



2025 Talent Trend Report.

builtin

Introduction.

How are organizations recruiting and retaining the best talent in 2025? Built In conducted a comprehensive survey of talent leaders, delving into their priorities and challenges as they prepare for a new year.

And even as economic uncertainty looms in the U.S. and abroad, the forecast is still cautiously optimistic. Yes, talent leaders face many challenges as they aim to effectively manage their organization's time, budget and resources, but they are also successfully **activating diverse, multi-channel recruitment strategies** that are building employer brand and ensuring they attract the right talent to fill their most critical roles.

This shift from traditional recruitment methods encourages talent leaders to develop a strategy with a broader marketing perspective. Employer branding initiatives are proactive, **driving the discovery of the best candidates right where they are, often even before they start a new job search.** An approach that is essential to today's talent industry and securing the leading expertise your organization needs to drive overall business goals.

The Built In 2025 Trend Survey results yielded additional insights on the following trends:

1. Priorities shift as hiring recovers
2. Economic uncertainty requires balanced global hiring
3. Finding high-quality tech talent remains challenging
4. Acquiring top talent demands multi-channel investment
5. Investments in employer brand are on the rise

Our report delves into each of these trends in more detail, providing talent leaders with the guidance to successfully navigate their recruitment strategies in 2025.

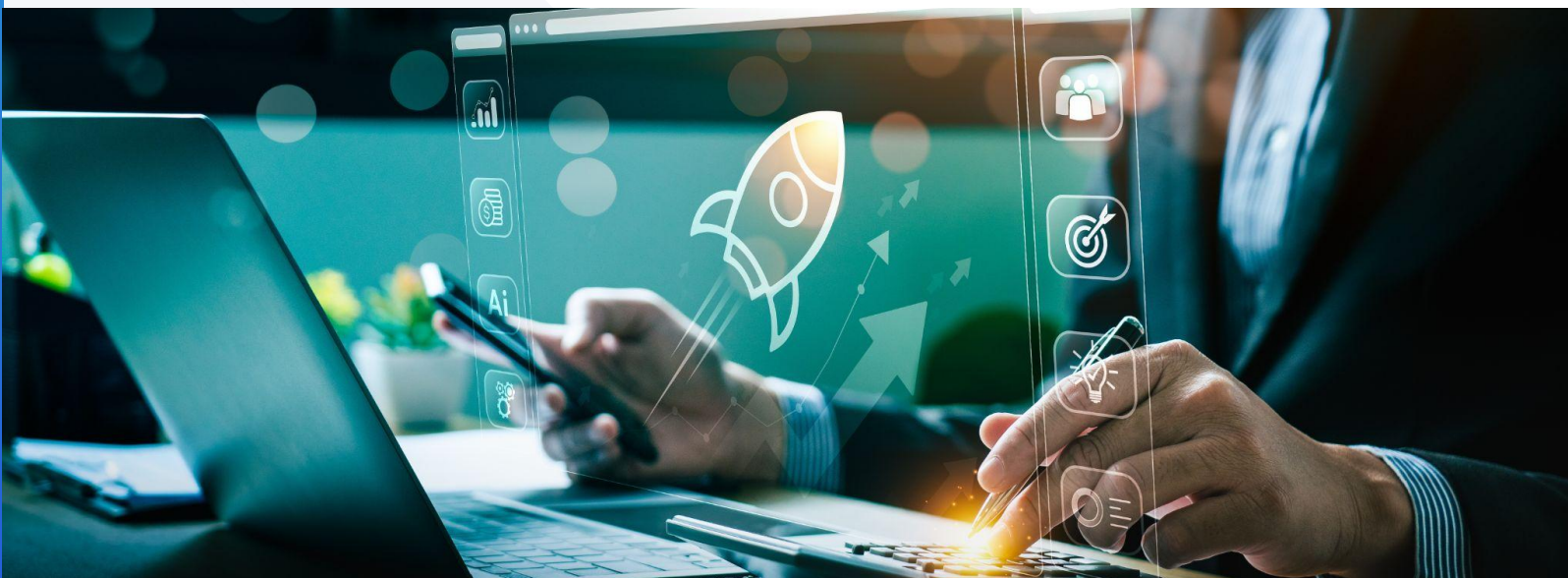


TABLE OF CONTENTS

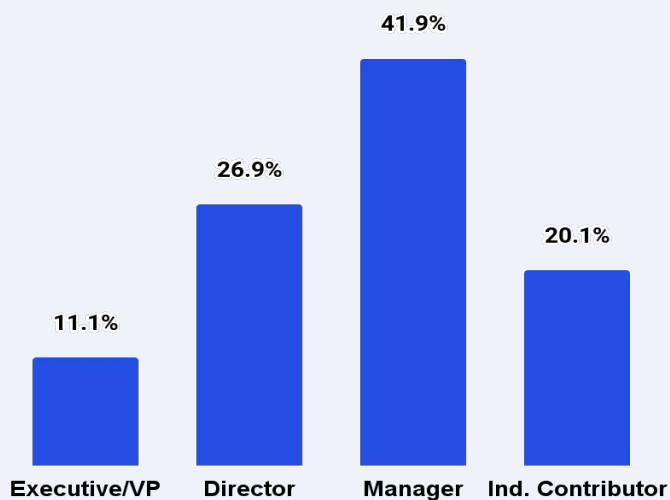
- **Survey overview**
- **Trend 1:** Priorities shift as hiring recovers
- **Trend 2:** Economic uncertainty requires a balanced approach to global hiring
- **Trend 3:** Finding high-quality tech talent remains challenging
- **Trend 4:** Acquiring top talent demands multi-channel investment
- **Trend 5:** Investments in employer brand are on the rise to support recruitment and retention
- **Recommendations and resources**

Survey overview.

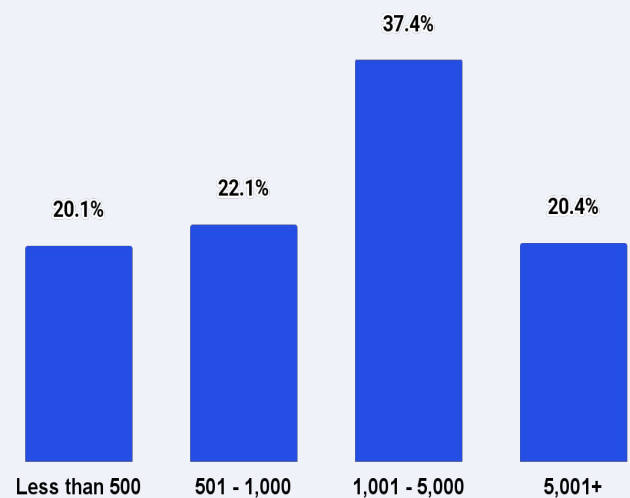
The Built In 2025 Trend Survey was conducted in January and February of 2025, targeting talent recruitment and human resource professionals.

The quantitative survey was designed with 27 questions covering 2025 recruitment strategies, priorities and challenges, budget, technology, and demographic information. There were 364 total respondents.

Respondent role



Company employee count





Trend 1

Priorities shift as hiring recovers.

After a period of volatility following the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic, where high-volume hiring sprees precipitated massive cuts, 2024 was a year of increasing stability and modest growth, largely driven by the tech industry.

TREND 1

Priorities shift as hiring recovers.

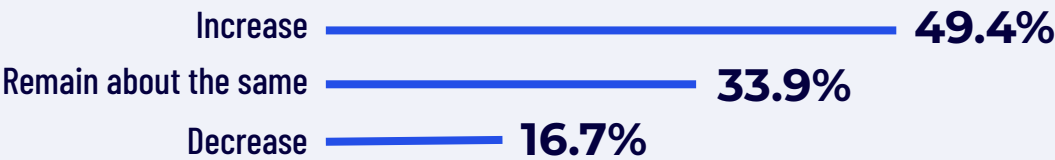
Hiring will continue to recover in 2025, with 49.4% of survey participants projecting an increase in hiring for the year compared to 2024, while 33.9% expect hiring needs to remain the same year over year.

