



## A Message From Our CEO: A New Decade Of Change

### Wrapping up the end of a recession-free decade

The U.S. labor market in 2019 can be described as historically record-breaking. It surpassed Economists' predictions, reflected a surge of strength, and has been the greatest job market since the late 1990s. For an entire decade, the first time in history, there was no report of an economic recession. The unemployment rate in December 2019 dipped to a half-century low (3.5%), the lowest it's been since September 1969. And the economy has been stable and steady for [126 consecutive months](#), adding thousands of jobs in a variety of sectors, including health care, professional and business services, manufacturing, transportation, and much more.

### Future outlook

As we optimistically welcome the beginning of a new era, several factors will affect the shifting landscape of the modern workforce. As more jobs become available and unemployment and inflation remain low, we expect organizations to continue to vigorously compete to attract and retain top talent. It's a candidate-driven market. Current employees will remain actively and passively seeking out other opportunities and job seekers will apply to in-demand jobs, ultimately receiving multiple, competitive offers.

### Workforce Trends 2020

#### *Generation Z is here*

Just when organizations thought they had an understanding of millennials in the workforce, their junior generation, [Gen Z](#) (those born between 1997-2012) have now entered the labor market. Although millennials currently are the largest generation in the market, Gen Z workers will be taking the workforce by storm this decade, 61 million of them. These digital natives' unique upbringing will affect the job market greatly. Keeping pace with current technologies, offering career growth options, and financial rewards should be top-of-mind when attracting this cohort.

#### *Increased use of AI*

We've known for the past two decades that technology has and will continue to profoundly change our lives. In 2020, you can expect to see industries of all kinds widely adopt and utilize transformative technologies to keep up with trends that will improve company operations. The surge of [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#) in the field of HR will affect employers and job seekers alike. During the recruitment process, AI can be seen integrated into resume screening, video interviews, and the search and selection process. Although AI cannot replace qualified human judgment and efforts, combining the two will speed up and advance the hiring process for every party involved.

### *Remote work options*

Technological changes in the way we work will be a major contributor when deciding to leave or stay at a job. Thanks to mobile devices and Wi-Fi, employees can 'log-on' anywhere. Having the flexibility to work remotely has become increasingly popular and demanded by employees across all generations. Currently, [two-thirds](#) of U.S. companies offer remote options. In 2020, you will see an outpour of organizations prioritizing this expectation. For employers, implementing a fair work-from-home policy reduces overhead, decreases turnover, and positively impacts the environment.

### *The rise in gig workers*

The gig economy is here to stay and will be stronger than ever in the coming years. Currently, over [one-third](#) of U.S. workers represent the gig economy working as temporaries, freelancers, contractors, and more. By 2023, 52% of the workforce will participate. The benefits of being a gig worker include the flexibility and freedom of your work schedule, supplementing income with different work options, non-traditional workplaces, to name a few.

### *Employer branding needs to be authentic*

In this current talent war, organizations need to focus on their [employer branding](#) efforts. To attract qualified candidates and stay relevant, your company will need to display authenticity, something you can't fake. Job seekers are looking to see your company culture, values and mission, and what current employees have to say about working there. Testimonials, online reviews, blogs, social media, and awards give candidates a peek into what it would be like to work at your organization. Consumer branding is no longer the sole focus, as this decade will require an equal emphasis on employer branding. Most importantly, both the consumer brand and the employer brand should have complementary values, whereby both external and internal brands reaffirm one another.

## **What does this mean for JOHNLEONARD?**

For the last fifty years, JOHNLEONARD has continued to employ our company values while making the process of finding and filling jobs efficient and cost-effective. When asked what attributes to JOHNLEONARD success, it boils down to our mantra that we live by each day, **Actions Speak Louder Than Words™**. Our commitment to doing what we say we will do and providing optimal solutions to our client's staffing challenges is what separates us from our competition...it is why we continue to be recognized as a 50-year employment industry leader.

As technology continues to disrupt the current workforce and the labor market becomes more dynamic, JOHNLEONARD renews its pledge to identify and embrace best practices in processes and technology. This will ensure that we continue to provide our clients, organizations and candidates alike, with the most effective and efficient services which guarantee successful outcomes. Already we have adopted AI into our recruitment process allowing us to proactively recruit candidate referrals using cutting edge interactive technology. JOHNLEONARD has also invested in a communication platform that combines conversational text messaging, cloud-voice service and personalized automation to help us engage with candidates in real-time. Given the expectations of a continued tight labor market, we believe that candidate engagement will be critical to our success as we enter this new decade. With the tech-savvy Millennials and the influx of Gen Z, who demand digital technologies and omni-channel communication,

we recognize that technology will play an ever-increasing role in our industry. But, for **JOHNLEONARD** at least, it will never displace our commitment to holding ourselves to the highest standards and to treating all our employers and candidates with respect.

We are extremely optimistic about the future labor market and economy. We will continue to be the go-to provider of the best career and employer advice and industry trends. It might be a new decade, but we look forward to continuing the tradition of delivering the highest level of expertise and customer service to our clients.

Sincerely,

*Linda J. Poldoian*

CEO

