibility cannot become a compulsion for others. Today, competitive advantage is built by organizations that are able to systematically protect their people’s time. The alternative is burnout and the loss of key talent, which no one can afford in the current market conditions. That is why in the coming year, the key competence of a leader will be not only managing people, but above all, managing their attention.

## TREND 13 ♦ Leadership in a different light



# A new era of leadership: leaders between change, technology, and emotions

We live in an age where change has become the only constant. The pace of work is increasing. In addition to that is digital transformation, pressure related to AI, ESG requirements, and working in complex structures. Leaders are facing new challenges: they are expected to be guides, stabilizers, and interpreters of change and technology into "human language."

At the same time, leaders are one of the most burdened groups in organizations today. According to the IRCenter report "Leaders' Needs 2024" cited by Sukces Pisany Szminką, as many as **75% of leaders of small teams in Poland experience symptoms of burnout, and 63% admit that they cannot afford to show emotions at work.**<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, expectations are growing as to what kind of leaders are "needed for tomorrow." In a study by the EY Academy of Business and the University of Łódź, described by CRN, over 700 leaders in Poland were asked what competencies will be key for leadership in the future. The **ability to understand and respond empathetically to the needs of employees came first, with 38% of respondents indicating this.** This was followed by: **a holistic view of the situation (24%), collaborative communication (23%), and the ability to build hybrid teams that combine human and technological competencies (23%).**<sup>2</sup> This is a clear signal: "hard knowledge" is still important, but a leader's effectiveness is increasingly determined by interpersonal skills, empathy, and the ability to work in a world of people and technology simultaneously.

The new model of a leader is someone **who stands not so much in front of the team, but in the middle** of it: they build a sense of psychological security, create space for discussion about difficulties, and at the same time are able to set a direction in the midst of change. This is a leader who:

- Does not pretend to be indestructible, but knows how to talk about boundaries and seek support
- Explains the meaning of tasks, rather than just holding people accountable for their completion
- Treats AI and technology as tools to relieve people, not replace relationships
- Is able to reconcile business requirements with the real capabilities of the team.



**Nearly 40% of leaders believe that in the future, one of the most important distinguishing features of leadership will be the ability to understand employees' needs and respond to them with empathy.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://sukcespisanyzminka.pl/samotni-na-szczycie-wypalenie-zawodowe/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://crn.pl/aktualnosci/przywodztwo-przyszlosci-a-nowe-technologie/>

The new era of leadership therefore requires a change not only in the competencies of individual managers, but in the entire system. Organizations that want to have leaders capable of guiding people through uncertainty need to take care of several things at once. First: the development of soft and leadership skills, such as empathy, mental resilience, communication, and working with emotions. Second, companies should address the risk of leader burnout by offering them real support: mentoring, managerial supervision, access to well-being tools, the opportunity to share responsibility, etc. Third, it is necessary to design leadership in such a way that AI, automation, and processes do not overshadow relationships, meaning, and values.

## Empathy is not indulgence or "softness." It is the ability to see things from the employee's perspective.



**Magdalena Kanclerz**  
Regional Director  
Permanent Recruitment,  
Devire

Managing a dispersed team that is overloaded with information and operating in an environment of constant change is one of the greatest challenges facing modern leaders today. The most effective approach combines empathy, clear communication, good work organization, and the ability to prioritize.

It is no coincidence that empathy is at the top of the list. **True people managers are literally "worth their weight in gold" today, and organizations identify this competency as key in their recruitment processes.** Who is such a leader? It is a person who focuses on people: their development, motivation, and well-being, understanding that it is they who build the organization's results. Empathy is not indulgence or "softness." It is daily mindfulness, the ability to see things from an employee's perspective and recognize what makes their work easier or more difficult. It is only on the basis of empathy that clear communication can be developed, priorities set, and meaning given to tasks.

A good leader works together with their team: they remove obstacles, facilitate work, and, very importantly, give space for action instead of relying on excessive control. Teams work effectively when they are not overloaded, when they feel motivated but not burned out, and when their work-life balance remains in equilibrium. **This is the role of a leader: to create such working conditions, share responsibility for results, and develop a culture in which each team member understands the meaning of their actions. Appreciating people's contributions, authenticity, credibility, and "leading by example" are still of great importance.**

What will the leaders of the future be like? First and foremost, they will operate in an environment that is even more digital, volatile, and unpredictable than today. They will need to be able to build cooperation between people and their "digital counterparts," reinforce the sense of purpose in their work, and motivate teams that will experience increasing information overload. It will also be necessary to consciously care for the mental well-being of employees, especially in the reality of remote work and dispersed teams. Added to this is intergenerational and intercultural integration: teams will become increasingly diverse, and the ability to bring them together will become one of the key competencies of leaders. One thing is certain: people will continue to be the most important factor, and it will be up to leaders to ensure that their organizations keep pace with the rate of change.