In the tech sector, [unemployment rates decreased to 2%](#), while the “[Magnificent Seven](#)” (Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Meta, Microsoft, Nvidia, and Tesla) experienced 63% average gains over the year, accounting for more than half of the gains on the S&P 500.

This growth is expected to carry into 2025, driven by emerging technologies like AI, Machine Learning, and Natural Language Processing, which are addressed in the 2025 Trend Survey and Report.

Overall an optimistic forecast, with [AI perceived as a stabilizing force](#), generating high-quality hires both in and outside the tech industry.

How do you predict your hiring needs will change from 2024 to 2025?



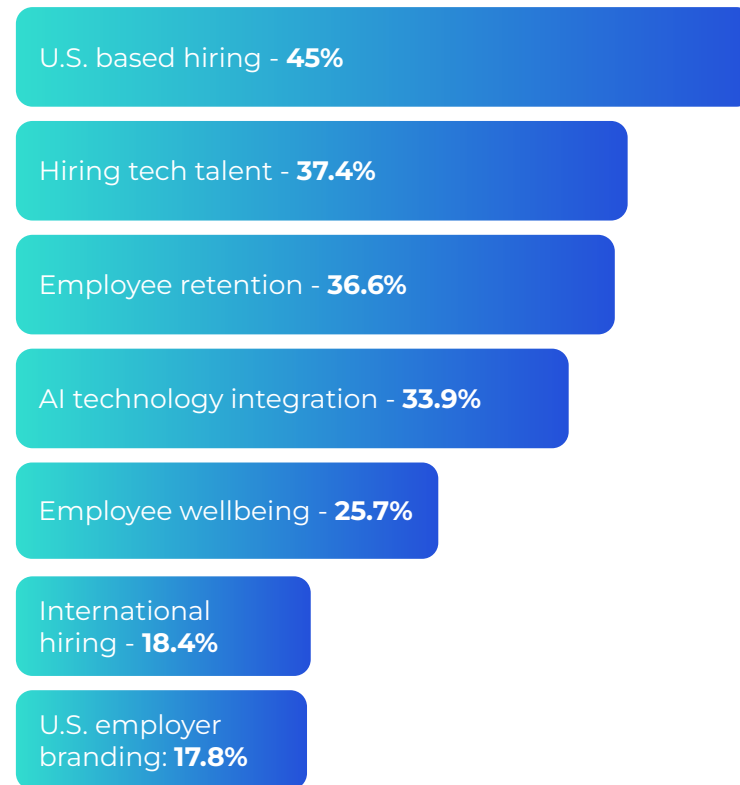
TREND 1, continued

Amidst the continued recovery of the job market, new priorities are emerging.

U.S.-Based Hiring, Hiring Tech Talent, and Employee Retention were consistently ranked as the most important recruiting strategies for survey respondents, with AI and Technology Integration ranked higher for larger enterprise corporations looking to streamline recruiting, application, and hiring processes.

Top recruitment priorities

By percentage of top 3 rankings



TREND 1, continued

With the growth of the tech industry driving the U.S. market, it's not surprising that talent professionals continue to find themselves recruiting for skilled tech expertise. Companies are hiring fewer generalists but aggressively seeking high-skilled, specialized engineers in AI, cloud infrastructure, and cybersecurity.

Similarly, as organizations face more and more challenges in recruitment, including budget constraints, a renewed focus on employee retention is crucial for an efficient and effective strategy.

It is estimated that voluntary turnover costs U.S. companies a whopping \$1 Trillion annually, making this a clear priority for talent leadership.





Trend 2

Economic uncertainty requires a balanced approach to global hiring.

While US-based hiring is a top priority, the majority of North American survey respondents also have an international hiring strategy.

TREND 2

Economic uncertainty requires a balanced global hiring.



60%

Of respondents will hire outside of the U.S. in 2025.

The Built In team predicts that India, Europe, and Latin America will see faster tech job growth, especially in AI, fintech, and cloud-based roles. However, we also expect U.S. hiring to continue to grow for specialized, highly-skilled tech roles.

