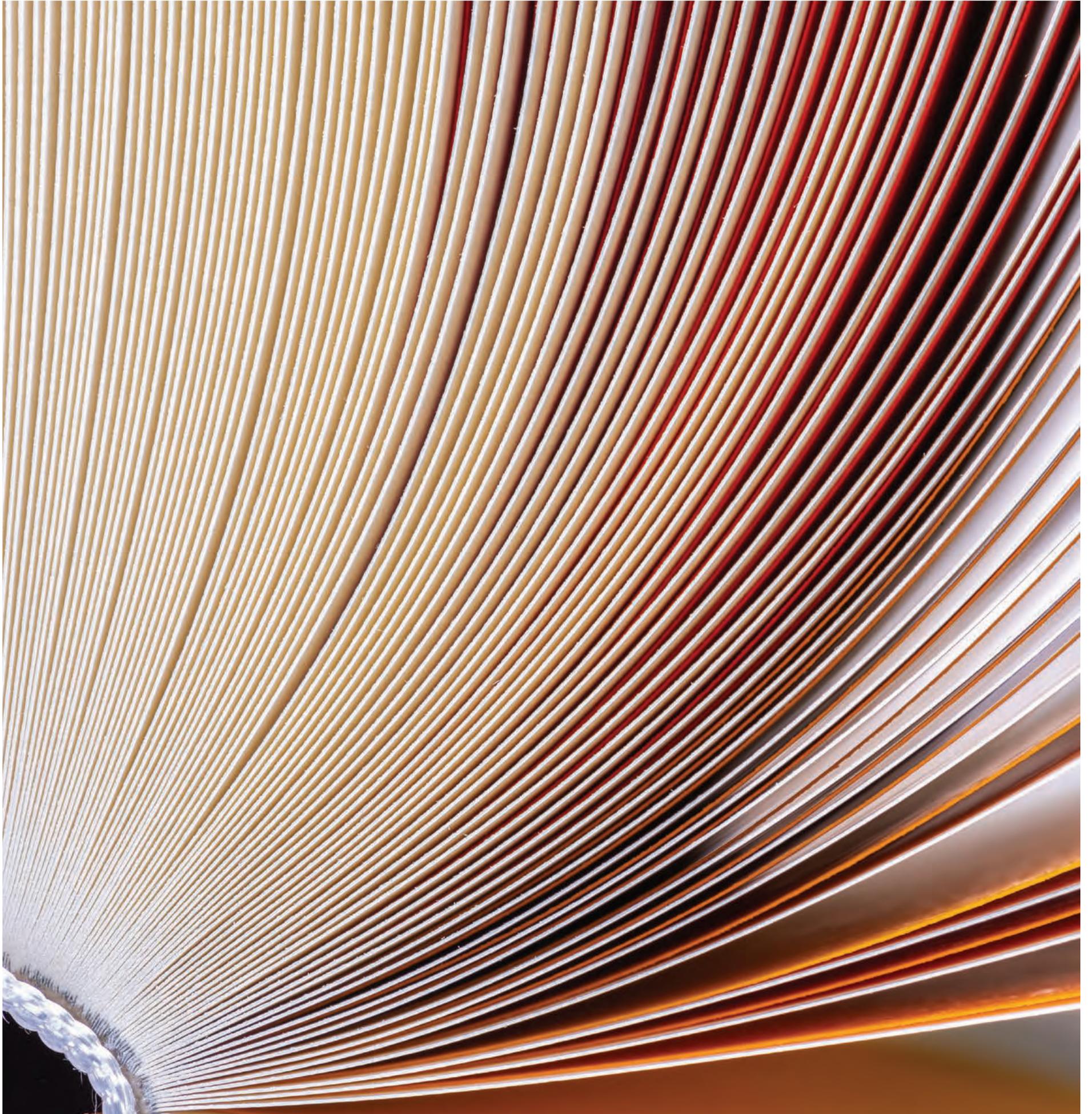


EDUCATION, TRAINING & ONLINE LEARNING



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ROXANNE GREITZ MILLER, Ed.D.
Dean, Attallah College of Educational Studies
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IMPROVING THE ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR ADULT LEARNERS

As a nationally-ranked private institution, Concordia University Irvine has helped set the standard for quality online and hybrid courses in graduate education.

Over the last decade, faculty members Tanya Tarbutton and Lori Doyle '97, MA '06, have conducted extensive research designed to continue the university's history of excellence in online learning. Today, the duo are co-authors of more than 14 projects, including journal articles and edited books, on the subject.

