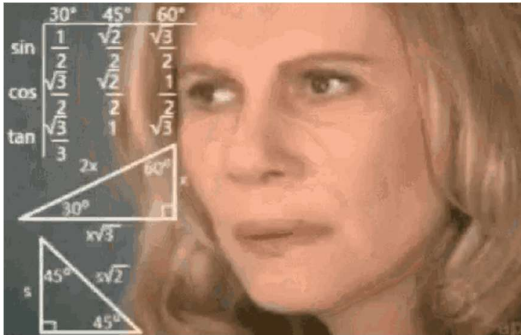


The job market lied to you!

864 people are losing their jobs every single day in 2026. And somehow... Banks still can't find risk specialists. Fintechs still can't hire AI talent. Shared services leaders are still fighting for transformation capability. And tech companies are still complaining the "right people just aren't out there."

Welcome to the most confusing job market in a decade.



And welcome to the very first edition of **The Shortlist** from Belvedere.

Every week, we're going to do something most recruitment newsletters don't:

We're going to tell the truth.

Not recycled LinkedIn clichés. Not "5 interview tips." Not fake urgency wrapped in corporate buzzwords.

Just real insight from the front lines of hiring across Poland and the wider CEE market.

What's actually happening. What's changing. What leaders are getting wrong. What candidates are misunderstanding. And where the opportunities quietly sit before the rest of the market notices them.

Because right now, the market is sending mixed signals to everyone.

Over 150,000 jobs have already been cut globally in the first months of 2026 alone.

Oracle. Meta. Amazon. Disney. Chevron. Heineken.

These are not failing businesses.

They're restructuring because AI is changing the economics of work itself.

Smaller teams. Higher output. Different skill requirements.

And yet here's the paradox nobody can ignore:

While layoffs increase, **72% of employers globally still say they cannot find the specific skills they need.**

Think about that for a second.

More candidates. More applications. More competition.

And still... a talent shortage.

Why?

Because the market doesn't have a people problem anymore.

It has a *precision* problem.

The professionals being displaced in bulk are often mid-level generalists.

But the people companies actually need?

- AI engineers
- quantitative developers
- cyber specialists
- risk professionals
- transformation leaders
- niche technologists

They're still employed. Still selective. And in many cases, still completely invisible to traditional hiring methods.

That changes everything.

"Once the best people stop actively applying, recruitment stops being a sourcing game. It becomes a trust game."

The businesses winning in 2026 are understanding that faster than everyone else.

We're seeing it every day across Warsaw, Kraków and the wider CEE region.

One fintech receives 400 CVs for a role and still can't hire.



One bank runs five interview stages and loses the candidate to a competitor who moved in five days.



One shared services leader tells us:
“We’ve never had more applicants and never found hiring this difficult.”

Sound familiar?

The companies getting ahead right now are not necessarily paying the most.
They’re simply moving more clearly and more decisively.

They understand:

- speed is now part of employer branding
- clarity beats complexity
- and the strongest talent is increasingly found through networks, trust and direct engagement, not job boards

And candidates are facing their own reality shift too.

The old strategy of “apply everywhere and hope something lands” is breaking down quickly.

In a world where hundreds of applications hit a single inbox, visibility without direction is just noise.

The professionals standing out are not the loudest.

They’re the clearest.

The ones who understand:

- what they want
- where they create value
- and how to position themselves in a changing market

So here's a practical exercise worth doing this week.

Whether you're hiring or job hunting, write down:

- 3 non-negotiables
- 3 nice-to-haves

Not generic answers. The real ones.

Because most hiring friction happens when nobody gets honest early enough.

And clarity, in this market, is becoming a serious competitive advantage.

A few things we're seeing heavily across Poland & CEE right now:

- AI & automation hiring continuing despite wider cuts
- Strong demand for risk, quantitative finance and regulatory specialists
- Shared services organisations accelerating transformation hiring
- More businesses moving toward contractor and project-based capability models
- Passive candidates outperforming active applicants in mid-to-senior hiring

And perhaps most importantly:

The businesses building long-term hiring advantage are no longer treating recruitment like a transaction.

They're treating it like strategy.

That's the difference.

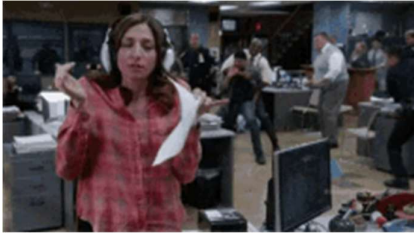
At Belvedere, we'll keep bringing you the realities of the market every week:

- hiring trends
- talent movement
- salary pressure
- AI disruption

- leadership hiring
 - specialist opportunities
 - and the conversations most companies are only having privately
-

This is issue one of The Shortlist.

And unlike most agency newsletters, this isn't built to flood your inbox with noise.



It's built to help you think better, hire smarter, and move earlier.

We'll be publishing every week.

Comments, challenges, feedback and suggestions are all welcome — because the best market conversations are never one-way.

If this was worth five minutes of your day, follow Belvedere and share it with someone navigating the market right now.

You probably already know exactly who that person is.

— The Belvedere Team

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 www.blvdr.pl