The reported Top Challenges Hiring Outside of the U.S. are similar to domestic challenges and include Resources and Budget Constraints, Building a Strong Employer Brand, and Skills Shortages. Notably, talent leaders are tasked with building a global talent strategy without dedicated budgets and resources, requiring them to rely on their current technology and employer brand investments to meet these hiring goals.



64%

Of respondents do not have an expanded or dedicated budget for international hiring in 2025



Trend 3

Finding high-quality tech hires is still challenging.

Hiring qualified tech talent remains consistently challenging for HR & recruitment professionals.

Trend 3

Finding high-quality tech hires is still challenging.

Top challenges in tech recruitment

By percentage of top 3 rankings

Competing on total rewards - **45.6%**

Finding candidates with the specific skills - **44%**

Competing on flexible work types - **36.5%**

Building a tech-forward employer brand - **29.3%**

Budget limitations - **29.3%**

Business or financial factors, like competing on compensation and benefits, rank as a major challenge for all companies, even larger enterprises. Although there is always pressure to find the right candidate, this is especially true when talent leaders are facing budget constraints and every hire is crucial to move the company forward and reach their strategic growth objectives. **Finding candidates with specific skills was ranked second as most challenging, driven by the proliferation of new AI roles and the need to hire based on skills versus traditional experience.**

With return to work on the rise **(the percentage of Built In clients roles that are remote are at an all time, post-pandemic low of 18%, down from 33% a year ago)** competing on flexible work types remains a top challenge for more than a third of respondents.

Trend 3, continued

Not surprisingly, smaller and mid-size companies report more difficulty building a tech-forward employer brand than their colleagues at large companies, also citing navigating budget and resource constraints as a major hurdle in developing these programs.

When organizations experience delays and challenges in recruitment, hiring and retention become business risks. An understaffed or wrongly-staffed team can lead to all sorts of problems, including missing roadmap deliverables, sales targets, or stakeholder obligations.

59%

Report **traditional** tech roles make up at least 25% of their planned hires.

47%

Report **emerging** tech roles make up at least 25% of their planned hires.

Further complicating the tech talent landscape is the race to fill emerging roles in areas like AI, machine learning, and natural language processing. Nearly half of respondents indicated that emerging tech roles will make up at least 25% of their planned hires in 2025.

- LinkedIn's "Jobs on the Rise" report for 2025 lists Artificial Intelligence Engineer as the fastest-growing role in the U.S., reflecting the escalating demand for AI expertise.
- Low-code/no-code & AI-assisted coding will reduce demand for basic dev work, but complex problem-solving, architecture, and system design skills will remain essential.
- Demand will Increase for Specialized Engineers including Cloud & AI infrastructure engineers, Cybersecurity experts and Embedded software & hardware engineers.



Trend 4

Acquiring top talent demands multi-channel investment.

To build a high-intent pipeline of quality talent, recruiters need to enlist more channels and technology to support the entire candidate journey.

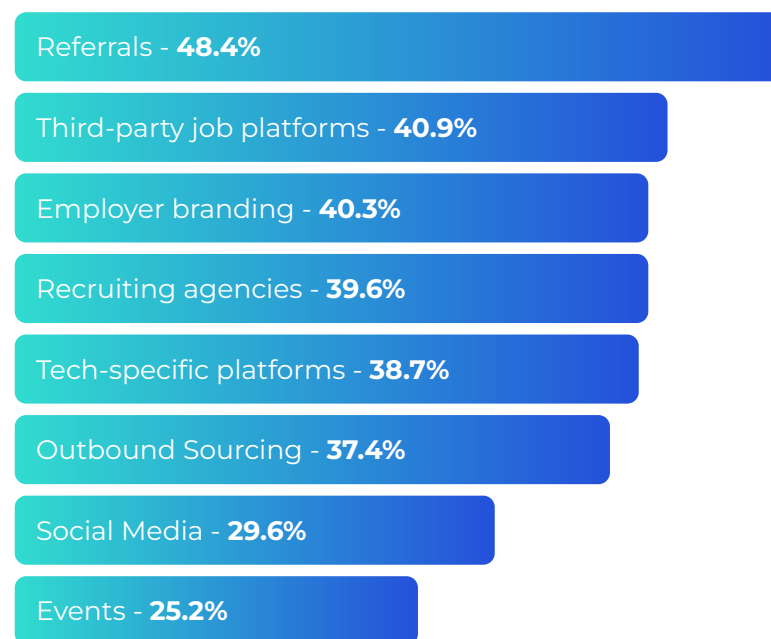
Trend 4

Acquiring top talent demands multi-channel investment.

