



# Consumer Goods & Services World of Work 2025 Outlook



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**73%**

OF CONSUMER GOODS EMPLOYERS  
WORLDWIDE ARE STRUGGLING TO  
FIND THE SKILLED TALENT THEY NEED

CONSUMER GOODS WORKERS ARE THE MOST  
LIKELY TO SAY THEY ARE CONSIDERING  
**NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

**63%**

OF EMPLOYERS SAY SKILLS GAPS  
ARE THEIR GREATEST CHALLENGE  
THROUGH THE YEAR 2030

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The outlook for the global consumer goods sector in 2025 is uncertain. At the macro level, we are in the midst of a fundamental reordering of the global economic status quo. Meanwhile, consumer goods leaders will need to navigate day-to-day challenges such as supply chain disruptions, inflationary pressures, and shifting consumer preferences towards sustainability and digital engagement. **This Global Insights World of Work research examines the impact on the future of work as organizations prioritize agility, innovation, and workforce transformation.**

- How are global brands reimagining their digital transformation strategies to accelerate innovation?
- How are global trends such as geopolitical uncertainty and AI adoption changing the future of retail?
- What can business leaders do to future-proof their strategic workforce planning as the pace of change accelerates?

# Ramping Up Reinvention

The global consumer goods industry is at a pivotal juncture where business transformation is not just an option but a necessity. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and evolving consumer expectations, companies must embrace digital innovation to remain competitive. This transformation encompasses the adoption of cutting-edge technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT), which streamline operations, enhance supply chain efficiencies, and offer personalized consumer experiences.



- **High Stakes:** Recent research estimates generative AI could increase the value of traditional AI tools by 15-40%. For the global consumer goods sector, the opportunity is estimated at \$160 to \$270 billion in increased annual revenue each year.<sup>1</sup>
- **A Change Imperative:** Nearly half (42%) of CEOs believe their company will not be viable beyond the next 10 years without reinvention.<sup>2</sup>
- **Bringing Workers Along:** Workers in the consumer goods sector are less certain than others about the future. They are the most likely (36%) to say their current employer offers insufficient career opportunities.<sup>3</sup>

1. [McKinsey](#) 2. [PwC](#) 3. [ManpowerGroup Global Talent Barometer 2024](#) 4. [World Economic Forum](#)

## Workforce Implications:

- Hiring and retaining an innovative workforce will be critical with years of disruptive innovation ahead.
- Scaling efforts to maintain a skilled and innovative workforce will remain a challenge in the coming year. Most employers (63%) worldwide say skills gaps will be their greatest innovation barrier through 2030.<sup>4</sup>
- Despite the growing needs, less than half (39%) of consumer goods and services workers say they have received additional training in the past six months. In addition, consumer goods workers are the most likely to say their current role is not part of a career plan (38%).<sup>3</sup>

42% OF CEOS

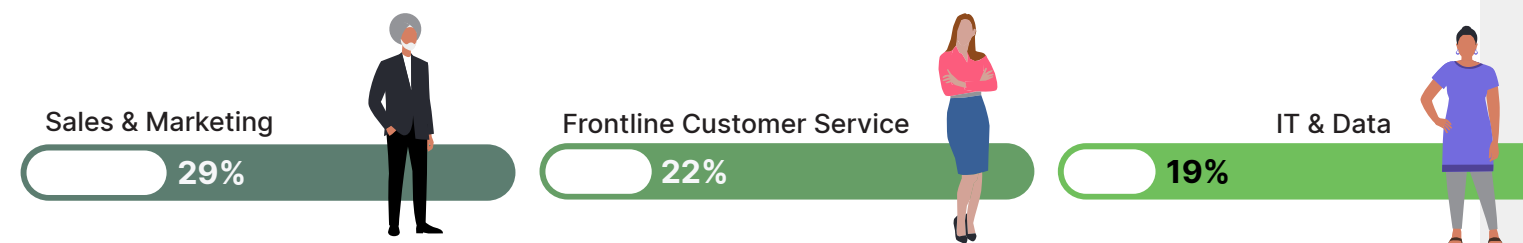
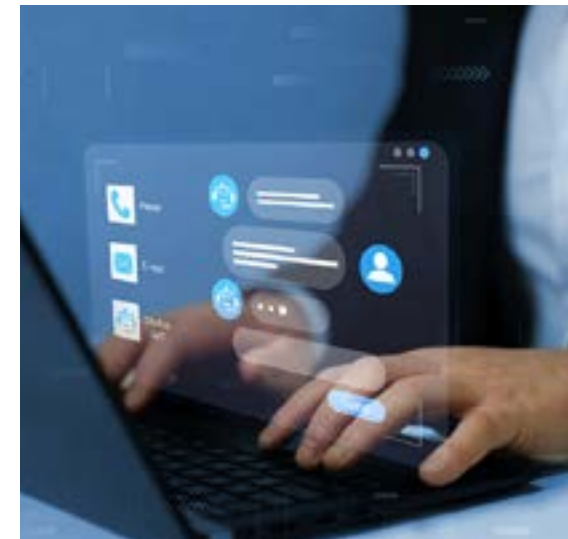


