CoderPad

State of Tech Hiring 2026

AI Was Meant to Replace Developers. Instead, It Made Them Critical

For the past two years, the conversation around AI in engineering has focused on the wrong question: *Will AI replace developers?* The data in this year's State of Tech Hiring report makes the answer clear. AI hasn't made developers obsolete — it's made them essential infrastructure.

Even as concerns about job security rise, demand for engineers is accelerating. Companies leading in AI are hiring more, not fewer, developers, and interview volumes are surging. The bottleneck isn't code generation anymore — it's judgment, systems thinking, and the ability to work effectively alongside AI.

Yet many hiring processes are still optimizing for outdated signals. As AI reshapes daily workflows, technical excellence is being redefined. This report explores what that shift means for developers, recruiters, and hiring leaders — and why the future of tech hiring will be decided by who works best in an AI-augmented world.

Amanda Richardson, CEO, CoderPad

Key Numbers

82%

of developers find GenAI useful – up from 76% in 2025

54%

of developers would lose some of their productivity if AI tools were removed tomorrow

53%

of hiring leaders expect budget increases – up from 37% in 2025

Executive summary

1. **AI is accelerating technical hiring, not replacing it.** Companies leading in AI are hiring more engineers across experience levels, including early-career roles.
2. **AI is now essential infrastructure for developers.** Most developers rely on AI daily, and productivity would drop without it.
3. **What developers do is shifting.** Writing new code matters less; system design, debugging, fine-tuning, and collaboration matter more.
4. **AI proficiency is now a core hiring signal.** The ability to work effectively with AI tools is becoming as important as foundational programming skills.
5. **Hiring practices are lagging reality.** Candidate AI usage is widespread, but many hiring teams are still catching up.
6. **Live interviews work best — but aren't used enough.** Technical discussions and live coding best reflect real-world skill, yet many teams still rely on outdated assessment formats.

About CoderPad

For the ninth consecutive year, CoderPad has surveyed the developer and recruiter communities to understand the landscape and trends within technical hiring. This 2026 report represents insights from more than 650 global participants, combining quantitative data with qualitative analysis to help organizations navigate the future of tech talent and technical hiring.

CoderPad is a comprehensive technical assessment platform trusted by more than 4,000 of the world's top technical companies worldwide, including over 20% of the Fortune 100 and 2/3 of the Forbes AI 50 list. The platform has hosted more than 4 million technical interviews across 99+ languages. Candidates prefer the CoderPad platform by 7:1 over traditional coding platforms.

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01.
AI: The Transformation Continues

a. AI in Development Workflows

b. Skills Development and Learning

c. Tension with Job Security

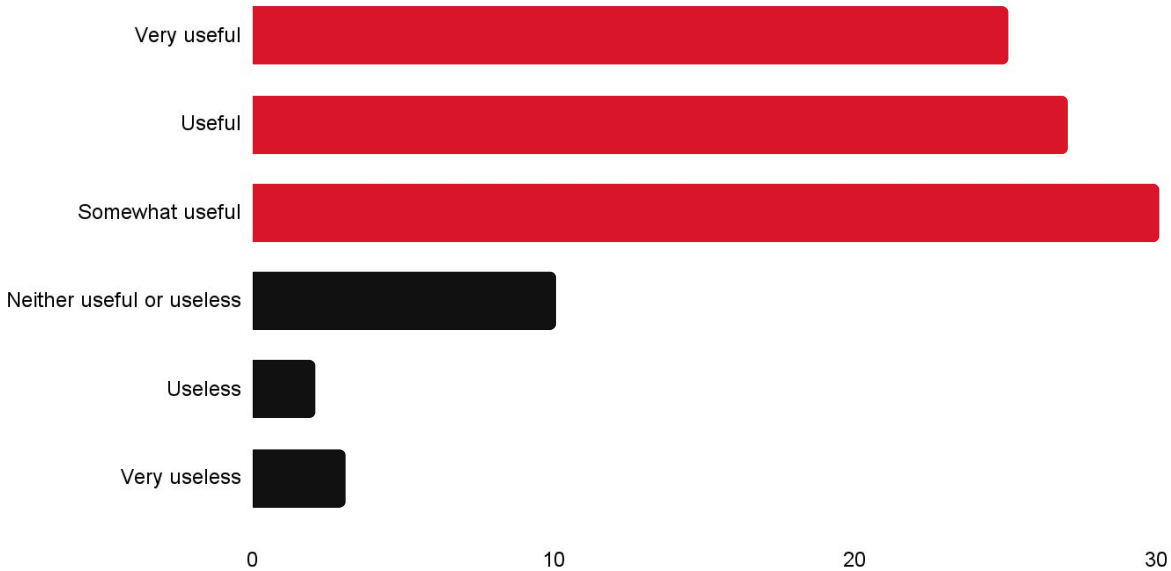
Last year, we tracked AI adoption. In 2026, we're measuring AI dependency. Our survey results reveal that AI has moved from an optional tool to an essential part of a developer's workflow. This integration brings both opportunity and anxiety.

