

TECHNOLOGY & CORPORATE FUNCTIONS

**ABAYENKO**

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# International Executive Search

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# Specialisms

SECTOR COVERAGE & INDUSTRY VERTICALS

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SENIOR APPOINTMENTS & BOARD

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP & SPECIALIST HIRES

## Technology & Corporate Functions

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TECHNOLOGY & CYBERSECURITY

RENEWABLES & ENVIRONMENT

CLEAN ENERGY & BATTERIES

AUTOMOTIVE & AEROSPACE

RISK & CORPORATE FINANCE

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## Our Values

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### Guided by our values.

- ✓ We put others first and at the heart of our work.
- ✓ We advocate without presumption or self-interest.
- ✓ We infuse hospitality and kindness into everything we do.
- ✓ We act with the highest standards of professional integrity.
- ✓ We focus on the bigger picture across all our engagements.
- ✓ We promote high-performing, diverse and inclusive workplaces.
- ✓ We commit to those who need us and are bound by a duty of care.
- ✓ We learn from our interactions and apply the outcomes to our work.
- ✓ We experiment, encourage creativity and cultivate new ways of thinking.
- ✓ We strive towards continuous self-improvement and reflect on our achievements.
- ✓ We foster long-term relationships through a culture of trust, transparency and relevance.



# Testimonials

PUBLIC ENDORSEMENTS & CLIENT FEEDBACK

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**Alex Marin Gasga**

Senior Partner Director, Microsoft

*“Damien is a highly passionate, experienced and excellent talent executive with a wealth of knowledge in the industry and the Asia region. His sharp approach to talent selection is remarkable, as well as his advocacy for what he believes in. These were attributes I experienced first-hand and give him an edge over others in the industry.”*





**Val Smirnov**

Executive Director, Hong Kong Jockey Club

*“Had a pleasant and professional hiring experience with Damien. Insights and job market information beyond formal JDs and company profiles, other candidate stories — all was really helpful. Additional guidance through the interview process and insight into the personalities of the interviewers also helped to pass through it flawlessly. Damien has my highest recommendation!”*







### **Raja Subbiah**

Regional Practice Director, Accenture

*"Damien is a very open and sincere consultant who can advise what is right for the individual. He will coach and hand-hold through the executive hiring process like a humble careers counsellor. You'll have a great time."*

### **Billy Leung**

Vice President, J.P. Morgan

*"Damien is a driven, responsible and responsive consultant with whom I have recently partnered. As recommended to me, he has an impressive network and a superb working knowledge of the industry. Thanks for all the support thus far... Keep it up!"*



### **Matthew Hum**

Chief Technology Officer, CyberForce

*“Damien was everything you could want from a recruiter. He got to know me and my skillset rather than ticking off a checklist. He communicates well and explains why you may (or may not) be a good fit. His empathy is refreshing and somewhat new to the industry. This likely comes from two decades spent in Asia, which clearly made him aware of local culture and the Chinese language. Damien is hands down one of the Top 3, if not the Top, recruiters I have ever worked with.”*

### **Rahul Lohar**

Associate Director – Cyber Security, FWD Insurance

*“I had a fantastic experience with Damien. He was simply brilliant and spontaneous throughout the engagement. Damien listens carefully to the entire story and always suggests viable, if not the best possible solutions. He is easily the most technical recruiter I’ve come across, or at least the only one I know that taught himself to code in Python, Golang and JavaScript. Keep up the good work mate.”*

### **Ravindar Kumar**

Head of Enterprise Services, Aruba

*“Damien is hardworking, results oriented and collaborative. He consistently produces high quality work, helping clients achieve their goals and exceeding expectations. I love working with him.”*



**Gregg GohTeckHua**

Chief Information Security Officer, NTUC

*"Damien is very helpful and goes the extra mile for his clients. I really appreciate his efforts. Thanks for everything.."*

**Matteo Perazzo**

Director of Pre-Sales, Skybox Security

*"I had the opportunity to collaborate with Damien and I really appreciated his straight forward approach, clear communication and honesty. All good qualities to set the ground for success!"*

**Chieh-Hsin Tsing**

Enterprise Account Executive, Red Hat

*"Damien is known to my friends as an expert recruiter who brings out the best in any candidate. I hope to have the pleasure of working with him again and I would recommend him to anyone searching for a new career opportunity."*

