



## WORK WITHOUT BORDERS:

How to Build a Remote Global Career

# PROFESSIONALS VALIDATING THEIR DEGREES IN THE U.S.

Discover the journeys of doctors, engineers, biomedical scientists, and physical therapists who are transforming their careers through diploma validation and global mobility.



## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH DIOGO MENDES SILVA

## GOLDEN VISA – PROS & CONS:

Benefits, risks, requirements, and the economic impact of choosing this path in the U.S.

# Knowledge transforms. And when transformation is strategic, it opens doors to a whole new world.

Welcome to the third edition of High Level News, a magazine created with a clear purpose: to connect professionals and entrepreneurs to the global market—especially the United States—and to empower careers through relevant, reliable, and high-level information.

Each edition plants new seeds—and we're already seeing the results of this journey in the lives of those who walk with us.

This April issue dives deep into a growing trend: the validation of foreign degrees in the United States, a step that is opening doors to new career paths, increased employability, and global recognition.

## You'll also find key insights on:

- » The most in-demand skills in the age of artificial intelligence (Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills)
- » Top-ranked universities and courses for those aiming to thrive in the automotive and mechanical industries
- » Career opportunities in engineering, including how to stand out in recruitment processes at companies like Tesla, Ford, and GM
- » How to build a successful remote career, especially across borders

» Startups revolutionizing the automotive industry through innovation and technology

» And a closer look at the Golden Visa, plus an exclusive comparison of the value of your work hour in different countries.

*High Level News is more than a magazine. It's a tool for transformation.*

A space where you'll find clarity, insights, and practical guidance to build your next steps with confidence and purpose.

If you're reading this now, know that it's not by chance. You were born to shine — and this issue may be your spark to begin.

**Shall we go further, together?** 🚀



**Warm regards,  
Dani Seixas**

*Founder of High Level USA &  
Editorial Coordinator of  
High Level News*

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# RECONSTRUCTING TRAJECTORIES:

## *Experienced Brazilians Are Validating Their Diplomas to Work Legally in the U.S.*

By *Dani Seixas*

If dreaming of an international career was once enough, today thousands of Brazilians are taking action. The number of professionals seeking to validate their diplomas in the United States grows every year, driven by new opportunities, better pay, and quality of life. But how does this process work? Is there a single path? And what does it actually take to return to professional practice on American soil?

The answer depends on the field of work. In the U.S., licensing and professional recognition rules are decentralized, meaning each state and profession has its own specific requirements. Still, there is a common route: gather academic documentation, prove English proficiency, pass technical exams, and — often — return to the classroom.



## HEALTH FIELD

In healthcare, the path is often long — but achievable. For physicians, for instance, the journey begins with diploma validation through the ECFMG, the organization responsible for accrediting foreign medical graduates. After that, the candidate must take the TOEFL to prove English fluency, followed by a series of exams: the USMLE (United States Medical Licensing Examination), which is divided into steps assessing everything from clinical knowledge to practical decision-making. Even after years of experience in Brazil, physicians must complete a new medical residency in the U.S. before receiving their full license to practice.

Dentists face similar challenges. After validating their diploma and demonstrating English fluency, they must take the INBDE exam and apply to Advanced Standing Programs, where they study for an additional two to three years at an American university before obtaining a state license.

Physical therapists and nurses follow comparable procedures. In physical therapy, diplomas are evaluated by the FCCPT, followed by the NPTE national exam and, in some cases, a supervised internship. Nurses must pass the CGFNS screening, demonstrate English fluency, and take the NCLEX, which authorizes them to practice.

For psychologists and occupational therapists, the process includes academic revalidation, completion of additional coursework as required by state boards, and exams such as the EPPP. Supervised internships and clinical interviews are also commonly required, especially in states with stricter regulations.

Other health-related professions — such as aesthetics, nutrition, and physical education — have distinct requirements. For aesthetics, most states require attendance at an American school for 600 to 1,000 hours, followed by a written and practical exam. Nutritionists seeking to become Registered Dietitians must take supplemental courses at accredited U.S. universities, complete internships, and pass the CDR exam. Physical education professionals generally require diploma validation, academic coursework, and passage of exams determined by state athletic boards.



## ENGINEERING FIELD

Brazilian engineers — especially those in civil and mechanical engineering — must also go through a well-structured validation journey. The first step is obtaining diploma equivalency through agencies such as WES (World Education Services), which assess alignment with U.S. academic standards. Next, they must register with the NCEES, the body that oversees the engineering profession, and take the FE (Fundamentals of Engineering) exam — a mandatory step for those aiming to become licensed Professional Engineers (PEs).

After passing the FE, engineers must work under supervision for at least four years before they can take the PE exam, which grants full licensure. This designation allows engineers greater autonomy, the ability to sign off on projects, and increased credibility with major construction and engineering firms.

Some professionals also pursue technical courses or certifications while waiting for diploma validation, which can accelerate their entry into the job market. Certifications in industry-specific software, American building codes, and technical English are valuable assets.





## TECHNOLOGY FIELD

In information technology, a diploma is not always required to secure great opportunities. The industry prioritizes hands-on experience, portfolios, and certifications above academic background. Still, diploma validation can be an advantage, particularly for those aiming to work in academia, public institutions, or management roles.

The typical path begins with study equivalency (via WES or ECE), followed by earning recognized technical certifications such as AWS, Cisco, Microsoft, CompTIA, and Google Cloud. Fluency in English, knowledge of agile methodologies, and proficiency in programming languages like Python, Java, and JavaScript are often more valued than academic credentials. In many cases, experienced Brazilian professionals can transition quickly into the U.S. market by demonstrating results and completing short-term courses from local institutions.



## SUPPORT FIELDS (Administration, Law, Accounting, Communication)

Fields like Administration, Law, Accounting, and Communication have varying — and in some cases more flexible — requirements, though the path is far from simple.

Administrators and project managers can work based on diploma equivalency, enhancing their resumes with MBAs or certifications such as PMP, CAPM, Lean Six Sigma, and Agile. These are highly regarded in the U.S. job market.

Accountants face more rigid standards. To become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), candidates must validate their diplomas, complete required accounting credits at U.S. universities, and pass the CPA Exam. Each state has specific rules regarding coursework and practical experience.

Lawyers face perhaps the most demanding path. In many states, taking the Bar Exam requires completion of an LL.M. (Master of Laws) in the U.S. Once completed, lawyers may apply for licensure, provided they meet local conditions — which often include an interview, background check, and ethics evaluation.

Communication, Journalism, Marketing, and Advertising professionals encounter fewer formal barriers. While no license is required, the U.S. market expects strong English communication, cultural adaptation, and often a complete portfolio revamp. Fast-paced training in digital marketing, UX design, or storytelling helps professionals stand out in this highly competitive sector.





That's why it's essential to seek support from specialized professionals who understand the legal and educational processes for your field. With proper guidance, the journey can be faster, more cost-effective, and much more strategic.

## Why Validating Your Degree Is Worth It — And Why Working Without a License Is a Real Risk

Though the process demands time, effort, and often financial investment, diploma validation in the U.S. means much more than academic acknowledgment — it is the gateway to real opportunities, better compensation, job stability, and professional growth in one of the world's most competitive and innovative markets.

Professionals who validate their degrees not only access better-paying jobs — they earn the right to work safely, ethically, and in compliance with American laws. Validation also builds social credibility, employer trust, and, most importantly, the freedom to build a solid and legitimate career without hiding or accepting underemployment.

Conversely, working without the required license or credential constitutes unauthorized professional practice, which is a crime in nearly all U.S. states. Penalties include heavy fines, criminal prosecution, and even deportation — putting one's entire future at risk.



**In this edition of High Level News, you'll discover real-life stories of Brazilian professionals — from healthcare, engineering, technology, and law — who are currently undergoing the validation process or have already secured recognition to work legally in the United States. Their experiences prove that, with planning and perseverance, starting over can be the most successful chapter of your career.**

# Diogo Mendes Silva

## A Journey of Purpose-Driven Reinvention in a High-Demand U.S. Market



By Dani Seixas

Starting over takes courage — and when that fresh start is guided by purpose, it becomes even more powerful and meaningful. Diogo Mendes Silva, a 40-year-old Brazilian dentist, is one of those professionals who has turned dreams into plans and plans into action. With 17 years of solid experience in dentistry in Brazil, Diogo is now preparing for a new chapter in the United States, bringing with him not only technical expertise but also a compelling story of perseverance, vision, and dedication.

Originally from Mogi das Cruzes, São Paulo, Diogo is relocating to Florida, where he plans to validate his dental degree and build his professional path in a country he describes as the land of meritocracy — where those who strive, succeed.

*"The United States values hard work. It's a country that respects service providers and strongly supports education and sports from early school years. That's very important to me, especially as a father of three daughters,"* Diogo shares.

### Professional Validation: A Challenging Yet Purposeful Process

Validating a professional degree in the U.S. is far from easy. It requires planning, adaptation, investment, and a lot of patience. For Diogo, the process is currently underway. He is pursuing an O-1 visa — granted to individuals with extraordinary ability — and beginning his qualification as a dental hygienist, which will serve as a stepping stone toward full licensure as a dentist.

*"The hardest part so far has been the waiting. Once you begin, you want things to move quickly. But I know this takes time, and I'm ready for it,"* he says.

He also points out the language barrier as one of the current challenges and is receiving guidance from organizations such as Valida USA and Mora EUA, which are supporting him during this transition to the U.S. workforce.

**"Once you begin, you want things to move quickly. But I know this takes time, and I'm ready for it"**

**Diogo Mendes**

## A Growing Market Full of Opportunity

The healthcare sector — especially **dentistry** — is among the most promising industries for qualified immigrants in the United States. Growing demand for preventive and cosmetic dental care, coupled with an aging population, has created a strong and consistent need for professionals in the field.

In this context, professionals like Diogo — experienced, forward-thinking, and entrepreneurial — are increasingly valued. His long-term vision includes not only practicing in the U.S. but also becoming a **dental business owner**, contributing to the growth of the industry and opening doors for others.

