

Reciprocity

MAGAZINE

JUNE 2026

THE QUIET MULTIPLIER

Meet Jess: The calm in the complexity

#GiveToGain

The AI Effect — Navigating the Future of Work

Cristiana • From Viareggio to Senegal

Charlene • Looking Glass



Letter from the Editor

"The most powerful thing any of
us can do
is invest in someone else."



When I launched Reciprocity on International Women's Day, I had one belief: that the most powerful thing any of us can do is invest in someone else. Issue One was our beginning. Issue Two is our proof.

The circle has grown to more than 119 members across industries, borders, and generations and what moves me most is the quality of the people in it. Leaders who give before they gain. Builders who create with purpose. Professionals navigating the biggest shift in the world of work in a generation, with curiosity rather than fear.

This issue goes deeper. Jess, our cover star, shows us that structure and empathy are not in tension, they are the combination that makes leadership sustainable. Cristiana turned a volunteer trip to Senegal into a lifelong mission she still lives today. Charlene saw a gap nobody else had named, and built Looking Glass from it.

We also go where the conversation is uncomfortable. The AI Effect offers clarity, not alarm naming what is shifting, what remains irreplaceable, and how the circle remains the most powerful career asset any of us can build.

Our round table brings six anonymous voices together with real candour. Jasmine took on the survey this issue designing it, running it, and pulling out the patterns that became our Survey Results section. What she found says more about this community than any of us could have written ourselves. 95 of our 119 members told us, honestly, that people are leaning on one another more than any institution has earned. Because words without tools are not enough, we built something practical: a CV support tool at reciprocity.network that scores your CV across five areas against your target role — clear, visual, actionable.

Issue Two is dedicated to everyone who gave before they gained. You are the circle. You are the ripple. And we are only just beginning.

Nadia
Founder & Editor-in-Chief, Reciprocity Magazine

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Contributors



Jess Harvey

Jess Harvey is an Executive Coach and Risk Professional based in London, and the founder of The Female Mentoring Alliance. With over two decades in financial and professional services, she now helps women in leadership find clarity, confidence, and sustainable success in their careers.

Charlene

Charlene Corrin is a co-founder of Looking Glass, a start-up reimagining the modern mirror through design and lighting. Originally from New Zealand and now based in London, she brings a background in architectural lighting and a passion for building products that help people feel confident in their own reflection.



Cristiana

Cristiana grew up in Viareggio, Tuscany, and now lives in London, where she balances everyday life with her ongoing humanitarian work in Senegal. Since her first visit in 2011, she has dedicated herself to supporting communities through education and grassroots projects, believing that even small acts of kindness can change lives.



Jasmine Serieux

Jasmine Serieux is a Politics and International Relations student, editor of this magazine, and a young entrepreneur who launched her own beauty business at 19. She enjoys content creation and exploring global affairs.





THE CALM IN THE COMPLEXITY

Jess on leading with rigour, empathy, and the quiet power of showing up differently

Her work sits at the intersection of structure and people risk, compliance, and coaching. What she has learned about leadership is not what the textbooks teach.

Your work sits at the intersection of structure and people risk, compliance, and coaching. What shaped your approach to leading with both rigour and empathy?

Early in my career, I was immersed in environments where precision, accountability, and getting it right were non-negotiable. Structure mattered. Outcomes mattered.

But over time, I began to notice something quieter, that behind every framework, every decision, every escalation, there were people carrying pressure, expectation, and often, a quiet sense of self-doubt.

I have seen what happens when we lead with rigour alone. Things get delivered, but often at a cost to the individual. And I have also seen the opposite where empathy exists, but without structure, leaving people feeling supported yet unclear.

My approach has been shaped by learning that the real impact sits in the balance.

Structure creates clarity. Empathy creates trust.

And when both are present, people do not just perform they lead in a way that is sustainable, grounded, and aligned.



On the Ripple Effect

You recently offered your time through free coaching. What motivated that decision, and what does giving back mean to you at this stage in your career?

It was not a strategic decision. It was a human one. I recognised so much of my earlier self in the women I was speaking to capable, high-performing, outwardly successful... yet quietly questioning whether they were doing enough, or even if they truly belonged.

At this stage in my career, giving back means creating space. Space to pause. Space to reflect. Space to step out of the constant pace of delivery and ask, "How do I actually want to lead?"

Because that space is often what is missing. It is not always about giving answers. It is about offering perspective and reminding someone that they are not alone in what they are experiencing, even if it feels that way.

Have you witnessed a moment where supporting one individual created a wider ripple effect beyond that initial interaction?

Yes and it is something I come back to often. I supported an individual who was struggling with clarity in her leadership role. She was overwhelmed, second-guessing decisions, and unsure of her direction.

As she began to find clarity, something shifted, communication became more considered, decisions steadier and her presence calmer.

And what followed was not just a personal shift, but a collective one. Her team became more aligned, confident and engaged.

It was a quiet reminder that leadership is rarely contained to one person.

When one individual leads differently, it creates a ripple across teams, cultures, and outcomes.

"Leadership is rarely contained to one person. When one individual leads differently, it creates a ripple across teams, cultures, and outcomes."

On Human Connection Within Structure

In industries that are often highly structured, where do you see the greatest opportunity for human connection and meaningful support?

Often, it sits in the moments we overlook.

The one-to-one conversation that goes beyond a status update. The check-in that allows someone to say, "I'm not sure," without fear.

The pause before reacting. The decision to ask rather than assume. Structure will always be necessary, but within that structure, there is space for intention.

And it is often in these small, deliberate moments that people feel most supported not through large gestures, but through consistent, human ones.



On the Future of Leadership

As the world of work continues to evolve, what skills or qualities do you believe will define impactful leadership going forward?

I believe we are moving away from leadership defined by control, and towards leadership defined by self-awareness.