Talent leaders are activating multiple recruiting channels as part of their hiring strategies. Survey respondents ranked Referrals as the most effective channel for hiring qualified candidates, while Social media recruiting and Events were ranked the least effective.

Top channels in tech recruitment

By percentage of top 3 rankings



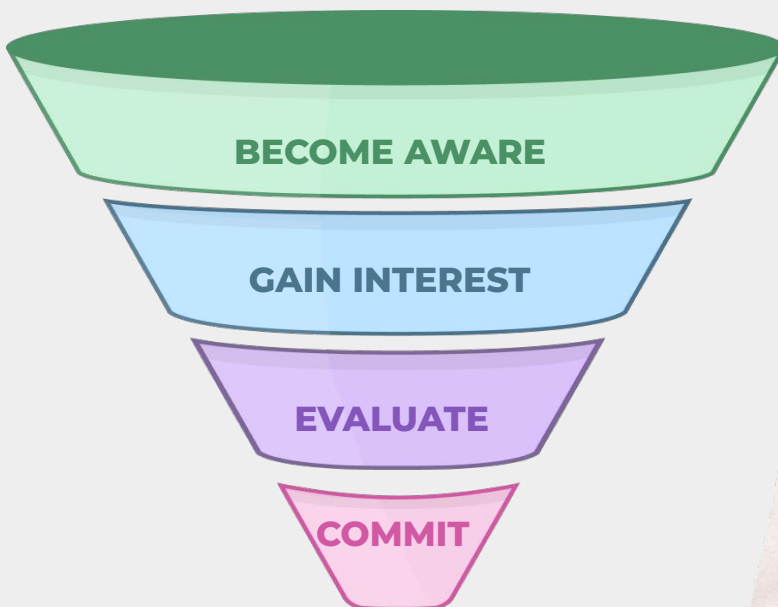
The close rankings across third-party job platforms, employer branding, recruiting agencies, tech-specific platforms, and outbound sourcing reflects the new candidate job-seeking experience. Recruiters need to support each of these channels to ensure they are meeting candidates across the platforms where they are looking for opportunities. At the same time, candidate frustration with the job-seeking process has resulted in the prioritization of referrals and company career sites when they apply because they believe it will increase their chances of being seen by recruiters.

Trend 4, continued

Why are talent leaders deploying a multi-channel approach? The candidate journey has changed and that means the approach to recruitment must change as well. **Candidates research and shop for jobs the same way they shop for brands.**

Talent leaders must invest in channels that build awareness of their company and career opportunities, generate interest in the employer brand, and provide tools for a candidate's consideration and evaluation to establish a high-quality pipeline of talent that meets their organization's specific hiring goals.

Multi-channel approach





Trend 5

Investments in employer brand are on the rise to support recruitment and retention.

As candidates evaluate career opportunities in new ways, employer branding will play a critical role in finding and keeping top talent.

Trend 5

Investments in employer brand are on the rise to support recruitment and retention.

As HR professionals continue to face many hiring and recruitment challenges, the shift in mindset from *sourcing* to *marketing* becomes increasingly important. This is well reflected in the Trend Survey as Employer Branding remains a highly prioritized opportunity, with 51% of respondents starting or actively expanding their investment in Employer Brand programs in 2025, and 38.9% maintaining their 2024 investment levels.

Employer branding is also a key strategy in managing employee retention, and was ranked the number one employer branding priority for HR professionals.

The top 5 employer branding priorities

- 1.** Driving retention with employer branding
- 2.** Measuring the ROI of our employer brand
- 3.** Building an employer brand that appeals to tech candidates
- 4.** Investing in employer branding partnerships
- 5.** Enhancing authentic employee storytelling and engagement

Conclusion.