*"My goal is to validate my degree, practice in the field, and eventually open dental clinics in the U.S. I want to grow professionally and help create opportunities for other professionals,"* Diogo explains.

## Strategic Transition and a Vision for the Future

Though he is still living in Brazil, Diogo is taking proactive steps to prepare for the move. He has been studying the U.S. dental market, keeping up with new technologies, and thinking about how to position himself once he arrives.

*"What impresses me most is how well professionals are respected and how affordable it is to access the latest technology. This directly impacts service quality and the overall value placed on the dental profession,"* he notes.

For him, this transition is more than just a change of address — it's a complete life transformation with higher personal and professional returns.

*"I define this phase as a fresh start with much greater potential for personal and professional fulfillment,"* he says confidently.



## A Message to Inspire Other Brazilians

Diogo knows that his journey can inspire other Brazilian professionals hoping to build a career in the United States. His advice is straightforward:

*"Prepare your English, plan your move carefully, and have faith. It's not an easy decision, but it's absolutely worth it. The return is great, in every sense,"* he encourages.

**Stories like Diogo's are a powerful reminder that Brazilian talent is recognized and sought after abroad — especially when combined with preparation and the willingness to step outside the comfort zone. The U.S. market is actively seeking professionals like him: experienced, skilled, and driven. And without a doubt, Diogo will be warmly welcomed on this new path.**

# Elcio Coelho de Sousa

## A Brazilian Living the Extraordinary in Electrical Engineering in the U.S.

By **Dani Seixas**

At 39 years old, Elcio Coelho de Sousa took a bold step toward a new future. Originally from Brazil, he now lives in Charleston, South Carolina, where he is navigating the degree validation process to work as an electrical engineer — a profession he has practiced for over a decade in his home country.

*"I wasn't just looking for stability. I wanted growth, recognition, and challenges that would push me beyond my comfort zone,"* Elcio shares.

### From Dream to Reality: The Path to Validation

The professional validation process in the U.S. can be complex, but with the right support, the path becomes clearer. For Elcio, the biggest challenge was obtaining and sending the required documents from Brazil.

*"At first, it was hard to figure out the process. But once I found the right support, things became much smoother,"* he explains.

He is currently completing his degree equivalency with the assistance of **ValidaUSA**, and the process has taken about four months so far.



### Market Differences: Recognition and Opportunity

When comparing the Brazilian and American markets, Elcio points out clear advantages in the U.S.: more job opportunities, better salaries, and a greater appreciation for academically trained professionals, especially in technical fields like engineering.

*"Here, engineers are truly valued. It's fulfilling to see that after so many years of dedication,"* he says.

Though he is still waiting for his professional license, Elcio has ambitious goals: **to work on developing new technologies in electrical engineering, and eventually complete a master's degree in finance.**

## Strategic Positioning and Professional Visibility

Elcio knows that visibility is essential in building a strong career in the U.S. That's why he actively participates in business networking events and is increasing his presence on social media.

*"Being present, connecting with other professionals, and showcasing your value is essential to this journey,"* he emphasizes.



## A Life-Changing Experience at the High Level Conference

Elcio's participation in the High Level Conference in Boston, held near Harvard Square, was unforgettable.

*"It was fantastic — something I never imagined. The perfect place for anyone seeking professional and personal growth. Incredible networking,"* he recalls.

He highlights as standout moments the visit to Boston's government headquarters and the Harvard campus, along with the rich exchange of knowledge and experiences.

*"It was a wave of knowledge in a short amount of time. I left feeling even more motivated to pursue my goals in the U.S.,"* he adds.

*"It was a wave of knowledge in a short amount of time. I left feeling even more motivated to pursue my goals in the U.S."*

**Elcio Coelho de Sousa**

## Advice and Achievements

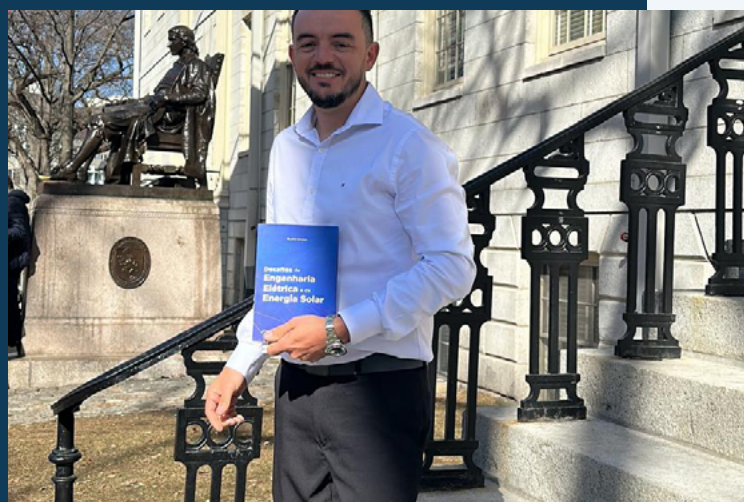
One of Elcio's biggest accomplishments so far has been being officially recognized as an electrical engineer by U.S. authorities — a key step toward obtaining his professional license.

*His advice to other Brazilian professionals?*

***"Keep pursuing your dream. And above all, seek help from trustworthy and experienced professionals. That makes all the difference."***

*When asked to sum up this new phase of his life, Elcio doesn't hesitate:*

***"I'm living the extraordinary in my career."***



With a promising future ahead, Elcio proves that dreaming big, planning carefully, and acting with courage are the keys to achieving something extraordinary — even across borders.

# Viviane Rodrigues:

## A Transformative Journey Toward Professional Validation in the U.S.

By Dani Seixas

At 41 years old, Viviane Cerqueira Rodrigues dos Santos is embracing a new chapter in her life — one of courage, growth, and professional expansion. A physical therapist specialized in manual therapies, a clinical aromatherapist, an osteopath in training, and author of the book “Chronic Pain Has a Cure”, Viviane is building a bridge between two worlds: Brazil and the United States.

*“I’ve always welcomed challenges, because I believe they help us grow. With every obstacle overcome, we evolve professionally and personally,”* she says.

Currently living in Maringá, Paraná, she is going through the process of **validating her physical therapy** degree in order to legally practice in the United States — where she aims to rebuild her career and secure a brighter future for her two daughters.

### Purpose-Driven Change: From Personal Healing to an International Career

Viviane iniciou sua vida profissional na área financeira, onde atuou por dez anos. Mas foi durante a reabilitação de sua filha que ela descobriu sua verdadeira vocação: **a fisioterapia como instrumento de transformação de vidas.**



At age 34, she started her degree and hasn’t looked back since. She has since dedicated herself to treating chronic pain patients with compassion and effective, integrative techniques.

*“My work is more than just pain relief. It’s about restoring quality of life, mobility, and hope. I want to take that work to the world.”*

### Toward the U.S.: Validation Process and Expectations

Viviane began her U.S. validation process in late 2024 and is currently in the document review phase to have her bachelor’s degree in physical therapy recognized. She highlights the complexity of the documentation and the financial investment required as major challenges.

*“Every step of the process requires attention to detail. Managing anxiety is key to moving forward efficiently.”*

With the support of her family and mentors, she is preparing for the next phases, including exams and potential complementary coursework.

## A Key Moment: High Level Conference in Boston

Viviane's participation in the High Level Conference in Boston, held near Harvard Square, was a defining moment in her international journey.

*"Being among professionals already established in both national and international markets gave me more confidence to keep going."*

At the event, she launched her book, spoke on stage about her work, and visited landmarks like Boston's State House and Harvard University.

*"It was a transformative experience that strengthened my belief in the impact my work can have abroad."*

## Vision, Purpose, and the Future Ahead

Viviane is already preparing to practice in the U.S., improving her language skills, learning new approaches, and actively participating in networking and professional events.

Her short-term goal is to work as a certified physical therapist, and in the long term, open her own wellness practice, offering personalized therapies for chronic pain.

***"My first goal is to show that it is possible to live without pain. Helping others achieve that is also the realization of my own dream."***

**Viviane Rodrigues**

With courage, preparation, and passion, Viviane is paving the way — inspiring other Brazilian professionals to pursue their own dreams abroad.

**"Don't let the fear of failing stop you from playing the game."**



## Physical Therapy in the U.S.: Innovation, Recognition, and Opportunity

Viviane views the U.S. healthcare system with admiration. The differences between Brazil and the U.S. are significant: greater recognition for physical therapists, strong collaboration across health teams, and advanced technologies such as biofeedback, robotics, and virtual rehabilitation.

*"In the U.S., there's a strong focus on preventive care, with personalized programs even for non-athletes. It's a dynamic, tech-driven, and collaborative professional environment."*

She also appreciates the wide availability of professional development courses and specialization programs, which keep therapists up to date.

# Fernando Luis Berticelli

## A Dream Builder Ready to Make His Mark in the United States

By Dani Seixas



With 18 years of experience in Brazil's construction industry, **Fernando Luis Berticelli**, 45, represents the profile of a new global entrepreneur: experienced, strategic, and ready to cross borders in pursuit of growth and impact. Based in Paran, Brazil, Fernando is now preparing to bring his construction expertise to one of the most dynamic and promising markets in the world — the United States.

*"My decision to move to the U.S. is directly connected to my goal of expanding my company into a dynamic and high-potential market,"* he explains.

### A Life Project with a Future-Focused Vision

Unlike many professionals who move to the U.S. looking for immediate job placement, Fernando is taking a medium- and long-term approach. Although he has not yet started the formal validation

process, he is carefully studying the market to make strategic decisions.

*"I'm still in the early stages, learning about the requirements and opportunities, and mapping out the best path for my transition,"* he says.

He acknowledges that future challenges may include language barriers, documentation, and adapting to the American system, but he's approaching the journey with a clear plan and commitment.

***"My decision to move to the U.S. is directly connected to my goal of expanding my company into a dynamic and high-potential market."***

**Fernando Luis Berticelli**

## A High-Demand, High-Opportunity Real Estate Market

Fernando has a clear understanding of the strengths of the American construction market. He sees greater demand and a steadier, more linear sales process compared to Brazil, which allows for more robust profitability.