"We look at virtual learning environments specific to graduate programs and how to do that really well," says Doyle, associate professor of education and director of the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership program. "From designing the coursework and assignments to hiring faculty, we focus on the whole process of online learning and how educators can do that in the best possible way."

Joining Concordia in 2015, Doyle holds the distinction of being one of the university's first full-time remote faculty members. Tarbutton, who joined Concordia in 2016, is senior director of the Master of Arts in Education degree programs, educational administration practicum coordinator, and associate professor of education.

"Many of the School of Education's programs are online and are taught by adjunct instructors who bring invaluable contributions and unique perspectives to our virtual classrooms," says Tarbutton. "We embraced opportunities to investigate and sharpen best practices for adult learners."

One of the pair's first projects was a book chapter titled, "Virtual Ancillary Faculty: A Model of Support to Avoid Burnout and Foster Self-Efficacy." They concluded that adjunct faculty need to feel strongly connected to a university and share a sense of support and camaraderie with others there to have long-term success. Doyle and Tarbutton recommended offering plenty of professional development opportunities for instructors where they could learn and connect with others.



"Social, collaborative communities develop organically in traditional face-to-face settings, but in online platforms, curriculum designers need to be intentional to create collaborative communities to reap those same benefits."

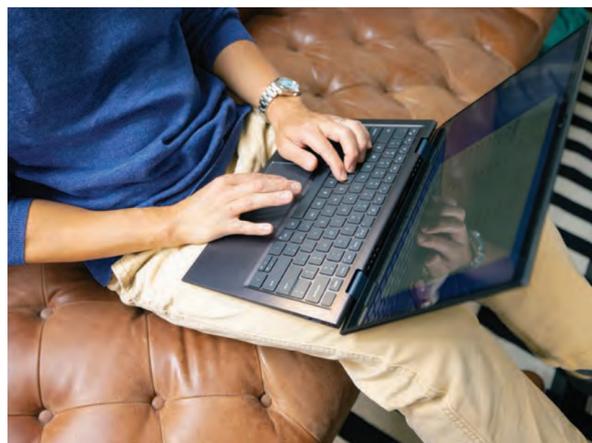
Tanya Tarbutton, Senior Director of M.A.Ed. programs, Educational Administration Practicum Coordinator, and Associate Professor of Education

"There are purposeful things a university can do to build an online program and make online learning the best it can be," says Doyle. "You foster success by the way courses are designed, assignments are written, and faculty are trained and supported. It's a lot of effort to make online programs successful, and that's what Concordia has embraced. There's purpose behind everything we do."

Doyle and Tarbutton co-wrote a 16-chapter handbook, *Adjunct Faculty in Online Higher Education: Best Practices for Teaching Adult Learners*, which was released in early 2024 and is described as "an essential handbook that delves into the pivotal role of adjunct faculty instructors in the booming realm of online higher education." Their second co-edited research handbook, *Best Practices and Strategies for Online Instructors: Insights From Higher Education Online Faculty*, will be published this fall. Both function as textbooks.

Improving the experience of adult learners is one of their primary motivations.

"You have to understand the needs and styles of adult learners, specifically," says Doyle. "They are in careers wanting immediate take-aways they can put into effect tomorrow. You have to provide them opportunities to connect their experiences, careers, and personal lives with what you're doing in the classroom."



To learn more about Concordia University Irvine, visit cui.edu.



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Amanda N. '15



Holding IVC's Commendation from the City of Irvine



Piloting a plane



With his dog Lucky

IVC Student Thrives by Doing What He Loves

Poorya "Pooris" Baine is firmly focused on taking a lifelong passion and transforming it into his life's work.

But his hasn't been a straightforward or easy path.

He grew up in Northern Iran, where he earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and eventually ran his own video game company – testing and selling games and related accessories while capitalizing on his love for game development and design.

"I started playing video games during the Atari era when I was just seven years old, it's been a passion ever since," he says.

Fast forward to 2015, a pivotal time in his life. "I won the green card lottery – a U.S. government program which gives out a limited number of immigration visas each year. This changed my life forever, I can't express how happy I was when that happened."

Upon arriving in the U.S, he moved to Irvine and worked as a civil engineer assistant and in construction management. With an eye on building valuable skills to land his dream job as a producer in the gaming industry, he then enrolled in Irvine Valley College (IVC), earning certificates of proficiency in Immersive Design/3D Animation as well as Immersive Design/Game Design.

His experience at IVC has been nothing but positive. "In addition to being affordable, IVC offers amazingly skilled professors and a friendly, welcoming environment. Even though at 38 I am one of the older students here, I have bonded with my classmates and found my tribe," he says. "I am using everything I have learned here – which is a lot – to grow even more, and my professors have been instrumental in that growth. They all go above and beyond to help and support their students."