**Saman Fatahpour**

Security Engineer, Crypto.com

*"Damien and his friends did a big favour for me. I highly recommend Damien as a recruiter and would love to work together again."*



# Bespoke Solutions

MORE THAN AN INTRODUCTION SERVICE

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## — Contingent Appointments

Sometimes a vacancy goes unfilled, time is limited and resources are stretched across competing priorities, which is why contingent solutions are ideal for organisations seeking to expand their talent pool without upfront commitment. Contingent appointments are also suitable for businesses looking to attract the highest standard of talent and ensure no stone is left unturned, drawing upon the networks of external recruiters to widen their available sources of talent. Our specialist team is positioned to assist with demanding, hard to fill, niche searches that can often divert resources away from more pressing tasks at hand. We also provide discounts for identical vacancies, volume hiring projects and exclusivity.

## — Embedded Talent & RPO

In some instances, it is not a vacancy that needs filling. In fact, it can be a gap within your internal processes and the talent function generally. Embedded RPO is an alternative solution designed for volume hiring projects, enabling access to an embedded recruitment team for a fixed monthly fee. It also enables organisations to maintain greater control over the hiring process and develop a sustainable talent strategy, which may be ideal for start-ups with minimal talent infrastructure looking to pilot and establish their first internal recruiting function. It can also be an appropriate solution for HR teams who require more than candidate sourcing alone, face time constraints and would prefer to work exclusively with a talent specialist they already know and trust. Aside from volume hiring, our RPO services cater for psychometric assessment, situational judgement analysis, seamless onboarding, background checks, criminal record disclosures, academic verification, professional registration queries, employment referencing, pre-employment screening, market mapping, salary benchmarking, competitor analysis, talent pipelining, succession planning, system reviews, ATS implementation, employer branding, workforce planning, talent strategy, DEI objectives and process design. The ultimate goal of embedded talent is to leave your organisation in a better position and create a foundation for future success.





## — Attention to detail

One size rarely fits all, which is why we offer a range of solutions from retained advisory to contingent appointments, embedded talent and recruitment process outsourcing.

Going beyond the traditional recruitment model, our uniquely tailored solutions are designed to help build high-performing and diverse leadership teams.

We strive to deliver a personalised candidate experience, implement hiring processes of the highest standard and attract future leaders who will shape the success of your organisation for years to come.

As part of the selection process we anonymise shortlists and include candidates from underrepresented groups to broaden our searches and remove any preconceptions or bias.

We add a personal touch to the candidate narrative and contribute towards their ongoing development through an extensive network of carefully selected leadership coaches and transformation partners.

We also utilise technical, psychometric and situational judgement assessments to give your business greater confidence in candidate suitability alongside a nuanced understanding of key competencies, individual personalities and leadership styles.

We combine this analysis with comprehensive market mapping, salary benchmarking and competitor analysis to pinpoint the best talent available, both locally and regionally.

As a team we strive towards continuous improvement, reflecting on feedback to drive better experiences for both our candidates and industry partners alike.

We take pride in the depth of our leadership assessments and exceed expectations through a range of immersive simulations, pre-recorded video introductions bringing candidate qualities to life and extensive reports offering a multifaceted view of individual leadership skills.

We also support our clients in designing organisational structures, talent development and reward strategies that motivate high-performance teams and retain future leaders for lasting success.

It's about human connection, intrinsic passion and leaving no stone unturned in finding it.



## — Our Services

Applying retained search practices to contingent recruitment, we are international executive search specialists seeking to make a difference through an alternative search process carefully designed to consolidate detailed research and due diligence while uncovering hidden talent and future leadership.

Assisted by bespoke research systems, we can discover new solutions and assess candidate suitability in greater detail, ensuring no-one is overlooked.

Our ability to delve deeper into specialist areas, exploring larger talent pools and covering greater workloads on a more cost-effective basis derives from this.

Our multilingual consultants specialise in a particular market and region, enabling employers to overcome language barriers, expand existing networks and look internationally for competitive edge.

The selection services we provide are defined by an established global network and a unique technical depth across our team of contributors; many of whom have relatable industry experience.