With this outlook, he has already set ambitious goals: to start construction projects in 2026 and deliver 60 homes by 2030, contributing to both the industry and local communities.

*"I want to build more than just houses — I want to deliver comfort, security, and well-being to American families, just as I've always done in Brazil,"* he says proudly.

*"It was an incredibly enriching experience. Being in such a welcoming environment, surrounded by inspiring stories and real opportunities, only reinforced that I'm on the right track,"* he shares.



## A Purpose-Driven Journey with Lasting Impact

Fernando's vision goes beyond financial success — he's focused on building a legacy. Whether in Brazil or in the U.S., his mission remains the same: to drive development through construction — not just of buildings, but of dreams.

*"This new chapter is full of promise and opportunity. My goal now is to solidify my company's presence in the U.S. and build a strong foundation for sustainable growth,"* he affirms.

Para os brasileiros que pensam em seguir um caminho similar, ele deixa um recado direto:

*"Pursue your dreams relentlessly. The journey may be long and challenging, but the reward at the end is priceless,"* he says.

## Networking, Connections, and Strategic Planning

Though still in Brazil, Fernando has already begun building his professional network in the U.S. He recognizes that networking is one of the most valuable currencies in the international market.

His participation in the High Level Conference was a key milestone on this path.



**Fernando is a shining example that Brazilian talent and entrepreneurship have a place in the American market. With strategic vision, humility to learn, and courage to act, he is positioning himself as a true builder of futures — and his name is sure to stand out in the years to come.**

# Mauricio Antonio Gouvea:

## Overcoming Challenges and Validating a 35-Year Engineering Career in the U.S.

With a 35-year track record in mechanical engineering, Mauricio Antonio Gouvea, age 56, is turning the American dream into a strategic life plan. Originally from Brazil and currently living in Kissimmee, Florida, he is steadily progressing through the process of validating his engineering degree in the United States, driven by professional goals and family values.

*"In addition to seeking new engineering opportunities, I came to accompany my two children — one starting college and the other beginning graduate studies. This move is meaningful for us as a family,"* Mauricio shares.

### Focused Validation and Resilience

The path to professional validation in the U.S. is known to be demanding — and Mauricio knows it firsthand. After receiving diploma equivalency, he moved forward to the most challenging phase: the FE (Fundamentals of Engineering) and PE (Professional Engineer) certification exams.



By Dani Seixas

*"I passed the FE exam last year, and now in April, I'm taking the PE exam. The hardest part has been going back to studying after so many years in the field,"* he explains.

With support from ValidaUSA, Mauricio was able to obtain diploma equivalency without any need for additional coursework — a milestone he proudly considers his greatest achievement so far.

### The U.S. Market: Specialization and Value

Mauricio notes a clear difference between the U.S. and Brazilian engineering markets: the level of professional specialization.

*"In the U.S., engineers work strictly within their specialties. In Brazil, roles are broader. Here, the technical and regulatory standards are more rigorous — but that also brings more recognition for certified professionals,"* he observes.

Because of this, he emphasizes that without the proper certifications, opportunities within companies are significantly limited, even for highly experienced professionals.

**"Here in the U.S., the technical and regulatory standards are more rigorous — but that also brings more recognition for certified professionals"**

**Mauricio Antonio Gouvea**

## Entrepreneurial Vision and the Road Ahead

Mauricio has a clear professional vision: to start a consulting and design company focused on industrial engineering, using virtual modeling and electronic mock-ups to present projects in virtual reality.

*"I want to bring innovation to industrial engineering in the U.S., combining my experience with cutting-edge project presentation technologies,"* he says.

On the personal side, his goal is to support his children's academic paths and early careers in the U.S. — one of the key motivations behind his decision to relocate.



## Connections and Strategic Positioning

Though still completing his certification process, Mauricio is already making professional inroads through **the network built from years working with multinational companies in Brazil**, and by attending events, conferences, and trade shows.

*"These connections are essential. Learning about the market, sharing experiences, and staying active in the professional community helps us prepare to enter the field competitively,"* he notes.

## Advice for Newcomers

With the insight of someone who has walked the path, Mauricio offers clear and valuable advice to other Brazilian professionals aiming to work in the U.S.:

***"Start the validation process while you're still in Brazil. Begin studying for the certification exams early — most professional careers here require it."***

## A New Chapter of Challenge and Fulfillment

With wisdom and optimism, Mauricio describes this new chapter as a time of transformation and personal achievement.

*"It's a phase of great challenges and change — but also of fulfillment and satisfaction,"* he concludes.

***His story proves that it's never too late to begin again, and that experience, preparation, and courage are the true foundations for building a meaningful career in the United States — with strength, recognition, and purpose.***

# Lucas Rocha:

## From Validation to Evolution: How Foreign Physicians Are Finding Their Voice in the U.S

By **Dani Seixas**

In a globalized world, the pursuit of professional excellence knows no borders—especially in medicine. While Brazil trains highly qualified specialists, many professionals still face challenges such as outdated technology, bureaucracy, and a lack of recognition. In the United States, the scenario is demanding but promising: the market is more competitive, but it offers structure, innovation, and respect for those willing to start over—with courage, focus, and strategy.

This is the journey of Lucas Vinícius Damasceno Rocha, a 34-year-old gastroenterologist originally from Brazil, now living in Orlando, Florida. With a decade of experience in medicine, Lucas is currently going through the validation process to officially practice in the U.S.—an ambitious dream that combines competence, entrepreneurial vision, and a strong sense of purpose.

**“I’m achieving ten years of growth in just one year,”** Lucas says, eyes shining as he talks about his new journey in the United States.



### A Choice That Crosses Borders

OLucas’s decision to pursue further training abroad didn’t come from dissatisfaction, but from ambition and vision.

*“What motivated me was access to better medical technologies and the ongoing pursuit of professional development. I’ve always believed that medicine is built day by day.”*

With that mindset, he decided to validate his medical diploma in the U.S. and started planning to open a specialized medical center focused on **gastroenterology and weight management**, similar to what he had already built in Brazil.

### Validation: A Technical and Emotional Journey

To work as a licensed physician in the U.S., Lucas must pass the **USMLE (United States Medical Licensing Examination)**, starting with Steps 1 and 2—a demanding process that typically takes around two years.

*“The biggest challenge so far has been adapting to the American culture and language. It’s not just about technical vocabulary—it’s about nuance, confidence, and learning a different way to practice medicine.”*

He emphasizes the importance of support along the way and is especially grateful to Dani Lopes from Valida USA and Rafael Duarte from RD Medicine, who have guided him through the process and helped him strategize.

## Differences and Expectations in the U.S. Market

Lucas quickly noticed that the American medical landscape is different from Brazil’s.

*“Here in the U.S., professionals are more valued, but the market is also more competitive. It demands constant preparation and positioning.”*

Although he’s not yet licensed, Lucas is already actively building his reputation through social media, networking, and participating in events that connect him with other professionals and communities.

Lucas didn’t move to the United States just to try something new. He came with a clear plan. His dream is to open a modern and human-centered medical center in the U.S. that integrates technology, specialization, and a patient-focused approach.

*“I want to see my children grow up here, but I also want to leave a professional legacy. Starting over doesn’t mean starting from scratch—it means rewriting the story with new tools.”*

## The Power of Community and the Impact of High Level

Lucas was a speaker at the High Level Conference in Boston, in the historic Harvard Square, and calls the experience unforgettable:

*“It was incredibly rewarding to stand alongside such qualified professionals. What impacted me most was the level of networking the event provided.”*

He left the conference with new ideas, new connections, and a renewed sense of belonging.

*“I realized there are many stories like mine—people who share the same dreams and goals. That strengthens, inspires, and opens doors.”*

## Achievements that go beyond a résumé

When asked about his greatest accomplishment since arriving in the U.S., Lucas doesn’t hesitate:

*“Watching my children speak English at school and with their friends is priceless. Also, participating in meaningful events and meeting people with purpose has made everything worth it.”*



## A Message to Those Looking to Rebuild Their Careers

To Brazilian professionals dreaming of restarting abroad, Lucas shares a powerful message:

**“Study the process, get organized, and come without fear. There is room here for those with courage, ethics, and dedication.”**



# DENTISTRY WITHOUT BORDERS: *Real Opportunities in the U.S.*

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Brazil is one of the countries that produces the most dentists in the world, with professionals recognized for their high technical standards. Yet, the oversaturated market, limited access to advanced technologies, and challenges in clinical management often lead many dentists to rethink their career paths.

Meanwhile, the United States faces a shortage of dentists in several regions and offers a more attractive income, cutting-edge infrastructure, and a patient-centered culture that values experience and service quality.

For many, restarting abroad isn't about escaping hardship, but about expanding their **careers with purpose** — bringing knowledge, experience, and values to a new market that rewards dedication and excellence.

**We spoke with Dr. Diogo, a Brazilian dentist with 17 years of experience, to hear his thoughts on the field and learn how he is navigating this new professional and personal transition to the United States.**



## “Dentistry was a calling”

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### Diogo, what led you to choose dentistry as a career?

I had no family influence. My parents worked in other fields, and no one close to me was in healthcare. But something awakened in me during my own dental treatment — a quiet admiration that grew over time. Now, after 17 years in the profession, I understand that I was chosen by God to transform lives through smiles. Without a doubt, it was the best professional decision I ever made.

## Challenges and growth in Brazil

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### What were the biggest challenges you faced throughout these years?

Earning the trust of patients in a highly competitive market was one of the main ones. I had to develop active listening, empathy, and human-centered care.

Another challenge was learning to manage a practice. Dental school prepares us technically, but not for entrepreneurship. I had to learn leadership, marketing, finance — all while maintaining clinical excellence.

And of course, keeping up with the constant evolution of dentistry requires lifelong learning.

## Achievements beyond technique

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### And what do you consider your greatest achievements?