Now, he is poised to be the first student to earn an Associate of Science (A.S.) degree from the school's newly developed Game and Interactive Media Arts Design, Production Management program – a degree he hopes to complete by this December.

The program, which was approved to award A.S. degrees last year by the California Office of Education, is the brainchild of Dr. Patricia Beckmann Wells, a long time IVC tenured-professor, award winning director and author. "Our new degree is very comprehensive and the interactive component is based on the game engine used to create the Call of Duty and Fortnite AAA franchises, integrating 3D and 2D with other experimental technologies to create story-driven experiences," she says. "In addition to gaming, students can output digital media to virtual reality, projection mapping for concert venues/clubs/marketing and virtual filmmaking – all using the Unreal Engine.

For virtual filmmaking, we have the only \$1.5 million LED wall in the county." The focus is on teamwork and production management, she says. "If a student decides creating art is not the right career path, they can also qualify for a career in interactive media production management and business."

Not surprisingly, the program has earned much acclaim, including a Commendation from the City of Irvine for its outstanding accomplishments in 2023.

Currently a teaching assistant for Beckmann Wells, as part of his IVC studies Baine also led a team of 20 students to win a special recognition for Best Cinematics at the IEEE (a professional organization serving the technology communities) 2023 GameSIG, an intercollegiate computer game competition.

"Pooris is a go getter who can hustle, and hustling is at the core of our program," said Beckmann Wells. "You need to learn to act on your instincts and create a career path for yourself and that is exactly what Pooris is achieving."

Equipped with laser-like focus and industry know how, Baine is confident he will land his dream job, which ultimately involves creating a game that helps with the prevention of suicide. "In the future, I hope I can be a pivot point during a dark period in someone's life, and help bring them to the light," he says. "Life is full of second chances."

He is ever grateful for the second chances gleaned from his studies at IVC after embarking on a new life in the United States. "IVC has been a life changing experience. Now I am confident in what I want to do and who I want to become."

When he is not studying, working in the classroom or developing new games, Baine is a self-described movie buff and adrenaline junkie.

"I love going to the cinema, as well as classic rock music and adventure sports like sky diving and bungee diving."

With his fearless nature and unwavering focus, Baine has set the stage for success while deftly navigating life in a new country.

"I started from scratch, but am now I am where I belong. When you are doing what you love, you can thrive."

For more information on IVC's Game and Interactive Media Arts Design, Production Management program, please contact Dr. Patricia Beckmann Wells at pbeckmann@ivc.edu or 949-451-5218 or visit www.ivc.edu/arts/dept/art/ima.

Inspiring success. Building futures.

Searching for that next successful addition to your team? Then Irvine Valley College (IVC) is the right place to look. Well-positioned for a strong future, our students are highly motivated and focused on excelling in their chosen fields.



Meet Poorya "Pooris" Baine.

An award-winning game designer, Pooris is poised to be the first student to complete an Associate of Science degree in IVC's newly developed Game and Interactive Media Arts Design, Production Management program. Focused on becoming a producer in the gaming industry, he is well on his way to transforming a lifelong passion into his life's work.



Learn more at ivc.edu/ewd



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Emerging Recruitment Trends HR Professionals Should Know for 2024

In recent years, HR professionals have navigated a series of formidable challenges ranging from the disruptive impacts of COVID-19 to unescapable labor shortages and the widening skills gap. While indications point towards a gradual return to an employer-driven job market, the task of attracting and retaining high-quality talent remains a significant challenge. To effectively address these challenges, talent acquisition teams must cultivate robust strategies that are adaptive to the evolving landscape of recruitment.



Crafting an Effective Hiring Strategy

To craft a hiring strategy that resonates in 2024, staying abreast of the latest trends is imperative. This article explores key trends that are shaping the talent acquisition landscape:

1. Remote Work Opportunities

Remote work continues to be a pivotal consideration for HR professionals. Despite efforts by many organizations to transition back to office-based work environments, there remains a robust demand for remote work options. Research indicates that a significant portion of the workforce, approximately 50%, would consider accepting lower compensation in exchange for the flexibility of remote work. Beyond remote work itself, offering benefits that support a healthy work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling, shift swaps, and additional paid time off, can also significantly enhance an organization's appeal to top-tier talent.

It is essential to recognize the broader implications of these trends. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote work practices, permanently altering expectations regarding workplace flexibility. Organizations that embrace remote work options not only enhance their attractiveness to potential candidates but also demonstrate adaptability and responsiveness to evolving workforce preferences.