a.

AI in Development Workflows

The trajectory of AI adoption among developers shows no signs of slowing down. In fact, when we asked developers how useful GenAI is to their work, 82% now report that they find it at least somewhat useful – up from 76% in 2025.

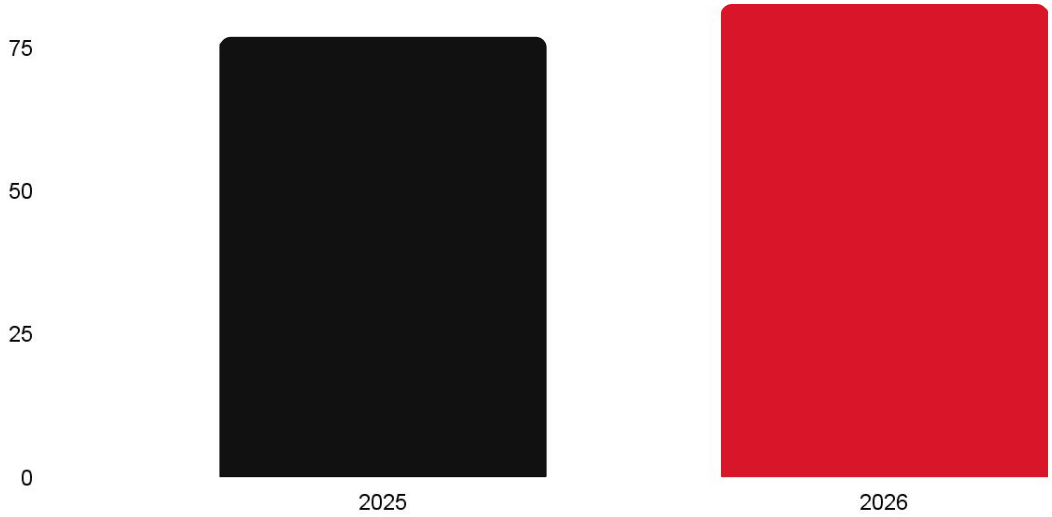
How useful is GenAI to you as a developer?



82% find GenAI useful (combining very useful, useful, and somewhat useful categories)

How does this compare to last year's results?