Helping people regain confidence through aesthetics and oral rehabilitation. I've seen patients recover their self-esteem, emotional health, and even career opportunities after treatment. Personally, I've also reached important milestones — opening three dental clinics and now launching my book, “*A Empresa Odontologia*” (The Dental Practice as a Business), a management guide for entrepreneurial dentists.





## Crossing borders: why the U.S.?

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### What motivated you to expand your practice to the United States?

After building a solid career in Brazil, I felt ready for new challenges. The U.S. is a leader in technology, innovation, and meritocracy — a country that truly rewards hard work.

There was also a personal side to the decision. I have three daughters, and I see this move as an incredible opportunity for all of us to grow together. More than leaving my comfort zone, it's about evolving as a person and professional.

***“Now, after 17 years in the profession, I understand that I was chosen by God to transform lives through smiles.”***

**Diogo Mendes**

## The Brazilian market and what lies ahead

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### Is there still room to grow in Brazilian dentistry?

Absolutely. Even with high competition, there's great opportunity for those who understand that dentistry is more than just technical skill. Today's patient wants to be heard, respected, and treated with transparency.

The real difference is in the experience: treating the patient the way they want to be treated.

Clinics that combine strategic management with patient-centered care have huge growth potential.

## Preparação e visão de longo prazo

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### Como tem sido a preparação para essa nova fase?

Desde o início, busquei apoio de profissionais experientes nesse tipo de transição. Estou sendo acompanhado por nomes como Roberto Spiguel, a equipe da Valida USA, Dani Seixas e Giselle. Além disso, estou estudando inglês, pesquisando o sistema americano de saúde e aprendendo com quem já trilhou esse caminho. É um processo que exige tempo, paciência e fé.

## Preparation and long-term vision

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### How have you been preparing for this new phase?

Since day one, I've sought support from professionals experienced in this kind of transition. I've been guided by people like Roberto Spiguel, the Valida USA team, Dani Seixas, and Giselle.

I've also been studying English, researching the U.S. healthcare system, and learning from others who have already walked this path. It's a process that requires time, patience, and faith.

## International recognition: the O-1 visa

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### You're applying for the O-1 visa. How do you see this recognition?

Being deemed eligible for the O-1 was a milestone for me. It's a visa for individuals with extraordinary ability, and receiving that recognition validated my entire professional journey.

Being seen as someone who can contribute internationally is an honor — and I plan to live up to it with hard work and dedication.

**"The U.S. is a leader in technology, innovation, and meritocracy"**

**Diogo Mendes**



## Purpose and recognition

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### You received the Band Destaque Award. What did that moment represent for you?

It was a very emotional and meaningful moment. More than a trophy, it symbolized years of effort and love for dentistry.

Being recognized among professionals who are making an impact reinforced our responsibility as leaders and fueled my desire to keep moving forward with purpose and integrity.

## Management and legacy

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### Tell us more about your book, "A Empresa Odontologia."

The book came from experience. I've always loved the clinical side, but I realized early on that success also demands business skills.

I studied under major mentors like Tallis Gomes and Alfredo Soares, took courses in sales and marketing, and learned that many of my colleagues face the same struggles. I wrote this book to share what I've learned and help other dentists see themselves not only as practitioners — but as entrepreneurs.

## A fresh start with family

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### How have you been preparing personally for your arrival in Florida?

We've been planning everything carefully — researching schools, infrastructure, and cultural adjustment.

We want to arrive with open hearts, ready both emotionally and logistically. It's more than a move — it's a life shift. A change of routines, countries, and dreams. We fully trust in what God has in store for us.

## For those dreaming of new horizons

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### What message would you give to other dentists thinking about restarting their careers outside Brazil?

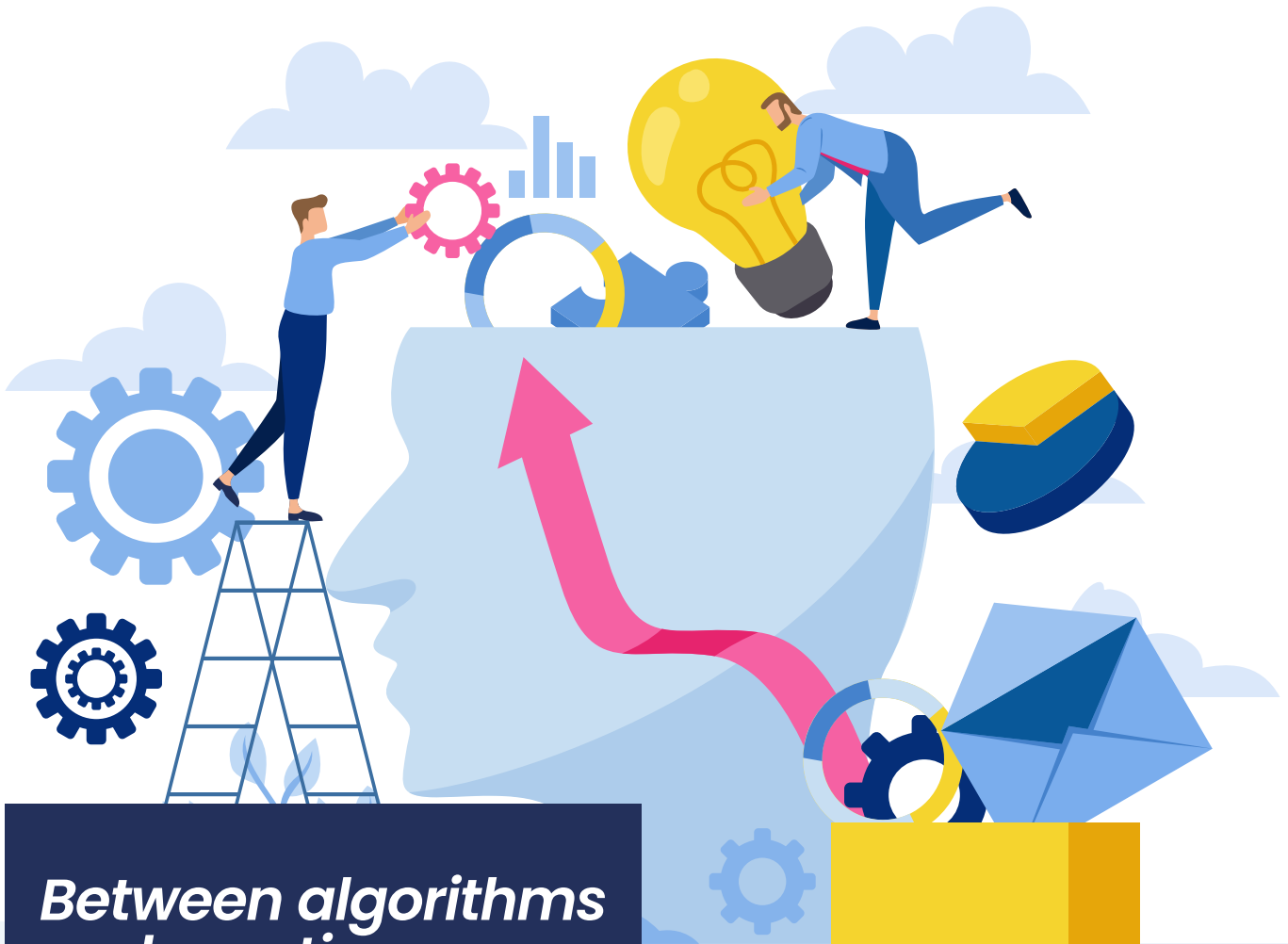
It's possible. It's not easy, but it's absolutely real. Starting over doesn't mean starting from zero — it means taking everything you've built into a new context. Invest in yourself. Learn how the system works, seek guidance, and believe in the process.

Don't compare yourself to anyone — each journey is unique. The world needs committed professionals. Those who prepare with intention will find their place anywhere.

**If there's one thing I've learned, it's this: the impossible only exists until someone chooses to try. And I chose to try — with faith, courage, and purpose.**

# HARD SKILLS X SOFT SKILLS:

## *The New Professional in the Post-AI Era*



### ***Between algorithms and emotions — who's leading the new era?***

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a vision of the future — it's part of our present reality. It's in faster and more accurate medical diagnoses, in automated processes that eliminate repetitive tasks, in predictive systems that shape consumer behavior, and even in the generation of texts and images. As this technological evolution accelerates, a fundamental question emerges across universities, global companies, and among professionals themselves: what still sets humans apart from machines in today's workforce.

There was a time when mastering a technical skill was enough to secure a prominent position. Today, that alone no longer guarantees relevance. In a world shaped by data, automation, and constant change, human capabilities — such as empathy, creativity, critical thinking, and adaptability — have become the new competitive edge. **Knowing how to operate a technology is important, but knowing why, for whom, and with what intention you're using it is what truly defines the modern professional.**

**Hard skills** remain essential, particularly in fields such as engineering, technology, finance, and healthcare. However, expectations have evolved: having a degree is no longer sufficient. What matters now is demonstrable expertise — proven through practical experience, globally recognized

certifications, and continuous learning. Skills like advanced programming and process automation are increasingly in demand, as are data analysis, machine learning, and artificial intelligence — all requiring logical reasoning, precision, and a mindset of constant renewal. Cybersecurity has become critical, with professionals working to safeguard the integrity of digital infrastructures. Those specializing in UX/UI design are gaining prominence by aligning technological efficiency with user experience, creating more intuitive, human-centered interfaces. And professionals who hold international certifications such as PMP, CPA, AWS, or PE are often more competitive, as these credentials reflect excellence in project management, accounting, cloud architecture, or licensed engineering. Ultimately, today's market doesn't just value what you know — **it values how relevant, up-to-date, and applicable your knowledge is.**



Meanwhile, as machines evolve through data, it is **soft skills** — human and interpersonal competencies — that continue to differentiate us. These are the abilities no machine has authentically replicated: clear, empathetic communication; critical thinking to navigate ambiguity; and emotional intelligence to lead, resolve conflicts, and connect across cultures. In a globally connected and multicultural environment, being able to communicate with empathy and intercultural awareness has become vital. Adaptability and a mindset of continuous learning are now fundamental for navigating transitions. And in a world that is complex and volatile, ethical and collaborative leadership is not just desirable — it's essential.