BELIEVE THEIR BUSINESS WILL  
NOT BE VIABLE IN TEN YEARS  
WITHOUT REINVENTION.<sup>2</sup>

# CX Transformation

To stay competitive, consumer goods companies must evolve the customer experience (CX). This requires attracting and retaining talent with expertise in AI, data analytics, and omnichannel commerce. Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous innovation and agile workforce strategies is vital. Companies that proactively adapt to these trends will not only enhance customer satisfaction but also strengthen their position in the war for talent, ensuring long-term growth and market leadership.

- **Hyper Personalization:** Most consumers (71%) expect companies to deliver personalized content. Of those customers, 67% say that they are frustrated when their interactions with businesses aren't tailored to their needs.<sup>1</sup>
- **Mixing it Up:** As global consumer frustration is growing, brands are revisiting their product mix to respond to changing consumer preferences, and in some cases, offer more premium offerings. Most executives in this sector (72%) say they will reevaluate product mix to drive profitable growth in 2025.<sup>2</sup>
- **Sellers Wanted:** As consumer goods brands around the world try to improve customer experience, they say Sales & Marketing (29%), Frontline Customer Service (22%), and IT/Data (19%) skills are the most difficult to find.<sup>3</sup>



## Workforce Implications:

- As AI and automation reshape consumer experiences, it will require the same skills industry hiring managers worldwide say are the most difficult to find.
- Stronger alignment between IT, marketing, and supply chain teams is crucial. Employers must promote a data-driven culture to enhance shopping experiences and streamline operations.
- As companies collect and utilize vast amounts of consumer data for personalized interactions, the risk of data breaches and regulatory non-compliance increases. Employers must invest in cybersecurity specialists, ethical AI professionals, and compliance experts to protect sensitive information and maintain consumer trust.

**AS CX INNOVATION CONTINUES, EMPLOYERS SAY THESE SKILLS ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO FIND.<sup>3</sup>**

1. [McKinsey](#) 2. [Deloitte](#) 3. [2025 ManpowerGroup Global Talent Shortage Study](#)