How useful is GenAI to you as a developer: 2025 vs 2026



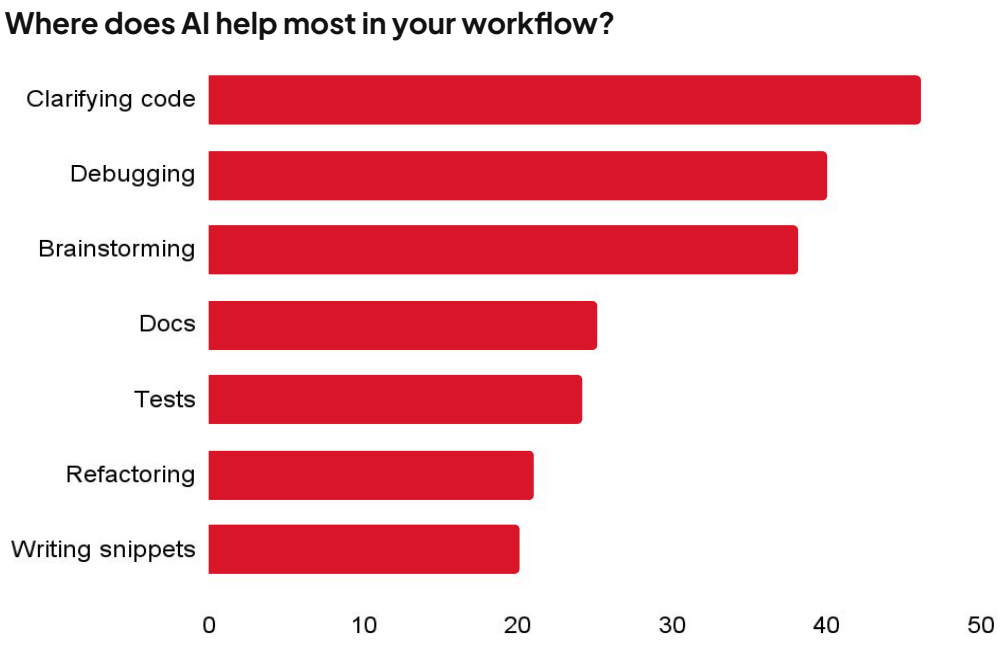
Year-over-year comparison:

- 2025: 76% found GenAI useful
- 2026: 82% find GenAI useful
- Change: +6 percentage points

GenAI tools have played a role across the entire development lifecycle. Developers aren't just

using AI to write code, but also to understand, debug, and optimize it.

Where does AI help the most?



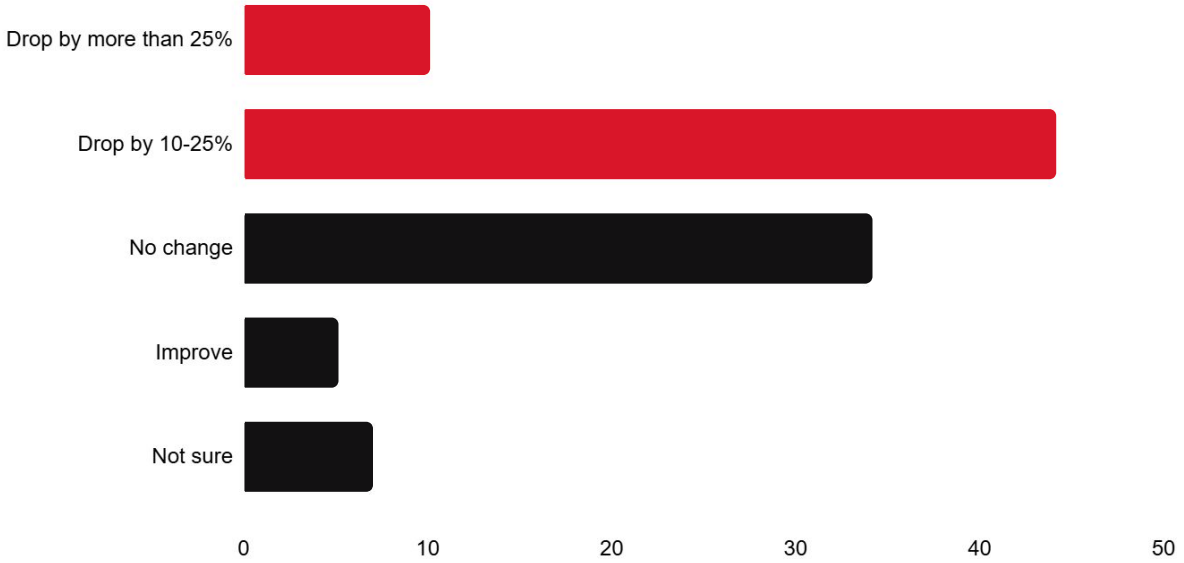
Multiple selections allowed

Whether or not a developer can efficiently review, edit, adapt, tweak, build on, or correct

AI-generated code is exactly what you need to be assessing as part of your tech hiring process.