This convergence between technical mastery and emotional intelligence gives rise to what many are calling the hybrid professional. No longer is the market looking for purely technical specialists or charismatic communicators. It seeks professionals who embody both — who move seamlessly between logic and sensitivity, who read data but also read people, who deliver results with excellence and humanity. These are the professionals who can translate information into strategy, who inspire and mobilize teams, and who innovate with both intelligence and conscience.

The path to developing this new profile begins with self-awareness. Understanding your strengths, identifying areas for growth, and committing to lifelong learning are crucial first steps. Investing in technical training while also enhancing behavioral skills expands your professional potential — not only in terms of capability but also in how you relate to teams, clients, and global cultures. Participating in multicultural experiences, international academic programs, and global conferences can provide the broader perspective needed to thrive in today's interconnected world.

Additionally, following the trends of innovative organizations and seeking mentorship from experienced professionals are powerful strategies. Institutions that integrate technology, human development, and purpose into their programs are already cultivating a new generation of professionals — more conscious, more prepared, and more in demand. And this is precisely the path that many Brazilians are choosing by validating their degrees in the United States — not simply to meet formal requirements, but to transform and elevate their careers on a global level.

**In the post-AI era, successful professionals are those who unite logic and emotion, technical expertise and human wisdom.** This is no longer just a market expectation — it's a reality we must embrace. Artificial Intelligence can assist us in processes, but it is our human competencies that will keep us relevant, creative, and indispensable.

**Those who understand this today will lead tomorrow. Because the future of work has already begun — and it belongs to those bold enough to reinvent themselves.**



# The Best Universities and Programs for Specializing in the **AUTOMOTIVE AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERING INDUSTRY**

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The automotive industry is undergoing one of the most profound transformations in its history. With the rise of technologies such as vehicle electrification, intelligent automation, hybrid systems, and sustainable materials engineering, the entire sector is being redefined — and it now demands a new generation of highly specialized professionals. In this evolving scenario, pursuing a degree in mechanical or automotive engineering in the United States is no longer just an advantage — it has become a strategic gateway into the heart of global innovation.



Studying at a top U.S. university in this field means more than acquiring technical knowledge. It means becoming part of a cutting-edge research ecosystem, working in state-of-the-art laboratories, and building direct connections with automakers, mobility startups, and advanced innovation hubs. Institutions like the *Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)*, *University of Michigan – Ann Arbor*, *Stanford University*, *Purdue University*, and *Georgia Institute of Technology* are globally recognized for their automotive engineering programs and have long-standing partnerships with companies like **Ford, Tesla, General Motors, Toyota, and Bosch**.

Getting into one of these institutions may seem challenging, but it is absolutely possible for Brazilian students who prepare early. Many graduate programs offer partial or full scholarships, including teaching and research assistantships that allow students to study and

work simultaneously. More affordable alternatives are also available at public universities and technical colleges with updated curricula and strong ties to the industry — such as Clemson University (home to the renowned CU-ICAR – International Center for Automotive Research), Kettering University, and Virginia Tech.

While prestigious rankings are valuable, what truly matters is a program that offers up-to-date content, access to emerging technologies, and opportunities for real-world application through internships, corporate partnerships, and hands-on research. The right program, in the right environment, opens doors not only to deep learning but also to tangible job opportunities and legal pathways to remain in the U.S. — especially in fields prioritized by American workforce and immigration policies.

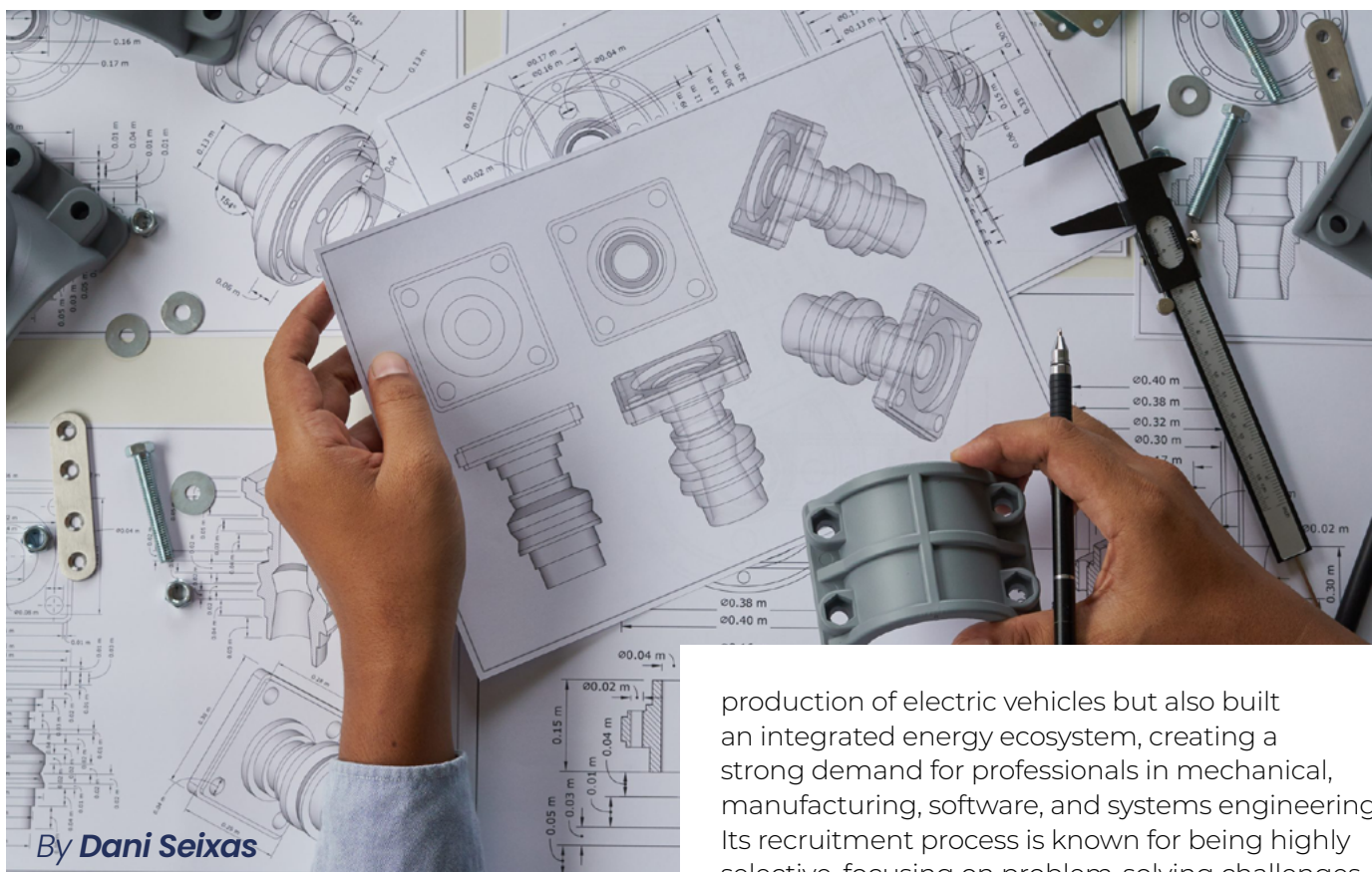
For those dreaming of working with electric vehicles, smart mobility systems, high-performance engines, or sustainable urban transportation, an education in the United States offers global visibility and strategic career positioning. When a student selects the right program and aligns their training with the real demands of the market, they are no longer seen as just a foreign candidate — they become a highly qualified professional with global vision and the potential to contribute to the future of the automotive industry.



In times of disruption and reinvention, technical knowledge combined with a solid, internationally recognized education can be the key that separates an average career from one that shapes the future of mobility.

# Mechanical and Automotive Engineering:

## Why the U.S. Still Leads the Global Dream — and Which Other Countries and Companies Are Gaining Momentum



Mechanical and automotive engineering is undergoing a profound, though often quiet, revolution. Driven by the electrification of vehicles, embedded AI systems, energy efficiency demands, and the adoption of sustainable materials, the global industry is calling for a new generation of highly skilled professionals — ready to thrive in high-impact, fast-moving environments.

In this context, the United States continues to be one of the most sought-after destinations for international engineers. Leading companies like Tesla, Ford, General Motors (GM), and emerging disruptors like Rivian have positioned the U.S. as a global hub for mobility innovation. Tesla, for example, has not only revolutionized mass

production of electric vehicles but also built an integrated energy ecosystem, creating a strong demand for professionals in mechanical, manufacturing, software, and systems engineering. Its recruitment process is known for being highly selective, focusing on problem-solving challenges and technical performance in high-pressure settings.

Ford, meanwhile, is deeply invested in the shift to electric and smart vehicles, with advanced research centers in Michigan, California, and Texas. The company offers structured career development programs, continuous education incentives, and innovation partnerships with both universities and recent graduates. GM is also at the forefront, with initiatives like the *Ultium Platform* and strategic investments in battery technology and AI partnerships. The company provides attractive employment packages, including relocation support, performance-based bonuses, and visa sponsorships — key advantages for foreign professionals aiming to establish careers in the U.S.

While the U.S. holds a dominant position, several other countries are emerging as global leaders in automotive innovation and talent acquisition. Germany remains a powerhouse in automotive engineering, home to brands like BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Audi, and Volkswagen. These companies are known for their technical excellence and deep investment in R&D, with headquarters in cities such as Munich, Stuttgart, and Wolfsburg. Volkswagen, for instance, is channeling billions of euros into autonomous driving and modular EV platforms, generating consistent demand for specialists in powertrain systems, mechatronics, and sustainable materials. German companies tend to favor engineers who demonstrate precision, reliability, and adherence to high industrial standards, while also fostering a culture of innovation.