While the global economy and many industries are projected to face volatility in 2025, **the tech industry and related hiring initiatives are poised for a second year of stability and growth following 2024**, with a focus on skilled jobs in emerging tech sectors like AI.

Talent recruitment continues to evolve as hiring initiatives increasingly overlap with traditional marketing and brand activity. As a result, organizations are leveraging more and more diverse tools and strategies to overcome both traditional challenges like hiring qualified candidates, as well as business challenges and resource constraints.

Employer brand is key to this success, and building and maintaining a strong tech-forward reputation will well prepare talent leaders as they face 2025 and any new challenges the year may bring.





Appendix

Recommendations + resources

Explore insights to support your employer brand strategy and attract AI talent in the new hiring landscape.

How to build an employer branding strategy.

The goal of an effective branding strategy for a company is to control their brand perception in the market and help it acquire and retain top talent. A proactive approach to recruiting, it also allows organizations to maintain top-of-mind awareness among passive job seekers. Here are some tips and resources to get started.

- **Develop a compelling employee value proposition (EVP)**
An EVP explains what the individual candidate or employee can expect of the company and what the company expects of the individual candidate or employee. [Start your EVP discovery >](#)
- **Don't forget about retention**
Each lost employee can cost as much as [two times their annual salary](#) to replace! Take the time to incorporate employee retention initiatives while creating your branding strategy. [Learn how >](#)
- **Explore potential promotion channels**
Owned channels, like your careers page or social media profiles, will likely be your primary resource, but don't be afraid to explore the realms of paid and earned media. Not every channel is right for every business, so you'll want to identify where your ideal candidates spend their time and take your message to them. This is one area to involve your marketing team!
- **Create a content calendar**
Whether you're publishing a recruiting blog, running targeted ads on social media, or rolling out new features on your careers page, creating a content calendar can simplify the process and hold people accountable for deadlines.
- **Don't be afraid to course correct**
There will come a time when you need to make some changes to your employer branding strategy to address a weakness or capitalize on a new opportunity. How do you know when it's time to course correct? [Learn more >](#)

Tips to attract top AI talent.

Competition for employers to attract the best AI talent will continue to increase as the sector grows. Try these tips to enhance your recruitment strategy.



Foster a culture of autonomy & experimentation

- Allocate time and resources for employee research
- Encourage experimentation with novel architectures and datasets
- Support continuous learning and upskilling opportunities



Engage the AI community

- Participate at key AI conferences that align with your marketing and recruitment strategies such as [Ai4](#), [Data + AI Summit](#), and [The AAAI Conference](#)
- Host or sponsor AI hackathons and competitions like [Genesis](#), [Global AI Hackathon](#), and [Kaggle](#)
- Connect with customers, prospects, and candidates on LinkedIn, Reddit, and Discord AI groups



Build a strong emerging tech brand

- Develop compelling content on AI and emerging tech topics, including blog posts, case studies, and webcasts
- Recruit and increase brand exposure through tech-focused communities like [Built In](#)

Recommendations & resources

More resources for better AI hires.

AI in the workplace

AI is quickly permeating the workplace, and businesses must be ready. Talent leaders will be at the forefront of this adoption and should start preparing today.

[Learn how >](#)

Why AI explorers are the next critical hire for your business

AI integrations often stall because there isn't a clear use case for the tool. Hiring a multidisciplinary team of AI explorers can change that.

[Learn how >](#)

What will the AI-powered future of tech work feel like?

AI tools can do much of the routine work that used to occupy the day-to-day of the tech workforce. So how will the software engineer role evolve?

[Learn how >](#)



For candidates

Better matches. Better jobs. Happier you.

Built In helps tech professionals stay on top of trends and news, expand their networks and carve out futures at companies they believe in.

[Explore resources >](#)

For employers

The recruitment platform for tech

Built In helps companies build employer brand and is a top source of qualified, diverse tech candidates — nationally, locally and remotely.

Ready to recruit?

[Get started >](#)

