

Be Visible. Be Trusted. Be Chosen.

The New Rules *of* Talent Discovery

builtin 

The AI Discovery Shift.

The biggest change in candidate behavior since the invention of the search engine is already here, and it is accelerating. Every day, more than 2.5 billion questions are asked in ChatGPT. Instead of browsing search results or career pages, candidates are prompting AI tools to do the research for them.

82%

of people say AI helps them search for things that are hard to describe, such as what kind of company fits them best or where their skills will make the most impact.

2028

AI-driven search traffic is forecast to surpass Google.

37%

of candidates are using Large Language Models (LLMs) to guide job discovery and company research.



Gemini



ChatGPT

This shift fundamentally changes how employers compete for top talent. It is no longer enough to have a careers page, an employer brand campaign, or great reviews. Candidates may never even see them. The questions they once typed into Google or career platforms are now being asked directly to tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, and Perplexity.

They are asking AI questions like:

- ***“What’s it like to work at [Company X]?”***
- ***“Who are the best AI startups in Chicago right now?”***
- ***“Which fintech companies are most stable in 2025?”***

Here is the truth: AI will answer those questions whether or not you have given it the right story to tell.

This eBook will show you how that shift impacts your ability to attract top talent, why first impressions are increasingly shaped by AI, and what steps you can take to ensure your brand shows up accurately, credibly, and competitively in these new discovery journeys. Along the way, we’ll share insights from Built In’s years of publishing trusted tech content that LLMs already surface—giving you a playbook to apply the same strategies to your own brand.

The race is on.

The brands that act now will own the narrative and the market.

AI Shapes First Impressions With or Without You

Your employer brand no longer introduces itself. AI does.

When candidates ask ChatGPT or Perplexity about your company, the answer is drawn from a patchwork of sources: press mentions, employee reviews, third-party sites, and whatever structured facts it can find.

Here is what AI prioritizes:

- Structured, verifiable facts. Data points such as headcount growth, DEI stats, internal mobility, funding rounds, or benefits.
- Credible third-party recognition. Awards, rankings, and coverage in trusted publications.
- Authentic employee voices. Reviews, testimonials, and candid reflections from your team.

And here is what it ignores: slogans, marketing fluff, and jargon-heavy job descriptions.

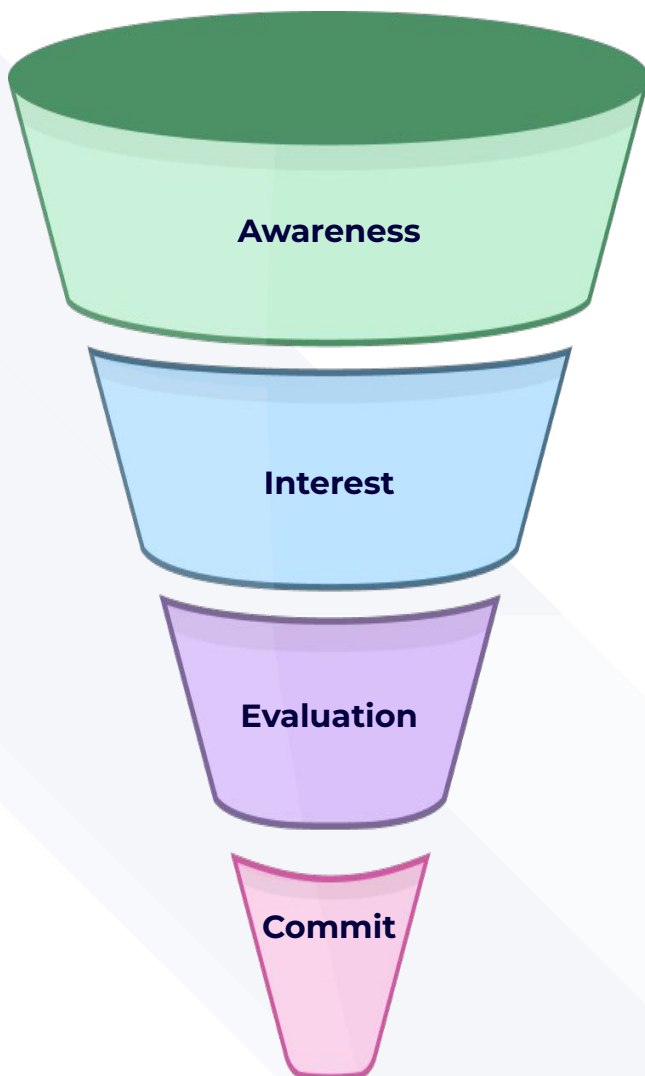
That means your employer brand is being summarized in real time, often without your input. If AI cannot find up-to-date, credible information, it will fill the gap with generic, outdated, or inaccurate data. Candidates walk away with the wrong first impression.

The implications are huge. By the time a recruiter reaches out, AI has already influenced whether that candidate responds. By the time they click on your job post, AI has already shaped their perception of your culture, your stability, and your momentum.

The message is clear: if you do not actively shape how AI sees you, you are surrendering narrative control to everyone else.

Inside the AI-Influenced Candidate Funnel

AI now influences every stage of the talent funnel, long before you speak to a candidate. You are no longer just competing on compensation or brand reputation. You are competing on narrative clarity and on whether AI can explain with confidence why you are worth engaging with.



Awareness: A candidate asks, “Who are the top Series B AI companies in Boston?” If you do not appear in the response, you are invisible. You lost before the race began.