It starts with the ability to lead yourself before you lead others to have the clarity to focus on what truly matters, rather than reacting to everything around you, and the emotional intelligence to create environments where people feel safe to think, contribute, and grow. These are often described as "soft skills", yet in increasingly complex environments, they are the very capabilities that create clarity, stability, and performance. Because people do not just need direction; they need leaders who can create a sense of calm within that complexity.

**"People do not just need direction;
they need leaders who can create a sense of calm
within that complexity."**

I gave my time because I had been the person who needed someone to show up for them. And no one did.

One piece of Advice

If you could give one piece of advice to someone navigating their career today, what would it be and why?

Take the time to define what success actually means to you not the version you have inherited, and not the one that simply looks good on paper, but the one that genuinely aligns with how you want to live and lead. It is easy to climb a ladder you never meant to climb, to stay busy, to keep achieving, and only later realise that something feels off. Clarity does not come from doing more; it comes from stepping back, even briefly, and asking yourself, "Is this the direction I truly want?"

That question, when answered honestly, can change everything.

Jess Harvey

Executive Coach & Risk Professional – London, UK

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Jess Harvey is the founder of The Female Mentoring Alliance and a leadership & career coach specialising in the development of women in financial and professional services. Having spent more than two decades working within the sector, she has first-hand experience of the opportunities and challenges that come with progressing into senior leadership roles, navigating organisational change, and balancing professional success with personal fulfilment.

Today, Jess works with women who are seeking greater clarity, confidence and purpose in their careers. Through coaching, mentoring and leadership development programmes, she helps women strengthen their leadership identity, trust their judgement, and create sustainable success without sacrificing their wellbeing, values or sense of self.

THE ROUND TABLE

An anonymous conversation between three hiring professionals spanning agency recruitment and in-house talent, two job seekers, and one employed professional about what is really happening in the market right now: the silence, the shifts, and the skills that actually matter.

Recruiter One · Agency, generalist

Recruiter Two · Executive search, mid-market

Recruiter Three · In-house talent, technology scale-up

Job Seeker One · Operations professional, actively searching

Job Seeker Two · Career pivoter, moving from legal to consulting

Employee · Director, financial services

Recruiter One · Agency, generalist

On the market

What is the single biggest shift you have seen in the recruitment market in the last twelve months the one thing that has fundamentally changed how you work?

Volume. The sheer volume of applications has exploded and not because there are more candidates. It is because AI tools have made it possible for one person to apply to two hundred roles in an afternoon. That sounds like efficiency but it has created a paradox. Hiring managers are overwhelmed, so they rely more heavily on automated screening, which means genuinely strong candidates are being filtered out before a human ever reads their application. The market is not short of talent. It is short of signal. My job has shifted from finding candidates to helping clients see through the noise. Three years ago I was a matchmaker. Now I am a translator sitting between two sides that cannot hear each other properly.

“The market is not short of talent.
It is short of signal”

What is the most common mistake you see candidates making right now the one that, if they fixed it, would genuinely change their outcomes?

On the mistake

Applying broadly and hoping something sticks. I understand the impulse when you are anxious and the market feels hostile, casting a wide net feels like the rational response. But it is counterproductive. Hiring managers can tell when an application is generic. They can feel the lack of specificity. The candidates who are getting through are the ones who apply to fewer roles but do it properly who research the company, tailor the narrative, and make it clear why this role, at this organisation, at this moment. Quality over quantity is not new advice, but it has never been more true than it is right now. The AI screening tools are looking for keyword alignment and relevance. A generic application fails on both counts.

“Three years ago I was a matchmaker.
Now I am a translator sitting between
two sides that cannot hear each other properly.”

Recruiter Two - Internal hiring, professional services

On skills

Are the skills employers are asking for now genuinely different from three years ago or is it the same skills dressed in new language?

Both, honestly. The core of what makes someone effective has not changed communication, judgement, the ability to build trust, the ability to navigate complexity. Those have always mattered and they still do. What has changed is the context in which those skills operate. Three years ago, being good at synthesising data meant being able to read a dashboard and draw conclusions. Now it means understanding what an AI model has synthesised, knowing where it might be wrong, and being able to articulate that to a board or a client. The underlying capability is similar. The application is entirely different. Where I do see genuinely new demand is in roles that sit at the intersection of technical understanding and human communication people who can translate between the two. That was a niche skill. It is now a core requirement across sectors.

On the pivot

What does a strong pivot look like on a CV? When someone has moved from a role that was automated into something adjacent, what signals to you that the transition was deliberate rather than desperate?

The narrative thread. When I look at a pivot, the first thing I am asking is: does this person know why they moved? Can they articulate it clearly and confidently? The candidates who struggle are the ones who present the pivot as something that happened to them. The ones who stand out are the ones who frame it as a decision even if the circumstance forced the initial step, they made a choice about where to go next and they can tell me why. Beyond that, I look for evidence of investment. Did they do something proactive in the gap a course, a project, a conversation with someone in the new field? That signals forward motion. And I look at whether the underlying capabilities genuinely transfer, not just whether the person wants them to.

On AI literacy

How important is AI literacy now not for technical roles, but for everyone? Is it a genuine differentiator or is it becoming table stakes?

It is rapidly becoming table stakes. Two years ago, if a candidate mentioned using AI tools in their workflow, it was a differentiator. Now, if they cannot articulate how they use AI or worse, if they seem resistant to it that is a red flag. I am not talking about building models or writing code. I mean the ability to use AI as a thinking partner, a research tool, a first-draft generator. The candidates who stand out are the ones who can say: here is how I use it, here is where I do not trust it, and here is where my human judgement adds value that the tool cannot. That combination of fluency and critical thinking is what employers want. Pure resistance reads as inflexibility. Uncritical adoption reads as lack of judgement. The sweet spot is informed, intentional use.

Recruiter Three · In-house talent, technology scale-up

On the gaps

What are the gaps you are seeing most often the things candidates think they are communicating well but are actually missing entirely?

