

WHY Q4 IS THE SMARTEST TIME TO JOB HUNT

INSIGHTS FROM THE BACHRACH GROUP AND SARA LUKSIN



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As the year winds down, it's easy to assume hiring slows to a crawl. Between holiday travel, budget resets, and end-of-year wrap-ups, many job seekers pause their searches until January, expecting companies to do the same. But that assumption might actually hold you back. Studies consistently show that the fourth quarter is one of the best times to make your move — and that the candidates who act now are often the first to secure interviews and offers in the new year.

According to a recent YourTango article citing employment experts, many employers ramp up hiring in Q4 as they rush to finalize open positions before year-end budgets close. Others begin early recruitment for roles launching in January, giving proactive candidates a head start. In short, while it may feel the market hits pause, companies with strong planning cycles are actively preparing for next year's success — and they're looking for talent that's ready to start strong.

WHAT THE DATA SAYS | Despite broader economic caution, the U.S. job market continues to hold steady. SHRM recently reported that employers maintain a positive hiring outlook for Q4, showing resilience across sectors like professional services, technology, and finance. Similarly, John Leonard's Q4 Job Report notes that the Net Employment Outlook sits at 34%, reflecting cautious optimism and steady demand for high-skill roles. For companies operating on a "use it or lose it" fiscal model, Q4 becomes a key hiring window — an opportunity to invest in people before budgets reset.



This momentum means that even as seasonal slowdowns happen in some industries, others are in full swing. From corporate planning to project ramp-ups, employers use this time to prepare their teams for the year ahead. Candidates who step into the market now aren't competing with the flood of January applicants; instead, they're engaging with hiring managers at a moment when inboxes are quieter and conversations can move faster. It's not just about finding a job — it's about getting seen first.

"Smart candidates, whether active or inactive, use the end of the year and the holidays as a time to actually get ahead," says Sara Luksin, *District Director* at The Bachrach Group. "While many job seekers hit pause until January, those that throw their resume into the ring now will actually get more views and potentially more attention. Come January, inboxes are flooded and everyone's looking for new opportunities. Building relationships now helps you stand out before the market gets crowded."

Sara's insight captures a truth that seasoned recruiters see every year: timing creates opportunity. Candidates who stay visible and engaged in Q4 are the ones who get the first calls in January. Even a quick update to your resume, portfolio, or LinkedIn profile can make a difference. Recruiters are actively sourcing now, and hiring managers notice those who are prepared before the rush. Momentum matters, and taking small steps now can lead to big moves when hiring surges after the holidays.

CONNECTION IS THE SECRET ADVANTAGE | The end of the year naturally lends itself to reconnection. Holiday parties, alumni events, end-of-year catch-ups, and even a simple "Happy New Year" message can spark genuine conversations. Sara adds, "Savvy professionals know this is one of the best times to build connections. Job seekers can reconnect with contacts more authentically during this time of the year. Holiday events, end-of-year gatherings, and even simple check-ins make outreach feel warm and genuine — not transactional."

In other words, networking feels easier — and more human — when it's not attached to an immediate ask. People are reflective at year's end, often more generous with their time and advice. Whether you're reaching out to a former manager, reconnecting with a recruiter, or checking in with an old colleague, these conversations can quietly set the stage for your next opportunity. It's less about the pitch and more about staying top of mind.



HOW RECRUITERS HELP YOU WIN | While some companies hold off on final offers until budgets reset, recruiters don't stop working. They're preparing shortlists, managing pipelines, and staying close to hiring managers planning for early-year roles.

"The end of the year is an ideal time to partner with recruiters," Sara explains. "Even if hiring decisions are being delayed until January, recruiters stay closely connected with hiring managers and have their fingers on the pulse of the market. They'll continue to follow up and advocate on your behalf — keeping you top of mind when hiring ramps up."

At TBG, our recruiters across the country are already supporting clients with early 2026 planning. That means they know which departments are hiring now, which ones will be hiring soon, and how to position candidates accordingly. Partnering with a recruiter during Q4 can give you an inside track — not just for what's open today, but for what's coming next.

DON'T WAIT FOR Q1 | January may feel like the "fresh start" month, but waiting until then means stepping into one of the most competitive windows of the year. Instead, use Q4 to refresh your materials, reach out to your network, and have those exploratory conversations that others are putting off. Even if your next move doesn't happen until early next year, you'll already be in motion while others are just beginning to start.

The job market may be shifting, but opportunity hasn't disappeared, they are evolving. Those who act now, with intention and curiosity, will find themselves walking into the new year not searching, but starting.

LEARN MORE ABOUT SARA LUKSIN & TBG

Sara L. is the District Director of Atlanta at TBG, overseeing multiple lines of business. A specialist in the legal market nationwide, she partners with clients and candidates across both in-house and law firm settings to deliver top attorney and legal support talent on a permanent and interim basis.

Known for her deep market knowledge and relationship-driven approach, Sara has built top-performing teams and a trusted network that spans from AmLaw 100 firms to emerging startups. She's passionate about creating meaningful, lasting partnerships — and finds genuine fulfillment in helping people and businesses succeed.

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