

How External Forces Are Rewriting the Rules of Work

What is changing?

The regional job market is undergoing a fundamental shift in the relationship between organizations and their people. The notion of long-term job permanence, which shaped professional life for decades, is giving way to shorter, more flexible employment cycles. In Oman, for example, fixed-term contracts (often around four years) have become increasingly common, replacing what were once predominantly long-term agreements. This shift reflects a deeper transformation in the global economy itself: "Previously, as an economic system, we needed these long-term contracts, because the nature of work, the economic period, and the available talent were different. Now, everything is changing" [1].

Alongside this shift is an unprecedented acceleration in how quickly required skills evolve. What once took seven to ten years to change now shifts roughly every two years, driven by the rise of AI and evolving workplace tools, and compounded by geopolitical shifts that increasingly ripple into local economies: "Changes used to take seven, ten years. Now there's a shift every two years, on top of geopolitical changes" [1]. This reality makes continuous learning a competitive necessity rather than an optional pursuit, for individuals and organizations alike.

At the organizational level, restructuring is no longer an exceptional event but a recurring management practice. Many organizations now realign their teams roughly every two years in response to market shifts. This puts HR leadership in a delicate position, balancing organizational growth against the need to remain supportive of their people: "In HR, we're always caught between two priorities: wanting to develop the organization, and wanting to remain supportive of our people" [1].

One of the most consequential factors in this transitional period is how clearly an organization communicates the reasoning behind its decisions. When the rationale is clearly explained, acceptance comes more easily and the psychological impact on affected individuals is significantly reduced: "When the reasons behind a decision are made clear, people are able to accept it much more readily" [1]. Organizations that build a transparent culture around these transitions, offering adequate notice, clear communication, and genuine transition support that connect affected individuals to new opportunities, are the ones best positioned to protect their reputation and organizational culture over the long term. Today's job market simply no longer tolerates standing still.

Source: Ibtisam Al-Khaifi, CEO of SIMAT, interview on Aish Saeed (Live Happy), Al-Wisal Radio.

Download as PDF