Almost every CV I read tells me what someone did. Very few tell me what changed because they did it. There is a fundamental difference between 'managed a team of twelve' and 'built and led a team of twelve that delivered a product six weeks ahead of schedule, generating an additional quarter of revenue.' The first is a job description. The second is evidence of value. The gap is not about exaggeration it is about specificity. Candidates assume that listing responsibilities is enough. It is not. Hiring managers want to understand the delta what was different because you were there? The other gap is commercial awareness. Even in non-commercial roles, the ability to connect your work to business outcomes is critical. If you cannot explain how your function contributes to the organisation's goals, you are making the hiring manager do that translation for you. Most will not bother.

**"The gap is not about exaggeration,
it is about specificity."**

Employed · Director, financial services

The reality

From where you sit, how is AI actually changing the day-to-day not the headlines version, but the reality inside your organisation? What are people talking about that is not making it into press releases?

The honest answer is that the change is slower and more uneven than the headlines suggest and more anxiety-producing than the communications acknowledge. The tools are being rolled out, pilots are running, productivity gains are being measured. But what the internal conversations are really about is roles. People are watching which teams are growing and which are being quietly restructured. They are reading the subtext of every reorganisation announcement. Nobody says out loud that a function is being reduced because of automation it is always framed as efficiency or strategic realignment. People are not fooled. They are paying very close attention and drawing their own conclusions. The gap between what leadership communicates and what employees believe is the real story right now.

**"The gap between what leadership communicates
and what employees believe is the real story right now."**

THE JOB SEEKERS

Job Seeker One · Operations professional, actively searching

The moment

Can you describe the moment you realised the landscape had shifted — not just for your role, but for the way the whole search works now?

It was about three months into my search. I had applied for over forty roles. I had heard back from four. Not rejections just nothing. Complete silence. And then I started to realise that the silence was not about me. I spoke to people in similar situations and the experience was almost identical. Seventy-five percent of applications receive zero response. I had to recalibrate everything I thought I knew about how job searching worked. The old approach write a strong CV, apply to relevant roles, wait simply does not function in a market where AI is screening applications before a human ever sees them. I was being filtered out by a system before I had the chance to speak to a person. That was the shift. The game had changed and nobody had told me.

The process

Be honest what has the recruitment process actually felt like from the inside? The applications that disappear, the automated rejections, the interviews that go nowhere. What is broken?

What is most broken is the absence of human contact at the point where it matters most. You prepare for an interview, you show up, you have what feels like a genuine conversation and then nothing. No feedback, no explanation. According to research, nearly 60 percent of job seekers say ghosting is their top frustration, and I understand exactly why. It is not just demoralising it makes it very hard to improve. You do not know whether the issue was your experience, your presentation, the competition, or something internal to the organisation that had nothing to do with you. The automated rejection the one that arrives at 11pm on a Saturday at least closes the loop. The silence is worse. It leaves you in a kind of professional limbo that is genuinely difficult to navigate.

The lesson

What do you know now that you wish someone had told you on day one of your search?

That the network matters more than the application. I spent the first two months focusing almost entirely on job boards and company career pages. I was applying and waiting. The conversations that actually moved things forward came through people a former colleague who mentioned my name in a meeting, a connection who sent my CV directly to a hiring manager, a community I joined online where someone shared an unadvertised opportunity. Almost 80 percent of jobs are filled through networks rather than public postings. I did not act on that knowledge early enough. If I could go back, I would have spent far less time applying and far more time having conversations. The application is the last step, not the first.

Job Seeker Two · Career pivoter, moving from legal to consulting

To a recruiter

If you could sit across from a recruiter and say the thing you never get to say in an interview — about what the process misses, what it gets wrong about people like you — what would it be?

That the CV is a document about my past, not a demonstration of my potential. And that the interview, as it is usually structured, asks me to narrate that same past back to you in a different format. Neither of those things tells you very much about what I would actually do in your organisation, in your context, with your challenges. I would love the process to spend more time on real problems, give me a scenario that your team is genuinely wrestling with and let me think through it with you. That would tell you far more than asking me to describe a time I demonstrated leadership. The candidates who are pivoting, who are bringing fresh perspectives from adjacent fields, are systematically disadvantaged by a process designed to reward familiarity over capability.

“The candidates who are pivoting, who are bringing fresh perspectives from adjacent fields, are systematically disadvantaged by a process designed to reward familiarity over capability”

The circle

What has community, a network, people going through the same thing meant to you during this period? Has it changed what you thought you needed?

It has been the most important thing. More than the courses, more than the CV rewrites, more than the career coaching the conversations with people who were navigating the same uncertainty have been what kept me moving. There is something specific about talking to someone who is in it with you. They do not give you platitudes. They share what actually worked, what did not, who was worth speaking to, which organisations were genuinely hiring versus just posting. That kind of practical, honest intelligence is not available anywhere else. It also changed my thinking about what I needed. I came into this believing I needed a better strategy. What I actually needed was better information and people willing to share it. The circle is the strategy.

"I came into this believing I needed a better strategy. What I actually needed was better information and people willing to share it. The circle is the strategy."

Navigating the Future of Work

with Clarity and Confidence

The world of work is undergoing one of the most significant structural shifts in modern history. Artificial intelligence, evolving workforce expectations, and a rapidly changing global economy are reshaping not just what we do, but how we think about careers, leadership, and professional identity.

Understanding the Shift

AI is not arriving it is already here, reshaping how organisations work, what skills they need, and how teams are structured. For professionals across every sector, the question is no longer whether this affects them, but how best to navigate it with intention and confidence.

The World Economic Forum projects that 92 million roles will evolve or be displaced by 2030, while 170 million new roles emerge a net gain that reflects the scale of opportunity ahead. The sectors experiencing the most significant transformation include financial services, marketing, legal research, logistics, and administration.

The IMF estimates that around 60% of jobs in advanced economies have meaningful exposure to AI capabilities not meaning replacement, but transformation. The nature of work changes. The human layer above the task becomes more important, not less.