2. Increased Emphasis on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Diversity, equity, and inclusion have emerged as critical priorities, particularly among younger generations like Gen Z. More than half of Gen Z workers prioritize working for employers that demonstrate diverse leadership and foster inclusive workplace cultures. Implementing structured interview processes and ensuring inclusivity in job postings are pivotal steps toward mitigating biases and attracting a diverse pool of talent. Beyond compliance, a robust DEI strategy can drive innovation, collaboration, and organizational success.

3. Workforce Analytics

Advancements in technology continue to revolutionize recruitment practices, with workforce analytics powered by AI and machine learning gaining prominence. These tools enable HR teams to conduct faster and more accurate candidate assessments, thereby streamlining the hiring process and improving alignment with organizational needs and cultural fit. Leveraging data-driven insights not only enhances efficiency but also facilitates smarter decision-making in talent acquisition.

Technological advancements, particularly in workforce analytics, present HR teams with unprecedented opportunities to optimize their recruitment strategies. By harnessing the power of data-driven insights, organizations can refine their candidate selection processes, identify potential talent gaps, and proactively address evolving workforce needs. This proactive approach not only improves efficiency but also positions organizations to attract and retain top talent in an increasingly competitive job market.

4. Consistent Employer Branding

Today's applicants are diligent researchers who often evaluate a company's brand reputation before applying for a job. A strong and consistent employer brand that aligns with organizational values is crucial in attracting candidates who resonate with the company's mission and culture. Consistency in messaging across recruitment efforts, coupled with transparent communication of company values, strengthens employer branding efforts and enhances the organization's attractiveness to prospective talent.



Claudia Perez

5. Collaboration with Professional Recruiters
 Navigating the complexities of the modern job market often necessitates collaboration with professional recruitment agencies. These partnerships provide organizations with access to specialized expertise and resources, facilitating more efficient candidate sourcing and selection. While companies retain control over final hiring decisions, professional recruiters can expedite the process and improve efficiency in identifying and engaging qualified candidates amidst evolving workforce dynamics.

6. Networking

Networking has evolved into a crucial strategy for efficient talent acquisition. Building robust connections with industry peers, educational institutions, and professional associations helps organizations establish a robust talent pipeline. Effective networking accelerates time-to-hire rates and enhances new hire retention by cultivating relationships that foster mutual trust and engagement.

7. Rise of the Gig Economy

The gig economy continues to expand rapidly, with an estimated 60 million gig workers in the United States alone. Embracing gig workers offers organizations scalability and agility in workforce management, enabling them to respond promptly to fluctuating business demands. Developing a structured approach to hiring and integrating gig workers enhances operational flexibility while tapping into a diverse pool of specialized skills and expertise.

8. Recruitment for Passive Candidates

Passive candidates constitute a substantial segment of the talent pool, comprising of individuals who are not actively seeking new opportunities but remain open to career advancements. Engaging passive candidates requires targeted strategies that extend beyond conventional job boards. Employers can leverage social media platforms and employer branding initiatives to showcase organizational achievements and benefits, thereby capturing the interest of passive candidates who align with the company's values and goals.

9. Hiring Amid the Skills Gap

The ongoing skills gap necessitates strategic adjustments in hiring practices. Rather than focusing solely on hiring candidates with existing skill sets, organizations are increasingly prioritizing candidates with potential for growth and adaptability. Investing in upskilling and reskilling programs enhances workforce capabilities and bridges skill deficiencies, underscoring the importance of crafting job postings and descriptions that emphasize learning opportunities and career development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evolving recruitment landscape demands agility, innovation, and a proactive approach from HR professionals. By embracing these emerging trends and leveraging strategic partnerships, organizations can position themselves for success in attracting, engaging, and retaining high-quality talent in 2024 and beyond.

For organizations seeking expert guidance in optimizing their recruitment efforts, partnering with Marquee Staffing offers tailored solutions designed to attract, engage, and onboard high-quality candidates. Contact our team today to explore how Marquee Staffing can empower your organization with superior recruitment outcomes.

www.marqueestaffing.com or contact us at (949) 222-6430

Claudia Perez serves as Senior Vice President of Operations at Marquee Staffing, where she spearheads strategic operations, oversees marketing project execution, optimizes recruitment processes, and expands the healthcare recruiting division. Leveraging her expertise in business development, Claudia fosters enduring partnerships with leading organizations seeking top-tier talent. Her team prioritizes quality, exceptional customer service, and strategic placements.

Explore how Marquee Staffing can support your talent needs and connect with us at www.marqueestaffing.com for more information and resources.



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– Jim Collins, *Good to Great*

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