TREND 14 ♦ The search for meaning



# Engagement grows where there is a sense of meaning

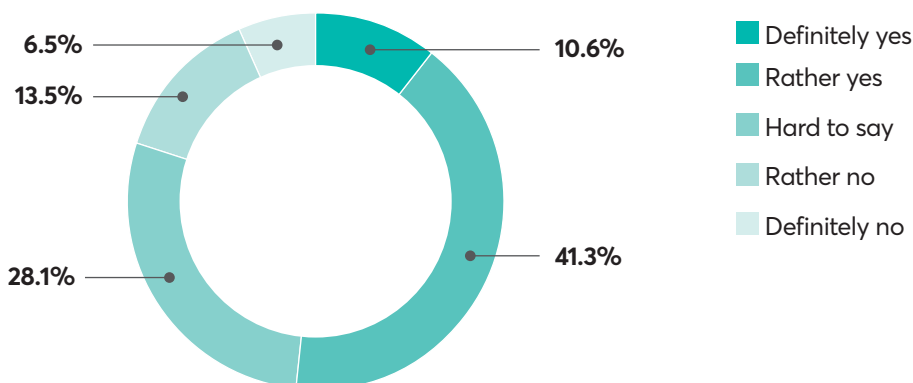
Employees increasingly want to know that what they do really matters. A sense of meaning is no longer a soft value, but has become one of the key factors influencing motivation, efficiency, and professional well-being.

A survey by Devire and SW Research shows that 52% of Poles feel a sense of meaning and fulfillment at work (41.3% "rather yes," 10.6% "definitely yes"). **At the same time, one in ten employees (13.5%) say outright that their work does not give them a sense of meaning, and as many as 28.1% respond "hard to say," which indicates a lack of clarity, direction, and impact.** As a result, almost half of Poles (48%) are unsure whether their daily activities have any greater purpose.

According to the report "The Well-being of Poles in 2024," the average level of well-being in Poland is only 4.9 on a scale of 1 to 10.<sup>1</sup> Respondents emphasize that their sense of well-being is influenced by, among other things, the meaning of their work, the alignment of values with the culture of the organization, and a sense of agency.<sup>2</sup> When these elements are present, commitment, loyalty, and willingness to work together increase. Meaning and inner peace strengthen relationships within teams, improve the atmosphere, support mental and physical health, and, in the broader perspective, translate into the quality of the entire organization's activities.

Companies that want to genuinely strengthen the sense of meaning among their employees can act on several levels. The most important thing is to show people that their daily tasks translate into the company's success, and to regularly appreciate their effort and commitment. It is equally important to create space for opinions, ideas, and co-creation of solutions. It is this sense of influence that builds agency, motivation, and trust. It is also worth talking about needs, supporting passions, and offering training that truly strengthens the team's potential. The meaning of work does not arise from declarations. It arises in everyday life, in conversations, in the decisions of leaders, and in an organizational culture that can give meaning to work.

Does work give Poles a sense of meaning and fulfillment?



Opinion poll conducted by SW Research on behalf of the Devire recruitment agency in November 2025. The survey was conducted among people who are professionally active or looking for work. Methodology: CAWI. N=300.

<sup>1</sup> <https://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/artykuly/dobrostan-jako-nowe-wyzwanie-odpowiedzialnego-biznesu-artikul-partnera-raportuodpowiedzialny-biznes-w-polsce-2024-dobre-praktyki>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.benefitsystems.pl/pl/artikul/wewnetrzny-spokoj-pracownika-jakie-dzialania-wdrozyc-by-zbudowac-go-w-firmie>

## When there is no meaning, motivation and commitment decline



**Joanna Niedzińska**  
Head of Talent, Learning  
and Development,  
Danone

There has been a lot of talk lately about finding meaning in work. But in my opinion, this is not a new trend. People have always wanted to see the impact of their actions, feel empowered, and understand what their efforts contribute to. However, the context has changed. Recent years, full of uncertainty, acceleration, and global crises, have amplified this need to a level where a lack of meaning instantly affects motivation and engagement. And this applies to all generations, not just the youngest. We only differ in how we define that meaning.

**In practice, I see that a lack of meaning triggers a whole chain of consequences: the desire to act declines, well-being deteriorates, and motivation melts away.**

At the same time, there is another extreme, and it is worth talking about it openly, namely people who almost symbiotically connect their identity with their work. For them, an excessive need for meaning sometimes leads to workaholism, burnout, and the belief that "I am my work." That is why balance is so important in this area.