170M

new roles projected to emerge globally by 2030

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM · FUTURE OF JOBS REPORT 2025

177%

increase in AI literacy skills added by professionals on LinkedIn since 2023

Within every disrupted sector, new specialisms, new leadership needs, and new ways of working are taking shape. This is not a story of loss. It is a story of evolution.

The Human Advantage

What cannot be automated becomes more valuable. The capacity to lead through ambiguity, to build trust across teams, to communicate with nuance, to make ethical judgements in complex situations, these are not peripheral skills. They are central.

Research from BCG and the World Economic Forum consistently identifies the same cluster of capabilities as most critical for the decade ahead: analytical thinking, creative problem-solving, resilience, leadership, and curiosity. These are not new skills. But their relative importance has increased dramatically as routine cognitive tasks become automatable.

The professionals navigating this era most effectively are not necessarily the most technically advanced. They are the most adaptable, the most willing to learn, and the most intentional about where they invest their energy.

The capabilities that remain distinctly human:

Relational intelligence — reading rooms, building trust, navigating conflict, earning loyalty

Contextual judgement — knowing when the data is incomplete, when the rule does not apply, when to listen

Adaptive resilience — recovering from setbacks and leading others through uncertainty

Change leadership — guiding people through complexity with calm and conviction

Cross-functional fluency — connecting dots across disciplines and seeing the bigger picture

Creative problem-framing — asking the right questions before any answer is generated

65%

of our community say AI has already changed their working life and most are approaching that shift with curiosity, not fear.
RECIPROCITY SURVEY — 2025

40%

of work currently done by professionals in their portfolios today, compared to 2019. The pace of skill evolution is accelerating.
LINKEDIN WORKFORCE INSIGHTS, 2025

"The question is not what you used to do. The question is what you know how to do and where else that expertise is needed."

Revaluing Experience Across a Changing Landscape

One of the most empowering realisations for any professional navigating change is that skills are far more transferable than they appear. A risk assessment made in one sector draws on the same cognitive architecture as one made in another. The negotiation instincts honed in one industry, the stakeholder management refined in another these do not expire.

The right reframe opens up far more than the job title one currently holds. What is the core capability it requires, and where else is that capability in demand? What is the thread that connects past roles and where is that thread most valued? What is the unique combination of skills, networks, and insight that no one else can replicate?

The Role of Community and Connection

BCG research shows that 74% of the value flow of transformation comes from the people dimension, not the technology itself. Organisations that invest in their people in reskilling, in building communities of knowledge-sharing, in creating the conditions for trust outperform those that do not.

At an individual level, the same principle holds. The professionals navigating this era most effectively are the most connected to peers who share insight, to mentors who have seen cycles of change before, to communities that function as both early warning systems and springboards. That is precisely the ethos at the heart of Reciprocity. When we share what we know, when we open a door for someone else, when we invest our platform in another person's growth, we do not diminish our own position. We scale it.

Looking Ahead with Confidence

The AI era is not something to brace against. It is something to move into with clarity, curiosity, and the right community around you. The data shows that new roles are emerging faster than old ones are disappearing. The human skills that have always driven great leadership empathy, judgement, communication, adaptability are more valued now than at any point in recent history.

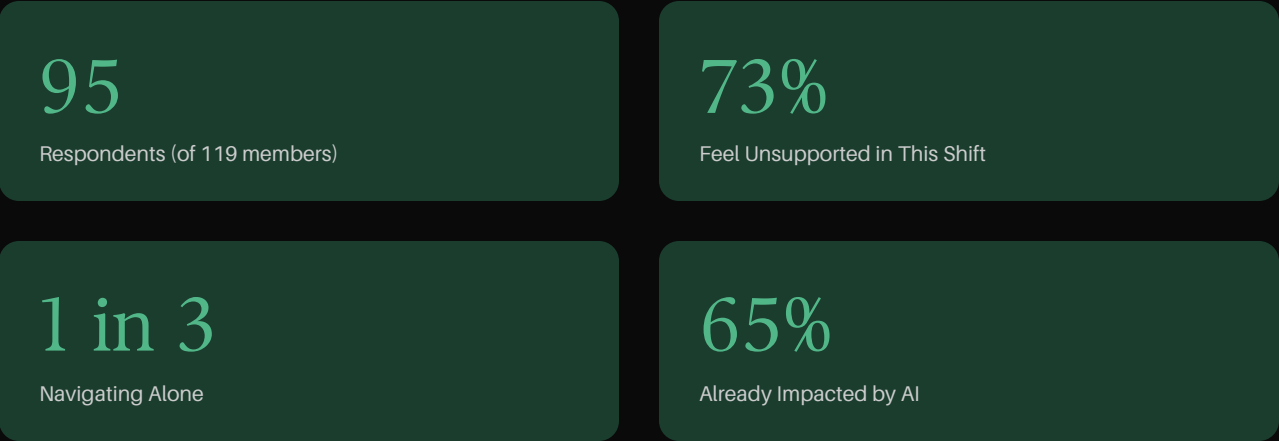
The opportunity is real. The tools to navigate it exist. And the circle the network of people investing in one another remains the most powerful career asset any professional can build.

"The professionals thriving in this era are not the most technically advanced. They are the most connected and the most generous with what they know."