Interest: Instead of browsing your careers page, candidates ask, “What is this company’s culture like? Do they offer flexibility? What do employees say about leadership?” If AI can’t find a strong signal, it fills the gap with someone else’s story.

Evaluation: At this stage, candidates ask, “*Is Company A more stable than Company B? Who is growing faster? Where are engineers happier?*” AI weighs the available evidence. If you do not stand out, candidates quietly drop off or ghost.

Commit: By the time you extend an offer, AI has already shaped how your opportunity feels. The decision is half-made before you even speak.

The Case for Action

The next six to nine months are critical. Brands that act today are laying the groundwork for 2026, when AI-influenced discovery becomes the default.

- AI decides who gets surfaced. If you are not mentioned or are misrepresented, you lose the candidate altogether.
- Early movers gain momentum. The signals AI sees today compound. Visibility becomes self-reinforcing.
- LLM-native strategy is the next edge. Optimizing for AI-driven discovery is now as important as SEO once was.
- This is a long-term investment. AI rewards what you reinforce and penalizes what you neglect.

**Companies that wait
will struggle to catch up.**

Win the AI Discovery Shift

You cannot control every narrative, but you can influence what AI finds and repeats. The system is simple but powerful:

Analyze your brand through the eyes of AI.

Run prompts in ChatGPT and Perplexity to see how your company shows up. Ask:

Step 1

- *“What are the best companies for [role type] in [city]?”*
 - *“What is it like to work at [Company]?”*
Look critically at the responses. Are you mentioned? Is the description accurate? What strengths and weaknesses appear?
-

Create and distribute fact-based content.

LLMs prioritize clear facts, third-party credibility, and authentic employee voices. Publish structured content across platforms AI trusts: Built In, earned media, employer profiles, and social channels. Do not publish once and forget. Capture proof points, echo them across surfaces, and refresh regularly.

Step 2

Track and tune your footprint.

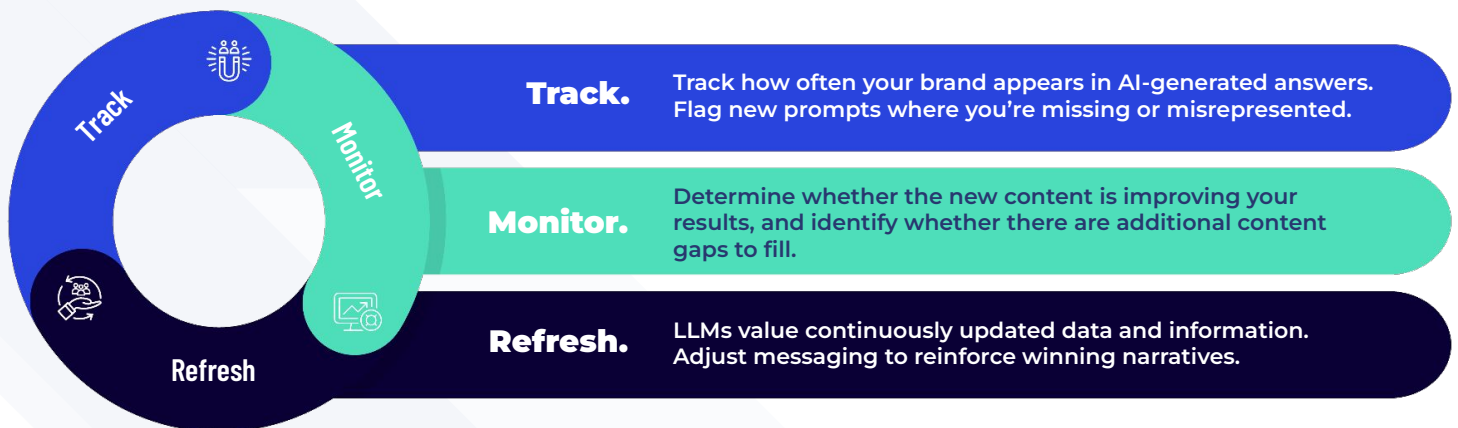
Check quarterly how AI describes you. Monitor whether new content is improving results. Refresh stats and achievements so your brand stays current. LLMs reward up-to-date information, so treat AI visibility like SEO: a constant drumbeat, not a one-time campaign.

Step 3

Your Next Moves

The age of AI discovery is here, and waiting is not an option. Here is where to start:

- Run a few prompts today that reflect your hiring priorities. Ask, “*Is [your company] a good place to work?*” or “*What are the top companies for engineers in [city]?*”
- Identify whether you are showing up. If not, decide where your narrative is weakest: awareness, interest, evaluation, or commit.
- Begin publishing structured, credible, and up-to-date content across your organic network and trusted third-party platforms.



Built In's Edge in AI Discovery

For 15 years, Built In has been publishing trusted content about tech companies, cultures, and careers. That content is already embedded in the LLMs that power ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini.

When candidates ask questions such as “Which tech companies are best for remote work in 2025?” or “What startups offer strong work-life balance?”, Built In content shows up. And not just occasionally. We are disproportionately represented in AI outputs.

We have also redesigned company profiles and content to be LLM-first. That means structured, clearly written content aligned with how AI surfaces and recommends employers.

We are not just adapting. We are leading the shift. And we are bringing our community with us.



Built In is the AI-powered talent platform that makes hiring better for everyone. We help millions of tech professionals discover the right opportunities and apply with impact, and we help employers build reputation and visibility in an AI-first candidate journey.

Learn more at builtin.com.