When I think about how companies understand meaning in practice, I see a huge range. Some organizations really try to show their employees how their tasks connect to the bigger picture. But many companies still treat their mission as a slogan from a presentation – except that meaning is not born on slides.

**Meaning is created in everyday behavior, in transparency, in what attitudes are rewarded and what attitudes are ignored. And above all, in the relationship with the immediate supervisor.** They are the ones who can show that even the smallest piece of work is part of something bigger. They are the ones who can make someone stop seeing themselves as a person who "clicks on tables" and start seeing their contribution to the product, the customer, and the team.

In my experience, meaning largely depends on the organizational culture: the real, everyday culture, not the one on posters. If declarations are not consistent with behavior, people sense it immediately. That is why authenticity, consistency, and showing the real connections between the company's values and everyday activities are key.

Each of us can do a few simple things to feel a sense of purpose again. First, it is worth asking yourself what you are really looking for in your job: security, development, influence, or perhaps simply stability. Second, determine what you can realistically influence. **Remember that "micro-impact" is often more tangible than major transformations.** And thirdly, realize how your daily actions translate into people, processes, and results. Sometimes meaning does not disappear, but each of us has to rediscover it in our own way.



**Meaning largely depends on organizational culture: the real, everyday culture, not the one on posters. If declarations are not consistent with behavior, people sense it immediately.**

## Meaning arises from action and relationships with others



**Izabela Kazimierska**  
Managing Director,  
Devire Global Solutions

■ **Meaning can mean something completely different to everyone, and even attempting to describe it through the values we consider important can take many forms.** Both at work and in life, the search for meaning is not an intellectual luxury but a basic need that determines our mental health, quality of life, and ability to engage. Our meaning should be consistent with what is important to us. It is difficult to define, understand, or pursue if we get lost in repetitive, boring tasks, tasks in which we see no purpose or agency, or with which we do not identify, or even when we act against ourselves, our principles, or our beliefs.

■ **The world is rushing by, and recent years have been a real roller coaster. We have gone through a pandemic, a war has broken out and is still raging beyond our borders, we are undergoing a technological revolution and all the apocalyptic scenarios associated with it – job losses, our lives being directed by AI, and even our careers being given meaning by it.**

Mass layoffs and the outflow of jobs in 2025 to countries with cheaper labor only add to this dynamic. The world is accelerating like never before, and it will continue to surprise us, become more complicated, and build pressure. Just look at the growing plague of lifestyle diseases. That is why we should first and foremost ask ourselves the questions: WHAT MAKES SENSE TO US? WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO US? Take care of your mental health and consciously manage your motivation, career, and daily satisfaction with your activities.

This may be a career, striving to reach the top, or, on the contrary, peace of mind, job stability, a work-life balance, but only we ourselves know what is best for us. The role of companies will be to support us in the process of guiding and motivating ourselves.

■ **What will win in the market is an attitude of authenticity and giving employees the feeling that they are contributing to the good of the company, their colleagues, and the market in their operational activities, and not just in the values and mission stated on banners.** The time of corporations is long gone, but now we are reaching a point where the companies and leaders who understand this will survive.

■ **For me, the search for meaning is about designing a life in harmony with myself, my needs, ambitions, and values.** It is about working in an environment that allows room for mistakes, learning, development, sensitivity, respects diversity, treats its employees fairly, and adheres to professional ethics. It shows this in its daily work—in good times and bad—by remaining authentic and not just through its image on social media of how it “should be” because it “sells” well. The new generation is even more sensitive to inauthenticity, and it is this generation that will shape the job market in the coming years.

It is also important to remember that meaning is not something that is given once and for all or unchanging. On the contrary, it is dynamic, born in action and in relationships with others. When we seek and nurture it, it becomes one of the most important sources of human strength, and then commitment is no longer an effort, but becomes a natural consequence of a meaningful life. The leaders of tomorrow will start with themselves, building their own meaning, and then help others follow this path. The companies of tomorrow will not resemble post-industrial hierarchical ladders, but rather families or living organisms that together face the market, its challenges, and constant changes.

# devire.

## About Devire

We are one of the largest recruitment agencies in Poland. We specialize in permanent recruitment, outsourcing, and IT services. Our goal is to connect great people with great employers.

We support companies in their development by searching for the best candidates, optimizing processes, providing professional outsourcing, and offering innovative IT solutions—but what sets us apart is our authentic relationships and cultural fit.

We combine the individual approach of a boutique agency with the resources of a large company.

Let's talk



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