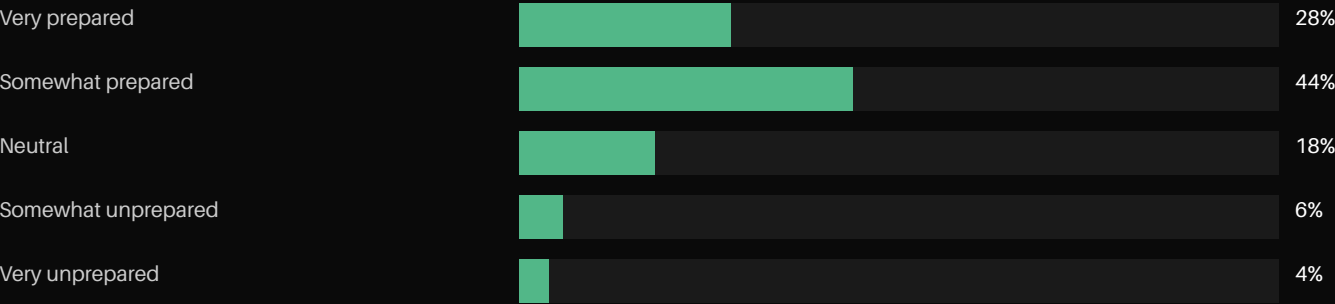
Data sources: World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report 2025 · IMF AI Employment Assessment 2024 · LinkedIn Workforce Insights 2025 · BCG Build for the Future 2025 · Pearson Skills Outlook · McKinsey Global Institute · Reciprocity Community Survey 2025

95 Voices, One Shared Conversation

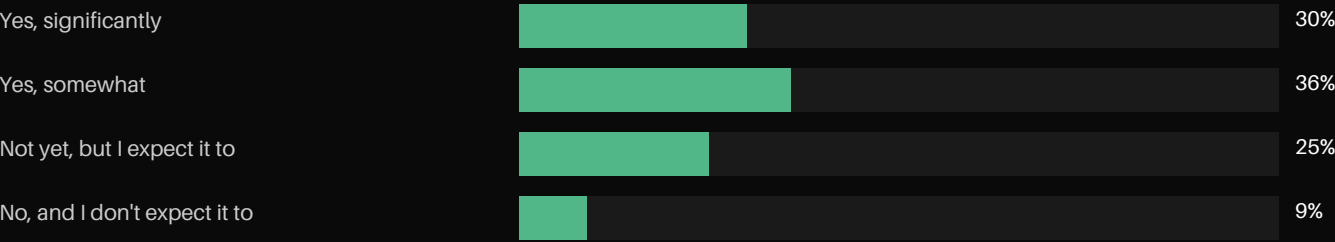
95 of our 119 members responded to this year's survey here's what they told us



How prepared do you feel for the changing world of work?

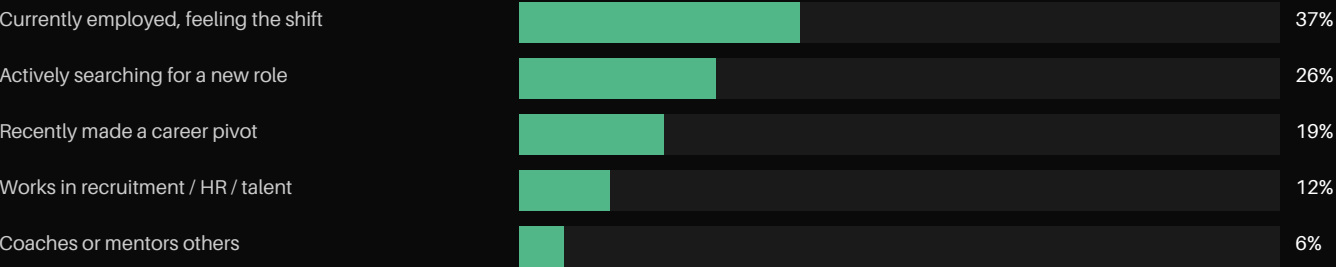


Has AI already changed your working life?



Q1 — Who responded

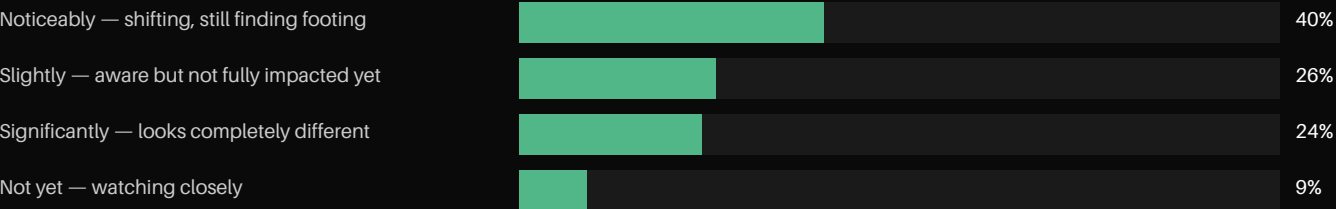
Which of these best describes where you are right now?



The majority of our members are still in work — but watching. The disruption is being experienced as ambient pressure rather than a sudden event.

Q2 — How much has AI changed things?

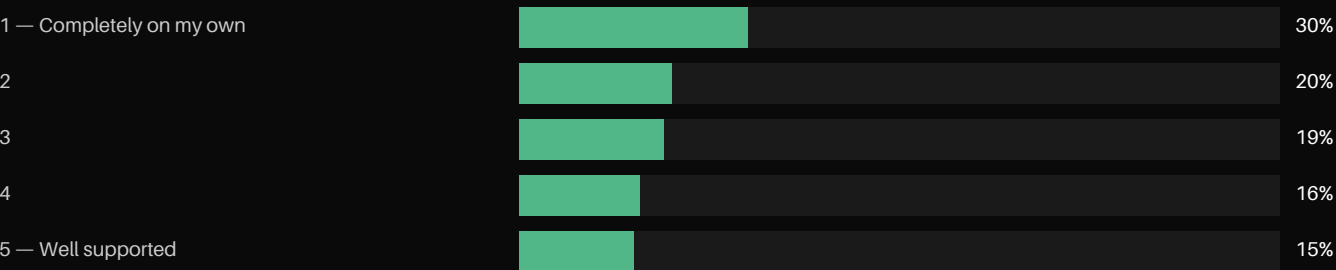
How much has AI already changed your working life or job search?



Nearly two thirds of members are already living it. Only 9% say they have not felt any impact yet.

Q3 — How supported do people feel?