Whether engaged on a contingent or fixed-term RPO project, our search process caters to all selection requirements and can adapt to any change in circumstances.

By entrusting our specialist network alongside our experienced consultants, you can focus on other tasks at hand and what ultimately matters most to your team.

It's about attracting the highest standard of talent in an increasingly competitive digital landscape, forging deeper connections and finding synergy.

We align values with shared purpose to promote sustainable talent acquisition, exploring motivational and behavioural attributes to ensure cultural fit.

Matching the best talent of today with opportunities that will shape their future is what we do.

We further careers, identify future leaders and establish hiring processes of the highest standard.

Through our partnerships we enable unfettered access to relevant talent and foresighted intelligence.

Together we provide options to inform better decisions and a full service solution for specialist hires globally.





Free help & advice on  
labour market abuses

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**IN PARTNERSHIP**

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## Key Insights – Facets of the Modern Workplace (2022/23)

August 13, 2022



At the start of 2022, many of us expected the world to return to normality.

2021 & 2022 were years more volatile than expected; with the rise of new covid variants, a war for talent and retention rates at an all-time low.

This volatility will only increase going forward, as new variants cause workplaces to move remote again and hybrid working creates further uncertainty around productivity.

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These realities will be dovetailed by longer-term digital transformation, continued political disruption and stronger commitments to diversity, equality and inclusion.

Many employees will be greeted with real wage cuts as raises fall behind inflation.

This brief summary has been prepared to save time and keep you updated ahead of 2023.



## 1. Social equity and responsibility will be the defining issues for organizations

Debates around economic fairness, climate change and covid vaccinations have become flashpoints in society. According to our analysis, the frequency with which CEOs talk publicly about issues of corporate responsibility, social equality and inclusion has increased by 660% since 2018.

Going into 2023, senior leadership will likely need to address how relations are managed across an increasingly varied and diverse workforce. This will, in fact, be the number one priority for HR executives next year.

## 2. Wellness is becoming the new metric for understanding the employee, although uptake of programs is limited

Companies have long experimented with different metrics to understand their employees, their satisfaction and engagement. This will continue into 2023 with organizations adding new measures to assess the mental, physical and financial health of their workforce ahead of time.

In the wake of the pandemic and increased demand for greater work-life balance, many employers expanded support systems available to employees such as flexible working. A Gartner 2020 survey of HR executives found that:

- 94% of companies made significant investments in their well-being programs and 38% increased support for financial well-being initiatives
- 85% increased support for mental health benefits and 50% made additional resources available for physical well-being

These programs, however, only work for those who take advantage of them and statistics suggest less than 40% of employees took part or contributed towards well-being initiatives provided by their employer over the last year.

So far it has yet to be seen whether uptake will yield the results envisioned and it is likely employee retention will continue to be problematic, if not at record lows.





### **3. Employee turnover will continue to increase as hybrid and remote work become the norm**

Flexibility and work-life balance are terms that have become synonymous. No longer a differentiator, employers are witnessing record levels of employee turnover as flexible options become table stakes.

Unfortunately for many organizations, offering flexible work or increasing its availability will not slow the tide of today's labor market. In fact, attrition will increase for two reasons.

First, there will be weaker forces binding employees. Those that work in hybrid or remote roles often have fewer social connections with their coworkers and this lack of emotional connection makes it easier for employees to feel disengaged. Studies also show colleagues working from home are less likely to be promoted. In fact, a Gartner survey of 3,000 participants conducted in the fall of 2020 revealed that 64% of executives consider in-office employees to be higher performers than remote employees and over 75% believe office workers are more likely to be promoted.

Second, there will be stronger forces enticing employees away as the pool of potential employers increases. With hybrid and remote work becoming more available, commutable distances go out the window and geographical radiuses for work suddenly expand. This increased attrition risk we are witnessing is likely to remain, even if a universal hybrid model were adopted whereby employees are expected to come into the office once a week. Compounding this further is the fact employees seem to be willing to undergo longer commutes if they are less frequent, which widens commuting tolerances significantly.

Altogether these factors will lead to a continuation of attrition rates higher than historical norms. At times it may seem as if the great resignation is shifting to the sustained resignation with employees moving to roles offering a value proposition that better aligns with their desires.