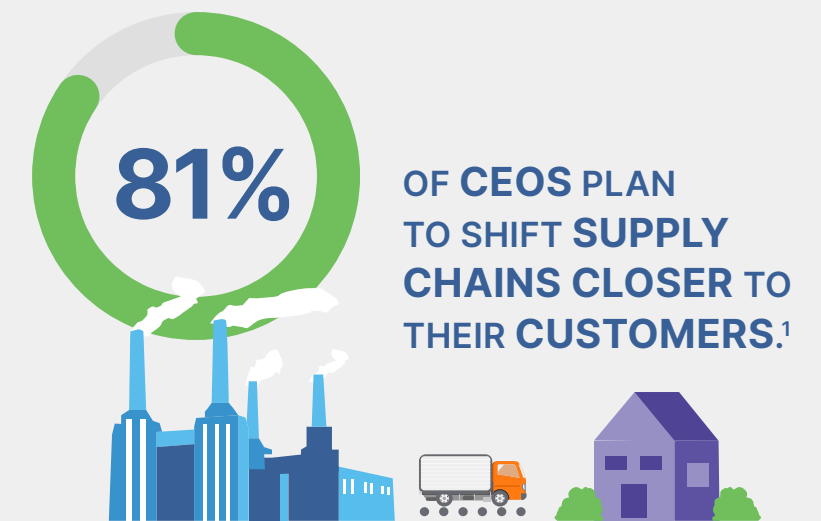
# Buying Resilience in Bulk

Supply chain resilience is paramount for employers in the consumer goods industry, where the ability to efficiently manage and adapt to disruptions can spell the difference between success and failure. In an era marked by unpredictable global events, from natural disasters to geopolitical tensions, a robust supply chain ensures continuity and mitigates risks. This will be particularly important in this industry since it has relied so heavily on global supply chains for decades.



- **Coming Home:** The proportion of CEOs and COOs reporting plans to bring supply chains closer to home or main markets increased to 81% vs. 63% in 2022.<sup>1</sup>
- **Doubling Up:** Nearly three quarters of global supply chain managers (73%) now say they are dual sourcing to reduce supply chain risks.<sup>2</sup>
- **Geopolitical Tremors:** A growing number of CEOs (40%) say increasing global political instability is a potential risk to their business.<sup>3</sup>

1. [Bain & Company](#) 2. [McKinsey](#) 3. [The Conference Board](#)



## Workforce Implications:

- Business leaders will need to find untapped sources of human capital as manufacturing returns to developed markets already facing skilled talent shortages.
- Scaling upskilling and reskilling efforts in markets with new production facilities will become increasingly important.
- With geopolitical uncertainty expected to continue, long-term strategic workforce planning will be increasingly important.

# Consumers Sending Mixed Signals



Mixed and declining global consumer sentiment has emerged as a critical concern for businesses worldwide. Amidst increasing geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainties, consumer confidence has taken a hit, leading to reduced spending and a cautious approach towards major purchases. This shift in sentiment is driven by factors such as fluctuating prices, volatile job markets, and an overall sense of unpredictability in the global trade landscape.

- **Consumer Sentiment is Mixed:** Overall global consumer sentiment was down year-over-year in January 2025. While the consumer mood improved in Latin America and Europe, it declined in North America and Asia.<sup>1</sup>
- **Inflation Fatigue:** Most industry executives (64%) say consumers are still comparing higher prices to pre-COVID levels, and many (51%) believe they can no longer pass along price increases to consumers. As a result, nearly all (95%) agree a focus on product innovation will be critically important in 2025.<sup>2</sup>
- **Steady Workforce Optimism:** Despite the ongoing global uncertainty, most workers (68%) in the consumer goods sector believe they will not be forced to leave their current role in the next six months and only 19% believe they cannot achieve their career goals at their current employer.<sup>3</sup>

1. [Ipsos](#) 2. [Deloitte](#) 3. [ManpowerGroup 2024 Global Talent Barometer](#)

## Workforce Implications:

- Trade tensions and overall economic uncertainty is beginning to impact consumer and worker sentiment.
- To overcome persistent volatility, a focus on “controlling what you can control” through strategic workforce planning, training and employee engagement remain sound best practices.
- Onsite support or global talent sourcing through trusted third parties can help business leaders increase their overall agility to respond to changing market conditions.



**MOST INDUSTRY LEADERS BELIEVE THEY CAN NO LONGER PASS ALONG PRICE INCREASES TO INFLATION-WARY CONSUMERS.<sup>2</sup>**

# Sustainable Business is Still Good Business



The global consumer goods sector faces a transformative reckoning as sustainability reshapes workforce strategies and production ecosystems. Mounting consumer expectations for ethical consumption, coupled with investor scrutiny of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance, are driving structural shifts in talent acquisition, operational frameworks, and supply chain architectures.