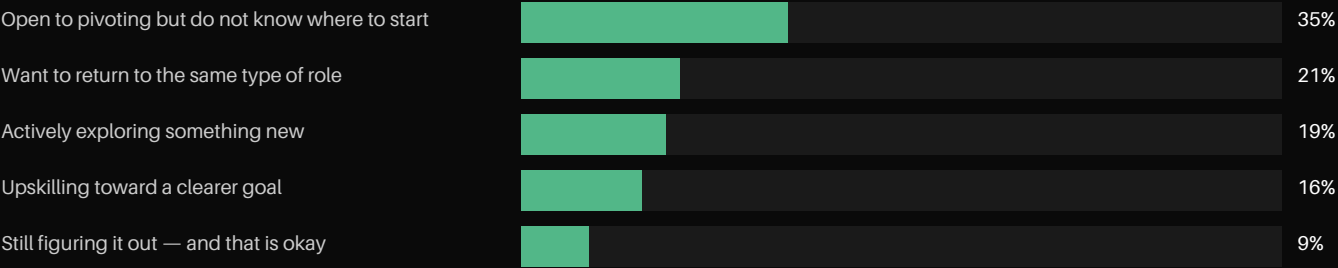
When it comes to navigating this shift, how supported do you feel? (1 = completely alone, 5 = well supported)



The most common single answer was 1. More than half rated their support at 1 or 2. The support infrastructure is failing — and people know it.

Q4 — What does their next move feel like?

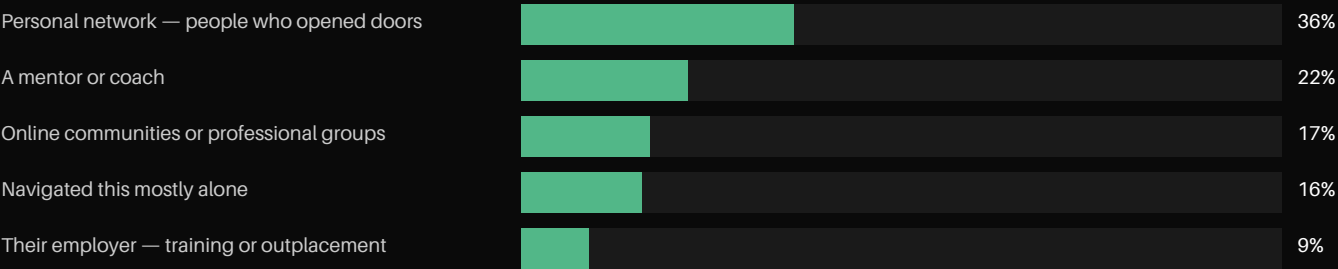
When you think about your next move, what feels most true right now?



35% are ready to move but have no map. That is the gap Reciprocity exists to close.

Q5 — Where has support come from?

Where has your most valuable support come from during this period?



Only 9% named their employer as most valuable. 36% credit their personal network. The circle is not a soft idea — for more than a third, it was the single most important thing they had.

Q6 — What people wish was said honestly

We gave people space to say what they actually think. No polish required. Here is what came back.

- "That the upskilling conversation is mostly aimed at people who already have time, money and confidence. The rest of us are trying to survive the week."*

— Currently employed · Financial services
- "Nobody tells you how demoralising it is to apply for 60 roles and hear nothing. The silence is the worst part. At least rejection is an answer."*

— Job seeker · Marketing
- "My employer talks about AI as opportunity. Meanwhile three of my team have gone and have not been replaced. I am doing the work of four people."*

— Currently employed · Operations
- "I pivoted and it was the best thing I did. But I did it because someone in my network believed in me before I believed in myself. Not everyone has that person."*

— Career pivoter · Legal to coaching
- "The jobs that AI is supposed to create exist. But they are nowhere near the people who lost the jobs AI replaced. That gap is not being talked about honestly."*

— Professional · Tech sector
- "I wish people would stop pretending this is just about learning new software. It is about identity. My job was who I was. That does not just update like an app."*

— Job seeker · Administration
- "A technology is reshaping work. Institutions are not keeping up. And the people navigating the gap are doing so largely without support — except for the networks, mentors and communities they have built for themselves. That is exactly the circle."*

— Community reflection



THE WORK THAT STAYS

Cristiana on Senegal, dignity, and the quiet persistence of showing up

Raised in Viareggio, Tuscany, Cristiana Cosignani grew up surrounded by the sea, strong family values, and the influence of her three older brothers an upbringing that shaped her resilience and independence.

Her life took a defining turn in 2011 during a volunteer trip to Senegal. What she witnessed communities living without basic resources yet filled with dignity, strength, and unity deeply transformed her perspective. That experience turned charity from something she did into something she lives.

Now based in London, she balances the pressures of everyday life with her ongoing commitment to humanitarian work, often making personal sacrifices to continue supporting those in need. For Cristiana, compassion is not optional it is essential. She believes that even the smallest act of kindness can restore hope, create connection, and remind people they are not forgotten.

THE ORIGIN

What first brought you to Senegal, and what made you stay?

My connection with Senegal began long before I founded my charity. The first time I went there was in 2011, as a volunteer. I thought I was going there to help others, but in reality, Senegal changed me forever. I still remember the faces of the children I met, their strength, their joy despite having so little, and the dignity of families fighting every single day just to survive.

There was one moment that truly stayed with me: seeing children eager to learn, full of dreams, but without access to basic school supplies, proper meals, or opportunities that many of us consider normal. I could not walk away and pretend I had not seen it. When I returned home, those faces stayed in my mind constantly. It became impossible to continue my life as before.

That feeling never left me. I realised that compassion alone was not enough action was necessary. Not “one day,” not “when the time is right,” but immediately. What started as volunteering slowly became a mission and eventually led me to create my own charity, driven by the belief that every person deserves dignity, hope, and the chance to build a future.



THE REALITY

What does the day-to-day reality of this work look like the parts that do not make it into photographs?