In Japan, companies like Toyota, Honda, and Nissan continue to lead in hybrid and hydrogen-based vehicle technologies. Toyota, in particular, is globally respected for its lean manufacturing philosophy and internal development programs. Japanese employers offer cutting-edge R&D environments, though cultural and linguistic adjustments are part of the equation for foreign professionals. The strong integration between industry and academia further enhances opportunities for engineers to work on emerging technologies before they reach the market.

South Korea is another rising force, with companies like Hyundai and Kia gaining global recognition for agile production, smart design, and deep integration of AI across manufacturing and vehicle systems. The country has become a hotspot for

innovation in urban mobility and connected vehicles, with high-tech hubs in Seoul and Ulsan offering competitive roles for international engineers in areas like EV systems, industrial automation, and integrated software development.

## Comparative Overview

» 🇺🇸 **U.S. EMPLOYABILITY RATE:**  
~89% placement within six months of graduation (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

» 🇺🇸 **U.S. AVERAGE SALARY:** :  
\$97,000/year, reaching \$130,000+ for senior technical roles).

» 🇩🇪 **GERMANY:**  
€70,000 average salary/year; strong recognition of engineering as a strategic national pillar.

» 🇨🇦 **CANADA:**  
CAD 85,000/year on average; ranks among top 3 countries in quality of life (World Happiness Report 2024)

» 🇯🇵 🇰🇷 **JAPAN/SOUTH KOREA:**  
Highly competitive packages, world-class R&D ecosystems, strong emphasis on technical mastery.

What all of these countries share is a common understanding: engineering is not just a profession — it's a strategic engine for the future. Across the board, these industries offer access to advanced technology, strong ties between academia and industry, structured career progression, and consistent investment in technical, digital, and human skills development.

For qualified international professionals, success abroad depends not only on the destination but on strategic preparation: updated technical expertise, fluency in industry-specific English (and/or the local language), international certifications, and active participation in forums, conferences, and digital platforms like LinkedIn and GitHub. Most importantly, it requires a mindset that embraces transformation and innovation.

The global automotive industry is being reshaped before our eyes. And with it, a world of opportunity is opening up for engineers who are ready — not just to find a job, but to help drive the future of mobility.

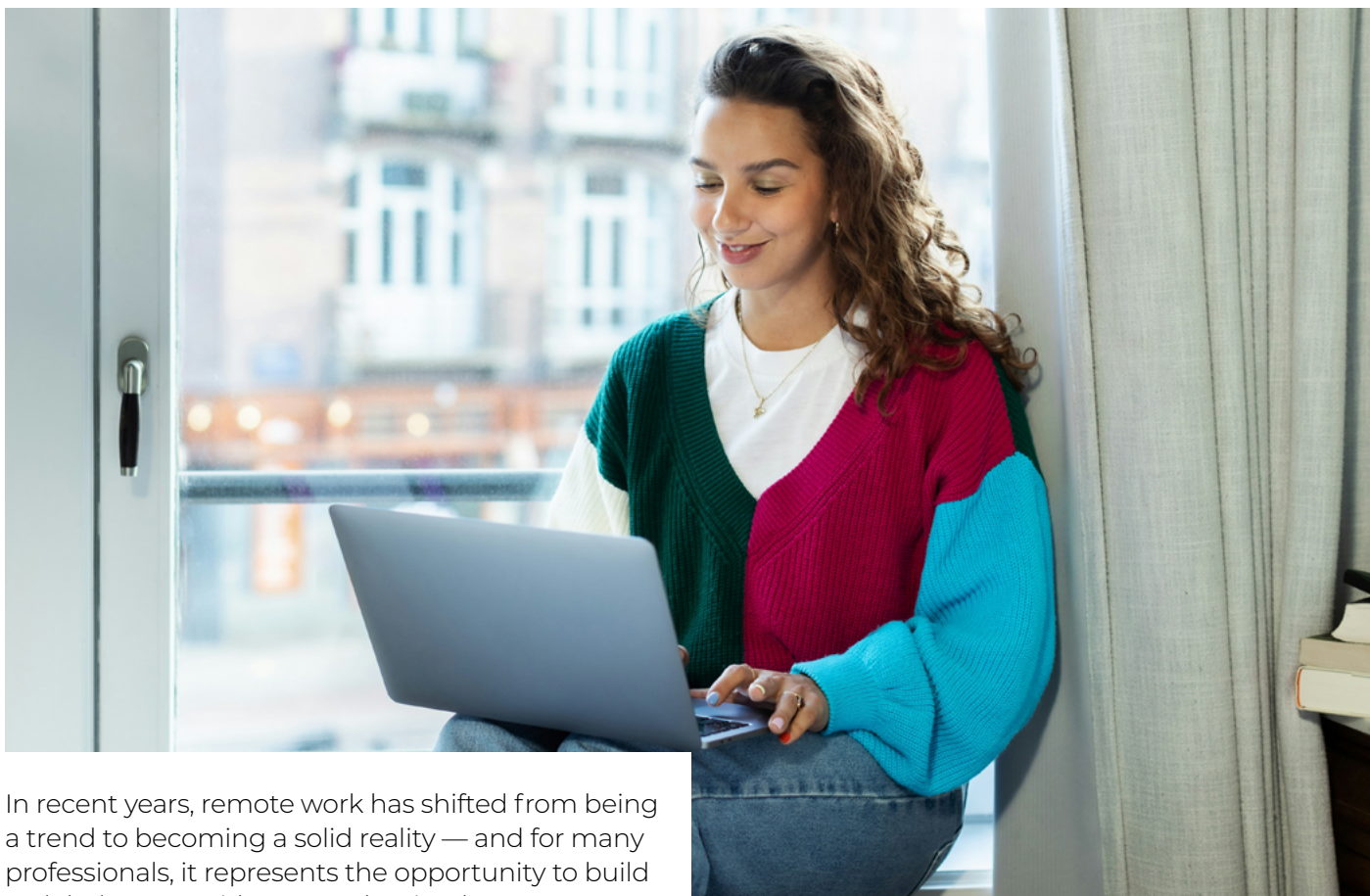
# Work Without Borders:

*How to Build an International Remote Career*

By Dani Seixas



What You Need to Know to Offer Your Services Globally — Legally, Strategically, and with Geographic Freedom



In recent years, remote work has shifted from being a trend to becoming a solid reality — and for many professionals, it represents the opportunity to build a global career without ever leaving home.

More and more companies and countries are embracing the concept of decentralized work, hiring talent from around the world as service providers across a variety of fields. If you want to be part of this growing market, the first step is to understand how this model works, where the opportunities are, and what is required from a legal and structural standpoint.

## Which Countries Are Hiring International Remote Professionals?

This movement began with companies in the United States, pioneers in the remote work model, especially in areas like technology, marketing, and digital services. Today, however, many other countries — including Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, and even Japan — have adopted strategies to hire international service providers.

These companies are seeking specialists with strong communication skills, technical expertise, and cultural flexibility to work on specific projects, provide consulting services, offer multilingual customer support, or perform remote technical assistance. Importantly, they are open to hiring qualified professionals regardless of geographic location.

## Who Can Provide Services to Foreign Companies — and How?

Any professional working as an independent contractor or under a registered business (such as an MEI in Brazil or an LLC in the United States) can legally offer services to companies abroad, provided that:

- » The service is delivered from the professional's country of residence, without relocating or legally residing in the client's country;
- » Payment is received in foreign currency through platforms like Wise, Payoneer, Stripe, or international wire transfers;
- » The professional handles their own local tax obligations, declaring and paying taxes according to the regulations of their home country.

If you are based in the United States, you can also offer your services to companies abroad — such as those in Brazil, Portugal, Canada, or elsewhere — either as an LLC or as an independent contractor, issuing invoices and receiving payments in U.S. dollars

## Where to Find International Remote Work Opportunities

### » GLOBAL FREELANCE PLATFORMS:

Upwork, Freelancer, Fiverr, Toptal, Workana;

» **LINKEDIN:** Filter remote job openings and connect directly with recruiters from different countries;

### » INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC PORTALS:

como Behance (design), FlexJobs, Indeed Global, Remote OK, We Work Remotely

### » NETWORKING IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES AND ONLINE EVENTS:

Groups on Discord, Telegram, and digital nomad communities



#### PRO TIP:

Keep your professional profile updated in English, highlighting your skills, certifications, case studies, and client reviews.

## Legal and Structural Considerations

You do not need a work visa if you are providing services remotely from outside the client's country. **However, there are some essential guidelines to follow:**

- » Have a clear contract that defines the scope of work, payment terms, deadlines, confidentiality clauses, and intellectual property rights;
- » Do not establish an employment relationship (for example, avoid time tracking systems, using company tools, or receiving direct day-to-day instructions from the client);
- » Issue an international invoice, whether as an individual contractor or under a business entity like MEI or LLC;
- » Report your earnings to your local tax authority and pay any applicable taxes accordingly.

If you are located in the United States, setting up an LLC can simplify contracts with international clients and strengthen your professional positioning.





## Advantages of Working Remotely for International Clients

- » Get paid in strong currencies (USD, EUR, GBP);
- » Enjoy greater geographic and schedule flexibility;
- » Gain exposure to diverse cultures and global markets;
- » Expand your technical expertise and international reputation;
- » Scale your services and build your own global personal brand.



## Challenges (and How to Prepare for Them)

- » Time zone differences may impact communication and scheduling;
- » You will need to adapt to international contract models and legal frameworks;
- » You are responsible for managing your own accounting, invoicing, and legal compliance;
- » This model demands autonomy, organization, and reliable technological infrastructure.

## Conclusion

International remote work is no longer just a trend — it has become a practical and strategic way to build freedom, career growth, and financial stability in a globalized world. If you have technical expertise, a professional attitude, and the right preparation, nothing stands in the way of your next opportunity coming from another country.

And the best part? No borders, no fixed office — just the whole world ready to work with talents like yours.