### **4. The complexity of managing a hybrid workforce will drive some employers to require a return to the office**

More than 90% of employers are considering adopting a hybrid working model in 2023. While this will define the start of the year, we expect there to be numerous high-profile companies that change course and demand employees return to the office full-time. Factors influencing this include:



- Heightened turnover of employees working a hybrid schedule
- Anecdotal reporting of hybrid employees working multiple jobs at the same time
- Perceived loss of organizational culture

Employers must be cautious and unreservedly so, as a steadfast return to the office may only increase attrition rates and reveal that certain challenges were the culmination of other factors.

## **5. Diversity, equality and inclusion will worsen in a hybrid world without intervention**

Recent analysis has identified that employees who work remotely or on a hybrid schedule can perform just as well as employees that work in the office. However, managers often perceive officers workers to be higher performing and they are statistically more likely to be promoted. Perhaps these perceptions will change over time and with further research post-pandemic.

However, so far what we do know is that women and people of color have a greater inclination to work from home than white men. This is concerning because without intervention, it is possible that gender pay gaps may widen and the degree of diversity across leadership benches may weaken. Underrepresented talent opting to work from home could, without intention, be excluded from critical conversations and networking opportunities that may drive future career growth.

## **6. Managerial tasks are being automated, enabling better relationships to be built with employees**

The manager-employee relationship has become more important than ever, particularly for hybrid and remote employees whose managers form their primary connection to the employer.

In light of this, HR software vendors have started releasing products that replace a number of repetitive managerial tasks such as scheduling, approving expense reports and monitoring completion of tasks by direct reports. Artificial intelligence is a prominent feature across all of these and we will see further process automation in years to come. In fact, our research suggests up to 65% of managerial tasks have the potential to be automated by 2025.



This technological innovation may stall attrition somewhat, especially if senior managers are able to place a greater emphasis on the career trajectories of their employees, up-skilling their teams and fostering relationships that are both individualistic yet representative of the organization's values.

## 7. 'Quiet quitting' has taken the media by storm, despite existing for decades

The trend named by a 'generation Z' creator on TikTok involves setting boundaries at work and withdrawing from the idea of going above and beyond for your employer. It has become the ripple-effect of the Great Resignation that made jobs seem plentiful and shifted power back to employees.

'Coasting' or 'clocking in-and-out' while getting the bare minimum done is not a new phenomenon and has long been a facet of the modern workplace. Nevertheless, it is concerning that over 50% of employees feel disengaged and have considered 'quiet quitting' in the last year.

To respond effectively, executive leaders must re-engage their employees and their intrinsic motivations, go beyond traditional incentivization schemes and think about the personal touch going into 2023.

## 8. The emergence of the Chief Purpose Officer

Issues of politics, culture and social debate have recently entered the workplace. Nowadays 75% of the workforce expects their employer to be involved in societal debates. Furthermore, research indicates that employee productivity and engagement can decrease by as much as a third when disappointed with the company's stance or failure to take a view on political events.

Some conflict has emerged, however, as result of this increased politicizing of the workplace. The fact more than 40% of employees actively avoided a coworker in the last year due to political beliefs shared in the office suggests there is certainly a careful balance to be struck.

The shifting nature of organizations — how they relate to local communities and their role in society — is giving rise to a new C-suite position: the Chief Purpose Officer. These responsibilities are currently diffused across different functions such as HR, legal and public relations. However, we will likely see them consolidated as social purpose becomes even more important to corporate strategies.



## 9. The changing dynamics of leadership

Going into 2023, senior executives must prepare to thrive in a period of turbulence and balance employee productivity with wellness, satisfaction and belonging.

We have ultimately been living through the greatest workplace disruption in generations and the pace is not slowing down; with the incoming recession, rising fuel costs and war in Eastern Europe. What can change, however, is organizational resilience, capacity and appetite for disruption.

It seems in preparation for the years ahead, organizations have already started turning to CEOs with broader C-suite leadership experience than their predecessors; reaching beyond the traditional remit of CFOs & COOs to include chief technology officers and risk specialists.

Considering almost 40% of newly appointed executives leave within 18 months, it is likely executive selection will remain one of the most important decisions for a business of any size.