The reality of charity work is far from what people usually see online. Behind every photo is an enormous amount of invisible work: traveling long distances, organising logistics, raising funds, finding resources, dealing with emergencies, and facing constant uncertainty. Some days are emotionally overwhelming because you witness situations that break your heart children without access to healthcare, families struggling to eat, young people with talent but no opportunities.

There are moments of exhaustion and frustration, especially when you wish you could do more. But there is also something incredibly powerful about the human connection built on the ground. Charity is not about “saving” people. It is about listening, standing beside communities, and building trust over time. The real work happens in silence, through consistency, patience, and showing up again and again, even when nobody sees it.

"Showing up reliably, honestly, without agenda
was itself a form of change."

THE IMPACT

What has this work made possible for the community, and for you?

One story that deeply touched me was a young boy I met who was about to abandon school because his family simply could not afford the basic materials he needed. Through the support we organised, he was able to continue studying and slowly regain confidence in himself. Over time, I watched him transform not only academically, but emotionally. He began to believe that his future could be different.

What moved me most was seeing how this change affected everyone around him. His siblings became motivated to stay in school, his family felt hope again, and the community started believing that opportunities were possible. That is the true impact of this work: when you help one person, you often inspire an entire circle of people around them. Sometimes the greatest gift you can give is not money or material things, but the feeling that someone cares and that their life matters.

THE CIRCLE

How can people support this work or get involved?

Right now, what we need most is sustainable support and people willing to believe in long-term change. Real impact does not happen overnight. It requires commitment, trust, partnerships, and continuous presence within communities. Every contribution whether it is time, resources, skills, or simply sharing awareness can help create opportunities for people who have been forgotten for too long.

To anyone reading this who wants to support the work or start something of their own, I would say this: do not underestimate the power of small actions. You do not need to have everything figured out to begin. I started with a simple desire to help after my first trip to Senegal in 2011, and that experience completely transformed the direction of my life.

The world changes when ordinary people decide they can no longer remain indifferent. If something touches your heart deeply, listen to it. That feeling exists for a reason.



www.cristianasenegal.org

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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

A conversation with the founders of Looking Glass about mirrors, confidence, and building something from nothing

Building a physical product, the design, the lighting, the manufacturing, the logistics is a completely different challenge from selling a service or an idea. What surprised you most about what it actually takes, and what nearly made you stop?

We felt confident that we would be able to take the product from the concept stage through the design phase and into manufacturing as we had experience in this through architectural lighting products we had made in the past.

Quality was paramount for us, and we met with suppliers of the best materials to develop our mirror.

What was very new to us, however, was that we had been working B2B, and had never made or sold consumer products - we were to become an online retailer in the beauty market which required a whole new approach.

The dropshipping and logistics process was surprisingly complex too! We wanted our customers to be able to make an order and for it to be delivered to them anywhere in the world, without having to deal with customs, import duties etc. There is a lot that goes on behind the scenes to ensure our customers have a smooth experience!

You ask: what nearly made me stop?

It was more the 'start' rather than 'stop' that was the battle for me. I knew from the outset that this was not going to be a hobby project. It's a bit like engaging in a new relationship; if you want to make it a success, you need to be 'all in'. What I knew was that I really believed in the idea and I knew we had the skills to bring the product to life. I needed to fully commit, and that's what I've done.



The Idea

Looking Glass was born from a gap you clearly saw before anyone else did. What was the moment the frustration, the realisation, the "why does this not exist?" that made you decide to build it yourself?

It started with a discussion with my (now) business partner Yasamine, who was looking to upgrade the mirror set up in her bedroom. Poor lighting was a frustration when she was trying to apply her make-up and she wanted to find a solution to improve this daily task.

If you ask someone to name a 'mirror' brand, most will struggle. That realisation really shocked me, considering it's a tool that we all use religiously. Mirrors are an essential part of our daily routine, yet unlike hair dryers and straighteners for example, where most people would be able to rattle off a number of major players in the market, mirrors just weren't the same. Who was the master of mirrors? I was compelled to dive deeper.

At the time, I was working for a design studio, and we had an award-winning lighting designer on our team who had been involved in designing luxury fitting rooms for brands like Dolce & Gabbana. We had the expertise in lighting, however we didn't know enough about the science behind the humble mirror.

What we discovered was that most mirrors are made using either plastic or aluminium, cheaper options which have distorted or lower reflection qualities. It is 100% pure silver coated onto low sodium, high index glass that provides the most realistic reflection, and unparalleled accuracy of colour, vividness and depth of image.

From here we saw the opportunity, and were driven to develop the world's ultimate mirror system.

THE MEANING

A mirror with beautiful lighting changes more than how someone looks, it changes how they see themselves, how they start their day, and how they show up. What do you want a person to feel when they use Looking Glass, and why does that matter to you beyond the business?

A mirror with beautiful lighting changes more than how someone looks, it changes how she sees herself, how she starts her day, how she shows up. What do you want a woman to feel when she uses Looking Glass, and why does that matter to you beyond the business?

We want those that experience a Looking Glass to feel entirely confident that what they see is what's there; an authentic reflection of reality. Looking Glass mirrors provide the most accurate reflection you will ever experience.

