



THE AUGUST HIRING RESET: IS YOUR TEAM READY FOR Q4?

Is your workforce ready for the final quarter of the year?

August is more than just another month on the calendar. For businesses, it is a valuable checkpoint, a moment to step back, assess what has worked so far, identify where the gaps are, and prepare for the final stretch of the year.

With Q4 approaching, businesses across Nigeria and international markets are beginning to think about year-end targets, new projects, expansion plans, employee performance, budgets and the talent required to deliver their objectives.

Five Signs Your Business May Need to Start Hiring

1. Your team is consistently overloaded

If employees are regularly working beyond their normal capacity, the issue may not be productivity. It may be insufficient staffing.

Continued pressure can contribute to burnout, reduced quality of work and employee dissatisfaction.

2. Your business is growing

New clients, contracts, markets, products or services can quickly create a need for additional talent.

Recruiting after growth has already occurred may mean your people are constantly trying to catch up.

3. You have a skills gap

Sometimes the answer isn't simply "more people."

You may need someone with a specific technical skill, leadership capability, industry experience or digital expertise that your current workforce does not possess.

4. A key employee leaving would create a major gap

If one person's departure would significantly disrupt a department, it may be time to consider succession planning, cross-training or additional recruitment.

5. You have important Q4 goals but no talent plan

If your organisation has ambitious goals for the final quarter but hasn't considered whether the current workforce can deliver them, now is the time to start.

WHAT IS A HIRING RESET?

A hiring reset is not necessarily about increasing headcount.

It is about taking a strategic look at your workforce and asking:

- Do we have the right people in the right roles?
- Are there skills we currently lack?
- Which teams are already stretched?
- What projects or business priorities are coming in Q4?
- Are we hiring for today's problems or preparing for tomorrow's needs?
- Which roles are essential to achieving our business objectives?
- Are we making the best use of the talent already within the organisation?

The answers can reveal that the organisation needs to recruit, restructure, upskill, redeploy, or simply improve workforce planning.

WHY AUGUST MATTERS

The period between August and the end of the year can move quickly.

Recruitment teams that wait until a vacancy becomes urgent often find themselves competing for a smaller pool of available candidates while simultaneously dealing with internal deadlines.

Starting earlier creates room for better decisions.

Instead of hiring the first person who appears available, employers can spend more time evaluating:

- **Skills:** Does the candidate have the capabilities required for the role?
- **Potential:** Can they grow with the organisation?
- **Cultural contribution:** Will they strengthen the team?
- **Adaptability:** Can they operate effectively when priorities change?
- **Long-term value:** Will the hire still make sense beyond Q4?

IDENTIFY YOUR Q4 CRITICAL ROLES

- Not every vacancy needs to be filled immediately.
- Prioritise positions based on their impact on business performance.

For example, ask:

- Which roles directly affect revenue?
- Which positions support key customers?
- Which roles are essential to operational continuity?
- Which skills are difficult to find in the market?

WHAT SHOULD HIRING MANAGERS DO AT THE END OF AUGUST?

At the end of August, conduct a practical workforce review.

1. **Review headcount:** Compare your current workforce with your expected Q4 workload.
2. **Identify capability gaps:** Look beyond job titles. What skills are missing?
3. **Review turnover risk:** Are there key employees who may be considering leaving?
4. **Assess succession:** If a critical employee left tomorrow, who could step into the role?
5. **Review open vacancies:** Are existing job descriptions still accurate?
6. **Look internally:** Could an existing employee develop into the role?
7. **Start priority recruitment:** For roles that are essential to Q4 performance, don't wait until October.
8. **Think beyond Q4:** A successful hire should support the organisation's longer-term strategy, not just solve a short-term problem.

The better question is:

“What talent will help our organisation achieve what it is trying to accomplish?”

Q4 hiring should not begin with panic. It should begin with preparation.



BEYOND THE CV: WHAT REALLY STANDS OUT IN 2026?

In 2026, a good CV is only the beginning of the conversation.

Recruitment has changed significantly. Employers are increasingly looking beyond qualifications, job titles, and years of experience to understand the person behind the application.

A candidate may have an impressive CV, but employers also want answers to more important questions:

- Can this person solve problems?
- Can they adapt?
- Can they learn?
- Can they work with others?
- Can they use technology effectively?
- Can they create measurable value?

These are the qualities that can make a candidate stand out in today's competitive hiring environment.

- **Demonstrated impact, not just responsibilities :** One of the most common mistakes candidates make is describing what they were responsible for without explaining what they achieved. Whenever possible, turn responsibilities into evidence.
- **Adaptability is becoming essential:** The workplace is changing rapidly. Technology, artificial intelligence, new business models, economic pressures, changing customer expectations, and evolving job requirements mean that employees need to be comfortable with change.

A candidate who can say, **“This was new to me, so I learned how to do it”** may be more attractive than someone whose experience is impressive but rigid.