- **The Sustainability Gap:** In 2024, 73% of consumers who care about sustainability are willing to pay more for sustainable products—up from 50% in 2022. However, only 41% of consumers say they have sufficient information to shop sustainably.<sup>1</sup>
- **Investors are Watching:** Nearly three quarters (70%) of investors say businesses should be investing in sustainability even if it reduces near-term profitability.<sup>2</sup>
- **Green Talent Demand:** More than two-thirds (68%) of consumer goods employers said that they are planning to recruit green talent. Most of this jobs demand comes from Manufacturing & Production, Operations & Logistics, IT & Data, and Sales & Marketing.<sup>3</sup>

**MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF CONSUMER GOODS AND SERVICES EMPLOYERS ARE RECRUITING FOR GREEN JOBS AND SKILLS.<sup>3</sup>**



## Workforce Implications:

- The information gap (only 41% of consumers feeling informed about sustainable shopping) demands a workforce skilled in data analysis and communication. Roles focused on ESG reporting, sustainability metrics, and consumer education will become increasingly important.
- Green business transformation leadership will have a growing influence on talent outcomes. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of all workers say they research an organization's environmental reputation and roughly one-third (35%) say it impacts their decision to accept or reject a job offer.<sup>3</sup>
- Sustainability leadership is even more important to younger workers. Among respondents aged 18-24, 75% say they will research an organization's environmental reputation, and almost half (46%) believe it will impact their likelihood of choosing a particular employer.<sup>3</sup>

1. [IBM](#) 2. [PwC](#) 3. [Manpower Green-Business-Transformation-2024](#)



# Smart Talent Shopping

It is clear business leaders in this sector will have no shortage of challenges with global geopolitical uncertainty, digital transformation, shifting demographics, and changing consumer sentiment expected to continue in the year ahead and beyond. They go beyond the abstract since your workforce is confronting them on the front lines every day. Business leaders that can help them navigate these times will position their organization for long-term differentiation.

- **Skilled Talent Still Scarce:** Most employers (73%) in the consumer goods sector around the world still say they are struggling to find the skilled talent they need.<sup>1</sup>
- **Opportunities for Improvement:** Consumer goods workers are the most likely to say they do not trust their manager (31%) and nearly half (49%) report daily workplace stress.<sup>2</sup>
- **Eyeing the Exit:** Consumer goods workers are the most likely (39%) of all industries to say they plan to voluntarily leave their current employer.<sup>3</sup>



**CONSUMER GOODS WORKERS ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO SAY THEY ARE PLANNING TO LEAVE THEIR CURRENT EMPLOYER IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS.<sup>3</sup>**

## Workforce Implications:

- **Skilled talent scarcity will continue to impact this sector around the world, and organizations must leverage agile approaches (e.g., global talent sourcing, onsite support) to overcome it.**
- **Our global worker sentiment research identified multiple low-hanging fruit opportunities for employers such as additional training, mentoring and work-life balance support.**
- **The need to scale upskilling and reskilling remains important as the World Economic Forum estimates 59% of the workforce will require additional training by 2030.<sup>3</sup>**



1. [ManpowerGroup 2025 Global Talent Shortage Study](#) 2. [ManpowerGroup 2024 Global Talent Barometer](#)  
3. [WEF 2025 Future of Jobs Report](#)

# Future of Work Opportunities in Consumer Goods & Services

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**Foster Innovation:** As consumers around the world struggle with inflation fatigue, price increases are no longer feasible for many global brands. Instead, business leaders and workers must prioritize product innovation and operational efficiencies.



**Accelerate Adaptability:** The Age of Adaptability will continue for workers and leaders in 2025. Our Accelerating Adaptability research explores the full impact of an increasingly diverse workforce, new ways of working, digital transformation, and accelerating global change on strategic workforce planning.



**Green is Good:** Investors and consumers worldwide are still seeking more sustainable solutions. In addition, since green business leadership is a key Employer Value Proposition (EVP) pillar for most candidates, it is an important differentiator as organizations seek to recruit and retain skilled talent.



**The Customer is Always Right:** The business imperative to continue evolving customer experience (CX) is clear and new AI tools will play a pivotal role. This makes finding and retaining the best internal and external tech expertise critical.



**Bring Workers Along:** Amidst the challenging business environment lies an opportunity to differentiate with a “back-to-basics” approach. Training, mentoring, work-life balance and overall support can become key differentiators.



# Global Workforce Solutions for Consumer Goods & Services



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Workforce  
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Talent  
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Career  
Management



Career  
Transition



Top Talent  
Attraction



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