# AUTOMOTIVE STARTUPS:

The silent engine transforming the global mobility industry



The global automotive industry is no longer solely defined by its traditional manufacturers and assembly lines. It is now being reshaped — from within and from the edges — by startups: highly focused, agile, and digital-native companies that solve complex mobility challenges with speed and creativity.

Startups are emerging to meet demands far beyond performance and aesthetics. The future of transportation requires vehicles that are smart, connected, sustainable, adaptable, and aligned with a new type of consumer — urban, digital, and experience-driven.

## Why are these startups emerging?

Automotive startups are born as fast-track responses to complex problems that large companies often cannot solve quickly. While a traditional automaker might take years to develop and implement a new technology, a startup — with its lean structure, agile mindset, and innovation-first culture — can experiment, iterate, and deliver fully functioning solutions in a fraction of the time.

They typically focus on three key drivers:

## 1 Technological acceleration:

» Vehicles are evolving into rolling computers. With built-in operating systems, remote software updates, real-time data analytics, AI-based features, and seamless smartphone integration, the automotive experience now relies on technologies beyond the scope of traditional car manufacturers.

» Startups specialize in **automotive software**, **cybersecurity**, **autonomous driving algorithms**, **real-time data systems**, and next-generation connectivity platforms.

## 2 Changing consumer behavior:

» Today's consumer isn't just buying a car — they're seeking a personalized mobility experience.

» This has opened the door for startups that offer vehicle subscription models, ride-sharing platforms, pay-per-use mobility, multimodal integration apps, and intelligent fleet management systems.



## 3 Demand for sustainability and energy efficiency:

» Environmental regulations and consumer awareness have fueled a surge of startups working on battery innovation, carbon footprint tracking, circular materials, and lightweight EV design.





## What do they offer traditional automakers?

Automakers like Tesla, Ford, GM, Stellantis, and Volkswagen increasingly see startups as strategic innovation partners, recognizing their ability to fast-track development and inject fresh thinking into legacy systems.

### These partnerships bring:

- » Faster access to innovation, by integrating proven startup solutions directly into vehicle platforms;
- » Lower risk, thanks to the open innovation model;

» Access to niche tech talent, particularly in AI, UX, software engineering, and data science;

» Real-time implementation of emerging technologies, like blockchain for supply chains, predictive maintenance AI, and in-vehicle data analytics for smarter decision-making.

## And what about consumers — how do they benefit?

The impact of automotive startups on the end user is often invisible — but deeply transformative. Many features that are now considered standard in modern cars were initially developed or scaled by startups.

### For example:

- » Automatic parking, lane detection, emergency braking, facial recognition, and voice commands were not born in traditional R&D departments.
- » The buying experience has been revolutionized by startups offering fully digital car purchases, online customization tools, and **direct-to-door delivery models**.

» Urban mobility is shifting from ownership to service: carsharing apps, electric fleet platforms, multimodal navigation tools, and carbon-offset calculators are reshaping how we move.

According to McKinsey, the global automotive software market is projected to hit \$462 billion by 2030, growing at an average of 11% per year. This means the vehicle's true “engine” is increasingly found in its code — and those who understand that code will drive the industry forward.

In essence, automotive startups are not just disrupting the market. They are rebuilding the foundations of global mobility. And those who pay attention now won't just witness change — they'll help lead it.





# GOLDEN VISA

## Opportunity or Risk?

### Understanding the Pros and Cons of the U.S. Investor Visa Program

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The discussion around investor-based residency programs — commonly referred to as Golden Visas — has once again taken center stage in debates on immigration and economic policy, not only in the United States but worldwide. These programs offer foreign nationals the possibility of securing legal residency in exchange for financial investments in local businesses, real estate, or development funds.

In the U.S., the closest equivalent to the Golden Visa is the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program, established in 1990. Its core objective is to attract foreign capital to stimulate job creation and foster economic development, especially in Targeted Employment Areas (TEAs) - regions identified as having higher

unemployment rates or lower economic activity. Under current rules, the required minimum investment is \$800,000 (or \$1.05 million outside TEAs), with the investor obligated to create at least 10 full-time jobs for U.S. workers.

In return, successful applicants and their immediate family members are eligible to receive a green card (permanent residency) and, eventually, U.S. citizenship. On paper, this appears to be a win-win solution - capital for the country, mobility and security for the investor. However, the reality is far more complex, and the model remains surrounded by debate, questions of ethics, and calls for reform.

## The Benefits of the Golden Visa Program: For the U.S. and the Investor

From the perspective of the United States, the EB-5 program offers a valuable source of foreign capital to support economic growth, especially in areas where traditional financing may be limited. It serves as a mechanism to fund infrastructure projects, stimulate local employment, and encourage entrepreneurship through global networks and partnerships.

### For the investor, the benefits are equally clear:

- » Legal residence in the U.S., including the right to live, work, and study;
- » Access to the largest consumer market in the world;
- » Family inclusion (spouse and unmarried children under 21);
- » The potential for long-term financial diversification and business expansion in a stable legal and economic environment.

The green card provides access to public schools, universities, healthcare systems, and other social benefits, along with a direct path to U.S. citizenship.

## The Risks and Limitations: What Investors Must Consider

While the EB-5 offers attractive possibilities, it is neither a fast-track process nor a guaranteed outcome. Processing times can be prolonged, often extending to five years or more, depending on the investor's nationality and visa category backlog.

There are also significant financial risks involved. If the selected project fails to meet the job creation requirements or faces financial difficulties, the investor's green card application may be denied — and the invested capital may be lost. Past instances of fraud and mismanagement by certain regional centers (intermediaries that handle EB-5 projects) have further raised concerns, prompting U.S. authorities to strengthen regulatory oversight through the EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act of 2022.

Moreover, critics argue that such programs could effectively equate to "selling green cards to the wealthy," raising ethical questions about fairness when compared to the long waiting periods faced by highly skilled workers and family-based applicants.

## Recent Data and Proposed Changes:

*In fiscal year 2024, the EB-5 program issued a record 12,055 visas, the highest annual number since its inception. The largest share of these visas was processed through the U.S. consulate in Guangzhou, China, reflecting the strong demand from Chinese investors.*

***Invest In the USA***

*Since the enactment of the Reform and Integrity Act, the program has raised approximately \$1.5 billion in new investments, with nearly \$1.4 billion collected in fiscal year 2023 alone.*

***investmentmigration.org***

*Amid this, former President Donald Trump recently floated a proposal to introduce a new "Gold Card" program, requiring a direct payment of \$5 million to the U.S. government — without the job creation requirements of the EB-5. Although the idea has sparked attention, it remains unclear whether such a program would gain sufficient support from Congress or whether it aligns with broader U.S. immigration priorities.*

***Business Insider***

## How Golden Visa Programs Are Evolving Worldwide

Globally, countries like Portugal, Spain, Greece, Malta, Canada, Australia, and the United Arab Emirates offer residency-by-investment programs, often with lower investment thresholds than the U.S. EB-5.

However, these programs have also come under scrutiny. The European Union has debated restricting or banning Golden Visas tied exclusively to real estate, citing concerns over money laundering and real estate speculation. Portugal, for example, recently tightened its rules to discourage non-productive investment flows into the property market.

In the United States, EB-5 reforms have focused on increasing compliance, enhancing transparency, and ensuring that investments genuinely benefit the U.S. labor market. Future program changes may continue to emphasize job creation, economic contribution, and regional development over passive investment models.

## What Kind of Immigrant Does the U.S. Want to Attract?

Beyond attracting capital, the United States remains interested in immigrants who bring skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship. While the EB-5 program focuses on financial contribution, other immigration pathways — such as the EB-2 NIW (National Interest Waiver) or the O-1 visa for individuals with extraordinary abilities — prioritize talent and knowledge-based impact.

This underscores an important point: the U.S. seeks not only investors but contributors — people who can stimulate the economy, drive innovation, and generate long-term benefits for society.

## Final Considerations: Aligning Investment with National Priorities

The real debate around Golden Visa programs — whether in the U.S. or abroad — lies in finding the right balance between attracting capital and ensuring that this capital serves meaningful, long-term national interests.

For the United States, the challenge is to avoid reducing the program to a mere transactional exchange of money for residency. Instead, the country needs to establish mechanisms that direct these investments toward priority sectors, such as infrastructure, healthcare, affordable housing, renewable energy, and technology. This could include requiring that a portion of the capital be allocated specifically to public-interest projects or innovation funds, creating genuine economic and social value.

Strengthening compliance, monitoring, and accountability for project selection is key to preventing misuse of funds and fraud — issues that have previously damaged the program's reputation.





From the investor's perspective, the EB-5 or any Golden Visa scheme should be approached not as a quick-return financial opportunity, but as a long-term strategic decision. The real value lies in the ability to secure global mobility, stability for the family, access to the U.S. market, and diversified asset protection.

However, for those primarily looking for financial yield, the EB-5 may not be the most suitable vehicle, as returns on the investment itself can be modest, especially given the regulatory constraints and the focus on job creation over profitability.

*For high-net-worth individuals who seek residency flexibility, educational opportunities for their children, and business expansion into the U.S., the program may be worth the investment — provided it is navigated with proper legal guidance, financial planning, and due diligence on the chosen projects.*

*The success and future credibility of Golden Visa programs will depend on how well they align the investor's goals with the host country's development strategies. A program that values impact over mere capital inflow can become more than just a gateway to a green card — it can be a meaningful tool for national growth and international cooperation.*

# HOW MUCH IS YOUR **Hour of Work Worth?**

*A Look Beyond Salary: Comparing the U.S. and Other Countries Through Cost of Living and Real Purchasing Power*



When discussing international job opportunities, one of the first comparisons people usually make is about salary. How much does an engineer earn in the United States? What is the hourly rate for work in Europe? Does working in Canada or Australia offer better pay? But behind the cold numbers of salary charts, there's an even more important question: **how much is your hour of work truly worth?**

The answer goes far beyond the gross amount deposited into your bank account at the end of the month. To truly assess it, you need to consider factors like **cost of living, taxes, average working hours, safety, quality of public services, healthcare, education, and work-life balance**. What really matters is not just how much you make — but what you can actually do with that money.