- **AI literacy and responsible technology use:** Artificial intelligence has become an increasingly important part of the workplace. But being “AI literate” does not necessarily mean being a technical expert. For many roles, it means understanding how AI and digital tools can support productivity while recognising their limitations. The key is not simply saying **“I use AI.”** Show how technology helped you achieve a better result.
- **Problem-solving ability:** Employers don't hire people simply because they can perform routine tasks. They hire people who can think. During an interview, a candidate who explains how they approached a difficult situation can provide valuable evidence of their judgement and decision-making. A useful approach is: **Situation → Challenge → Action → Result**
- **Communication remains a major differentiator:** Technology may change how we work, but communication remains fundamental. Strong candidates can communicate clearly with colleagues, managers, customers, and stakeholders. Excellent communication is particularly valuable for employees working across teams and functions.
- **Emotional intelligence:** Technical skills can often be taught. How someone works with people can be more difficult to develop. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, relationship management, and the ability to understand how your behaviour affects others.
- **A learning mindset:** In a fast-changing labour market, what someone knows today may not be enough tomorrow. That's why employers increasingly value people who demonstrate a commitment to learning. Learning doesn't have to mean collecting certificates. A candidate who can demonstrate **how they have grown** can be particularly compelling.



BEYOND THE CV: WHAT REALLY STANDS OUT IN 2026?

- **Transferable skills:** Candidates sometimes underestimate experience that doesn't perfectly match the job description. But many skills can transfer between industries and roles. The key is to connect previous experience to the requirements of the new role.
- **Authenticity matters:** Candidates are often tempted to fill CVs with phrases such as:
 - Results-driven.
 - Team player.
 - Strategic thinker.
 - Hard-working.
 - Dynamic.
 - Excellent communicator.

These phrases aren't necessarily wrong, but they are easy to claim and difficult to evaluate. Evidence is more powerful than adjectives. Show it rather than simply saying it.

- **Cultural contribution rather than “culture fit”:** The idea of culture fit is also evolving. Hiring solely for people who seem similar to the existing team can create a workforce that lacks different perspectives.

A stronger approach is to consider culture contribution.

Ask:

- What perspective could this person bring?
- What experiences are different from those already represented?
- Will they challenge assumptions constructively?
- Can they strengthen the way the team works?

The objective isn't to hire people who all think alike.

It is to build teams that can work effectively together while bringing different strengths and perspectives.

WHAT CANDIDATES SHOULD DO DIFFERENTLY IN 2026

Before submitting an application, ask:

- Does my CV show outcomes or just responsibilities?
- Have I demonstrated how I have adapted to change?
- Can I provide examples of problem-solving?
- Have I shown how I use technology?
- Can I demonstrate continuous learning?
- Does my LinkedIn/profile tell the same professional story as my CV?
- Can I explain the value I would bring to this particular organisation?

These questions can help transform an application from a list of previous jobs into a clearer picture of professional value.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD LOOK FOR

The responsibility isn't entirely on candidates. Employers also need to rethink how they assess talent.

A CV screening process that focuses too heavily on keywords, job titles, or a rigid career history can overlook capable people.

Recruiters and hiring managers should consider using:

- Structured interviews.
- Skills-based assessments.
- Work samples.
- Behavioural questions.
- Portfolio reviews.
- Practical exercises.
- Evidence of measurable achievements.

The objective should be to assess what someone can actually do, not simply how well their CV matches a checklist.



THE 2026 TAKEAWAY

- The strongest candidates are no longer defined solely by where they have worked or what qualifications they have collected.
- They stand out because they can demonstrate impact, adaptability, curiosity, problem-solving, communication, digital confidence, and a willingness to keep learning.
- For candidates, the message is simple:

Don't just tell employers what you've done. Show them what you can do.

- For employers, the message is equally important:

Don't just hire the strongest CV. Look for the strongest evidence of potential and value.

HR MYTHS FOR THE MOMENT

- **HR is the employee's advocate.**

Myth: HR exists primarily to protect employees.

Reality: HR has to balance employees, managers, leadership, and the organization.

- **A good employee doesn't need recognition.**

Myth: High performers are self-motivated and don't need much feedback.

Reality: Lack of recognition can quietly drive strong people away.

- **People leave because of money.**

Myth: Compensation is the main reason people resign.

Reality: Management, growth, workload, culture, and lack of trust often matter just as much.

- **Employee engagement is an HR responsibility.**

Myth: HR should fix engagement.

Reality: The employee's day-to-day experience is largely created by their manager and team.

One Question to Leave With

A moment to pause, reflect, and look beyond the obvious.

Workplace experiences are shaped by more than job titles, policies, and performance reviews. Sometimes the real issue is the manager, the culture, unclear expectations, poor communication, or simply staying somewhere that no longer supports your growth.

This closing note invites employees, managers, and HR professionals to ask themselves honest questions about their workplace and their role in it.

- **For employees:** Are you unhappy with the job—or the environment you're working in?
- **For managers:** Would your team describe your leadership the way you think they would?
- **For HR:** Are you solving the real problem, or simply managing the process



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