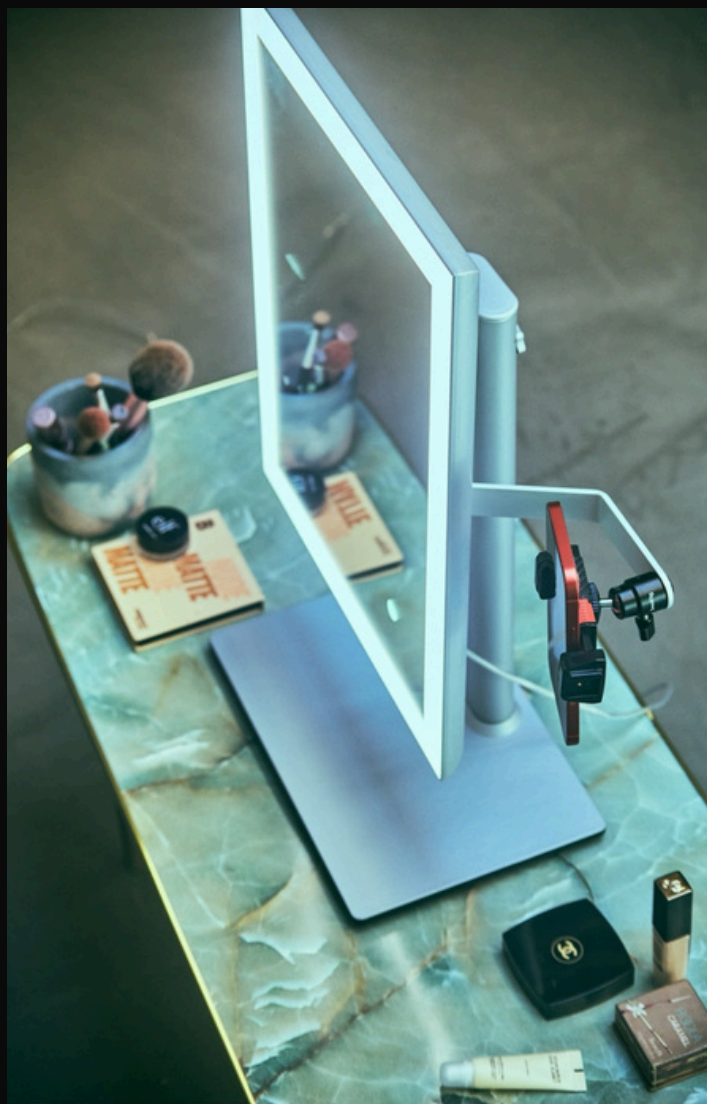
With this confidence, people can truly connect with themselves.

In fact, looking in a mirror is the only time you can look directly into your own eyes; you can't achieve that with an iPhone or photo. It is a very powerful tool for building self-awareness and confidence.

Mirrors have a reputation for being linked with vanity, however we want to redefine people's experience with reflection. Knowing that you haven't compromised on the quality of your reflection is empowering, and we know our customers have an elevated experience every single day.

"Looking in a mirror is the only time you can look directly into your own eyes. It is a very powerful tool for building self-awareness and confidence."





THE CIRCLE

How can people find you, support you, or become part of the Looking Glass world?

Looking Glass is still growing and the Reciprocity readers are exactly the kind of community that can help it grow. What do you need right now, and what would you say to someone who has a product idea she/he has not yet acted on?

Purchases - as a small start up business this is genuinely the most helpful thing anyone can do for us right now. If you are interested in the product for yourself, your business, or as an incredible gift for someone you love, please consider making a purchase!

Exposure - we have been working with some fantastic make-up artists including Lisa Potter-Dixon, Sophia Sinot and Kristina Gasperas who have become ambassadors for Looking Glass mirrors and allowed us to get exposure in the beauty industry, a space which is very new to us. If you know a professional who would be interested in working with us, or an event where you think professional-grade mirrors could be useful, we'd love to hear from you.

Funding - We are at a stage where we are exploring funding options to build our marketing presence. We would welcome conversations with anyone who could share advice from similar experience or business angels with a relevant background.

To someone who has a product idea and hasn't taken the plunge yet - speak to potential customers and ensure that they get as excited about the idea as you. Developing a new product is a big investment in time and money; you want to make sure it's viable. And, enjoy the concept development and brand building process. That's the fun part!

Looking Glass

www.lookingglass-pro.com

www.lookingglassmirrors.com

[@lookingglass](https://www.instagram.com/lookingglass)

www.linkedin.com/company/lookingglass-pro/

10% discount code for Reciprocity readers:

LGRMAG10

The Final Word: The Circle Expands

As we close Issue Two, we return to the truth that started all of this: reciprocity is not a gesture. It is a strategy. It is the architecture of everything that lasts.

This issue was built on generosity. Jess gave us her words, her philosophy, and her honesty about what leadership requires. Cristiana gave us her story one that began on a volunteer trip to Senegal and became a lifelong mission that she continues today, quietly, at personal cost, without asking for recognition. Charlene gave us her insight, her product, and a discount for every reader in this circle. Three women. Three different kinds of giving. One shared belief that what you put into the world comes back multiplied.

The six voices in our round table gave us the thing that is hardest to find candour. They spoke without their names attached so that the truth could travel further than their titles. 95 of our 119 members gave us their honest answers in our survey, and what they told us was not what institutions want to hear: that the most valuable support in a career transition does not come from an employer. It comes from a person. A conversation. A circle.

And the data all of it points in the same direction. The AI era is real. The shift is real. But the human capabilities that have always defined great leadership are not being replaced. They are being elevated. The professionals who will thrive are not the ones who wait for permission to adapt. They are the ones already in motion learning, connecting, giving before they gain.

"The circle is not a soft idea. For more than a third of the people we surveyed, it was the single most important thing they had."

Reciprocity exists because we believe the circle scales. Every connection made in these pages, every tool we build, every story we tell it is all in service of that one idea. That when we invest in one another, we do not lose influence. We multiply it.

We are 119 members strong. Issue Two is in your hands. And Issue Three is already taking shape.

NOMINATE

Who is your Give to Gain hero? Nominations for Issue Three are open to everyone.
info@reciprocity.network

TRY THE TOOL

Score your CV across 5 areas against your target role. Clear. Visual. Actionable.
reciprocity.network



SHARE

Pass this issue to one person in your network today. That is the circle in action.
[#GiveToGain](https://twitter.com/GiveToGain)

Nadia Hocini
Founder & Editor-in-Chief, Reciprocity Magazine

RECIPROCITY

Issue Two • 2026

Giving is the
highest form
of gaining

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The circle expands.

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