## Hourly Rates in the United States: High Earnings, High Costs?

In the United States, the federal minimum wage in 2024 is \$7.25 per hour, but in states like California,

New York, and Massachusetts, this rises to **between \$15 and \$18 per hour due to local legislation**. However, for qualified professionals, average earnings can be much higher. A civil engineer, for example, typically earns \$45 to \$60 per hour, while an IT professional can exceed \$70 to \$100 per hour, especially in states with high demand for tech talent.

On the other hand, the cost of living in cities like San Francisco, New York, and Boston is among the highest in the world, with average rent for a **one-bedroom apartment in central areas ranging from \$2,500 to \$4,500 per month**. This means that, despite high gross earnings, purchasing power may be significantly reduced, particularly for those living in the most expensive regions.

## How Does This Compare to Other Countries?

Let's look at some examples (updated data from 2024):

COUNTRY	MINIMUM WAGE (per hour)	QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL AVERAGE (per hour)	COST OF LIVING (1 person, monthly, excluding rent)
USA	US\$ 7,25 – US\$ 18	US\$ 45 – US\$ 100	US\$ 1.300 to US\$ 2.500
Canada	CAD 16 – CAD 18	CAD 40 – CAD 80	CAD 1.200 to CAD 2.000
Germany	€12	€35 – €70	€1.000 to €1.800
Portugal	€5,20	€20 – €40	€700 to €1.200
Australia	AUD 23,23	AUD 50 – AUD 90	AUD 1.500 to AUD 2.500
Japan	¥1.004 (national average)	¥4.500 – ¥8.000	¥120.000 to ¥220.000

Source: OECD, Numbeo, Trading Economics (2024).



**This comparison clearly shows that earning more does not automatically translate into a better quality of life**

For example, an hourly rate of \$60 in the U.S. might offer a similar standard of living as €35 per hour in Germany, depending on differences in healthcare, housing, food, and transportation costs.

# Quality of life and balance: the true value of an hour



Beyond salary numbers, another crucial factor is how work is organized in each country.

In Germany and the Netherlands, for example, the average workweek is 35 to 40 hours, with strong emphasis on free time, long vacations (up to 30 business days), and well-established public welfare policies. In contrast, in the U.S., despite high salaries, the average workweek can exceed 45 hours, with shorter vacations (around 10 days per year) and limited legal requirements for paid leave.

In countries like Australia and Canada, more accessible public healthcare and robust social security systems help reduce personal spending on health insurance, which in practice increases the real value of each working hour.

**When evaluating international opportunities, professionals should always consider the complete picture:**

» **What is the salary being offered?**

» **How much does it cost to live in that location?**

» **What is the tax burden on income?**

» **What are the healthcare and education costs?**

» **Are there vacation policies, work-life balance programs, and employee protections?**

**These factors are critical in calculating the net financial and emotional value of your working hours.**

# More than numbers: a lifestyle choice



**Because ultimately, what truly matters is not just how much your hour pays — but how much it allows you to live.**

The concept of “good pay” is not universal — it depends on your personal goals. Those looking for fast financial growth may choose markets like the U.S. or Australia. Those who value quality of life, personal time, and social security might prefer European countries or Canada. Meanwhile, professionals seeking cultural experiences, lower costs of living, and greater flexibility may find good opportunities in countries like Portugal or Japan, depending on their field.

In the end, the question “How much is your hour of work worth?” cannot be answered by numbers alone. It requires a deeper reflection on what you want to build with your time, energy, and talent.



# Mental Health and High Performance

*The New Turning Point for Careers and Businesses*

By *Dani Seixas*



For a long time, mental health was treated as a separate issue—something to be dealt with “after hours,” when an employee “wasn’t feeling well.” But the landscape has changed. Today, it’s clear: without emotional well-being, there is no real performance. And those—whether companies or professionals—who haven’t realized this yet are falling behind.

You can have the best software, the most modern office, or the most technically skilled talent in the market. None of that guarantees sustainable results if your team’s emotional foundation is unstable. The truth is simple: without mental health, there is no sustainable performance. And we’re not just talking about severe mental health crises, but the small, ignored signs that quietly erode productivity, creativity, and motivation day after day.

More than ever, companies must understand that the employee’s mind is the invisible engine behind every result. And that engine needs care. Without it, no strategy, culture, or innovation can stand the test of time.

At the same time, professionals must also take responsibility and understand that self-awareness is the key to the prosperous and balanced life we all dream of. Achieving work-life balance starts when we understand what truly matters—and recognize our role within the system we belong to.

## The Main Approaches to Mental Health—and How They Connect to Professional Performance

Today, there are several approaches to mental care—from traditional medicine to applied neuroscience. Having a basic understanding of each one is essential to choosing the most effective path for your professional moment.

### 1. Psychiatry

» **FOCUS:** Clinical diagnosis of mental disorders and neurochemical regulation through medication.

» **WHEN TO SEEK IT:** Severe depression, generalized anxiety, chronic insomnia, panic disorder, severe burnout.

» **EXAMPLE:** An executive in deep exhaustion is diagnosed with depression and begins medical

treatment that helps him safely resume his routine.

» **BENEFITS:** Restored emotional balance, renewed energy, cognitive capacity, and mental stability.

» **COMMONLY USED BY:** Leaders and professionals under extreme pressure.



### 2. Clinical Psychology

» **FOCUS:** Exploring emotions, behavior patterns, traumas, and limiting beliefs.

» **WHEN TO SEEK IT:** Feeling stuck, recurring conflicts, difficulty handling criticism, low self-esteem.

» **EXAMPLE:** A project manager constantly feels tense and self-sabotages in meetings. Therapy helps her identify and reframe childhood beliefs that made her feel invisible.

» **BENEFITS:** emotional intelligence, leadership ability, clarity of goals, and healthier professional relationships.

» **COMMONLY USED BY:** Professionals in leadership roles and human-centered fields.

### 3. Positive Psychology

- » **FOCO:** Development of personal strengths, life purpose, positive emotions, and subjective well-being.
- » **WHEN TO SEEK IT:** Loss of enthusiasm, questions about purpose, feeling apathetic even in favorable situations.
- » **EXAMPLE:** A highly technical but demotivated employee reconnects with his passions and talents through this approach, rekindling his engagement at work.
- » **BENEFITS:** Authentic engagement, renewed motivation, lighter and more productive work environments.
- » **COMMONLY USED BY:** Innovation teams, culture-driven companies, and human-centered leaders.

### 4. Behavioral Assessments and Structured Self-Knowledge (DISC, MBTI, Enneagrama etc.)

- » **FOCUS:** Mapping behavioral profiles, leadership styles, decision-making, and relationships.
- » **WHEN TO SEEK IT:** Career repositioning, promotion to a leadership role, difficulty adapting to teams.
- » **EXAMPLE:** An analyst feels out of place on a sales team. After taking the DISC assessment, he discovers his strengths lie in planning and is successfully reassigned to operations.
- » **BENEFITS:** Improved productivity, better relationships, and more aligned career decisions.
- » **COMMONLY USED BY:** Strategic HR teams, consulting firms, and leadership programs in global companies.



### 5. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

- » **FOCO:** Restructuring dysfunctional thoughts that lead to self-sabotaging behaviors.
- » **WHEN TO SEEK IT:** Mild to moderate anxiety, procrastination, fear of failure, paralyzing perfectionism.
- » **EXAMPLE:** A professional avoids applying for promotions believing she's "never ready." Through CBT, she learns to identify and reframe those thoughts.
- » **BENEFITS:** Reduced self-sabotage, increased confidence, focus on results, and safer action-taking.
- » **COMMONLY USED BY:** Professionals in rapid growth and leaders of high-pressure teams.



## Unbalanced Teams vs. Self-Aware Teams

Imagine two similar teams: one made up of professionals who actively pursue self-awareness and emotional balance; the other dominated by silence, emotional overload, and fear of vulnerability.

The first team delivers more, innovates more, resolves conflicts with maturity, and retains talent. The second sinks in hidden tensions, high turnover, and disengagement. The difference? Emotional culture and individual awareness.

## What Are Great Leaders Doing?

- » Attend therapy regularly
- » Have emotional mentors and personal coaches
- » Provide psychological support to their teams
- » Invest in profile assessments to align people and roles
- » Practice active listening, empathy, and emotional self-management

According to Gallup (2023), companies that actively support their employees' emotional well-being report **up to 23% higher productivity, 66% lower burnout risk, and 21% more profitability.**

## Emotional Health Now Has a Permanent Space in High Level News

Starting with this edition, High Level News will feature a recurring column on **Mental Health and High Performance**. In every issue, we will dive deeper into a specific topic, present effective methods, and interview leading professionals.

**Our goal is clear: by taking care of the mind, we take care of the future—of careers, relationships, and life.**

## 6. Systemic Therapy and Family/Organizational Constellations

» **FOCO:** Understanding family and systemic dynamics that influence career choices, repetitive patterns, and relationships.

» **WHEN TO SEEK IT:** Struggles with belonging, career blocks, repeated negative cycles.

» **EXAMPLE:** An entrepreneur repeatedly fails in business and realizes, through constellation work, that he is unconsciously repeating his father's path.

» **BENEFITS:** Release from unconscious patterns, clarity in decisions, and more authenticity in professional conduct.

» **COMMONLY USED BY:** Leaders, coaches, entrepreneurs, and integrative therapists.

## 7. Applied Neuroscience

» **FOCO:** Study of brain mechanisms involved in decisions, habits, focus, attention, and productivity.

» **WHEN TO SEEK IT:** Chronic stress, trouble concentrating, performing under pressure, harmful habits.

» **EXAMPLE:** A manager learns, through neuroscience, to regulate focus and attention using techniques like biofeedback, breathing, and time management.

» **BENEFITS:** Mental clarity, sustained energy, strategic focus, memory, and emotional regulation.

» **COMMONLY USED BY:** CEOs, elite athletes, and professionals in high-complexity environments.



**2025**