This year, we wanted to learn how dependent developers are on AI tools to be productive. Specifically, we asked what would happen if AI tools were removed tomorrow. These results reveal how deeply integrated AI tools have become in daily workflows.

If AI tools were removed tomorrow, your productivity would



54% of developers we surveyed would experience productivity drops of 10% or more. That means AI isn't optional anymore – it's infrastructure. Organizations need to consider this dependency when developing their tooling strategies and technical assessments.

As AI adoption grows, the need for engineers grows, too

While 54% of developers depend on AI for productivity, technical hiring assessments haven't declined – they've exploded. CoderPad's platform data reveals:

48%

growth in global technical assessments (since mid-2023)

90%

growth in U.S. technical hiring (in the same time period)

Large enterprises

(with 10K+ employees) leading growth

The companies with the most AI resources and most sophisticated tools are hiring MORE engineers – not fewer. The question shifts from "Will we need developers?" to "Can we hire them fast enough?"

Our data reveals that AI isn't killing developer jobs – it is accelerating the need for technical talent who can leverage them effectively.

> You can use an AI assistant as a tool during this interview, just like in a real-world setting. That said, we'd like to first see your initial thought process and approach before turning to AI. Feel free to use it if you get stuck or need help refining your solution. Our goal is to understand how you think through problems and how you leverage tools like AI to enhance, not replace, your problem-solving.

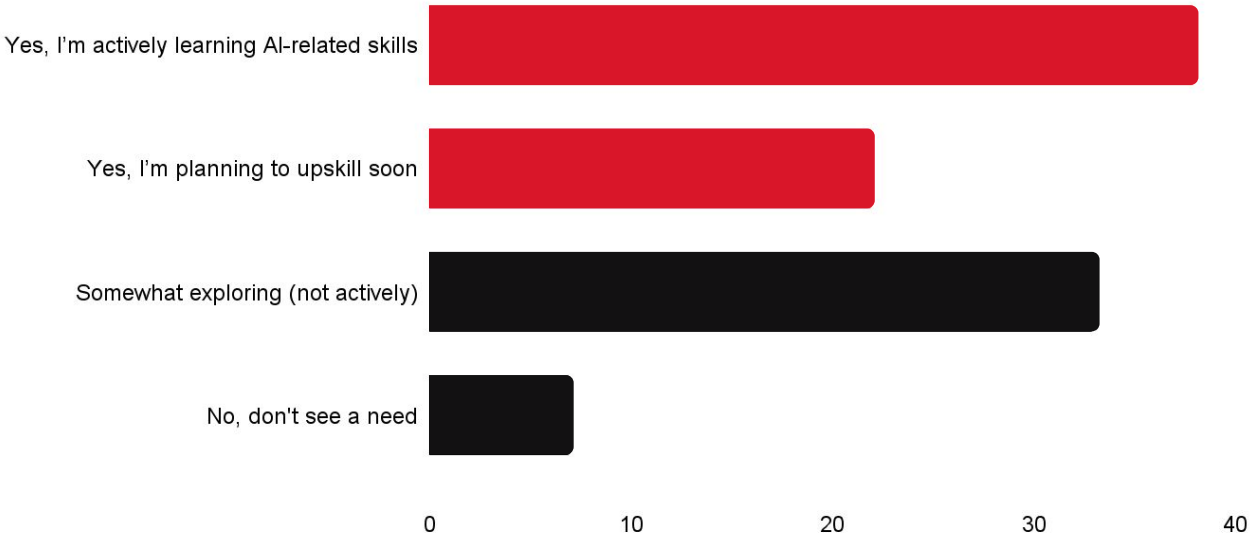
Engineering Manager MNTN

b.

Skills Development and Learning

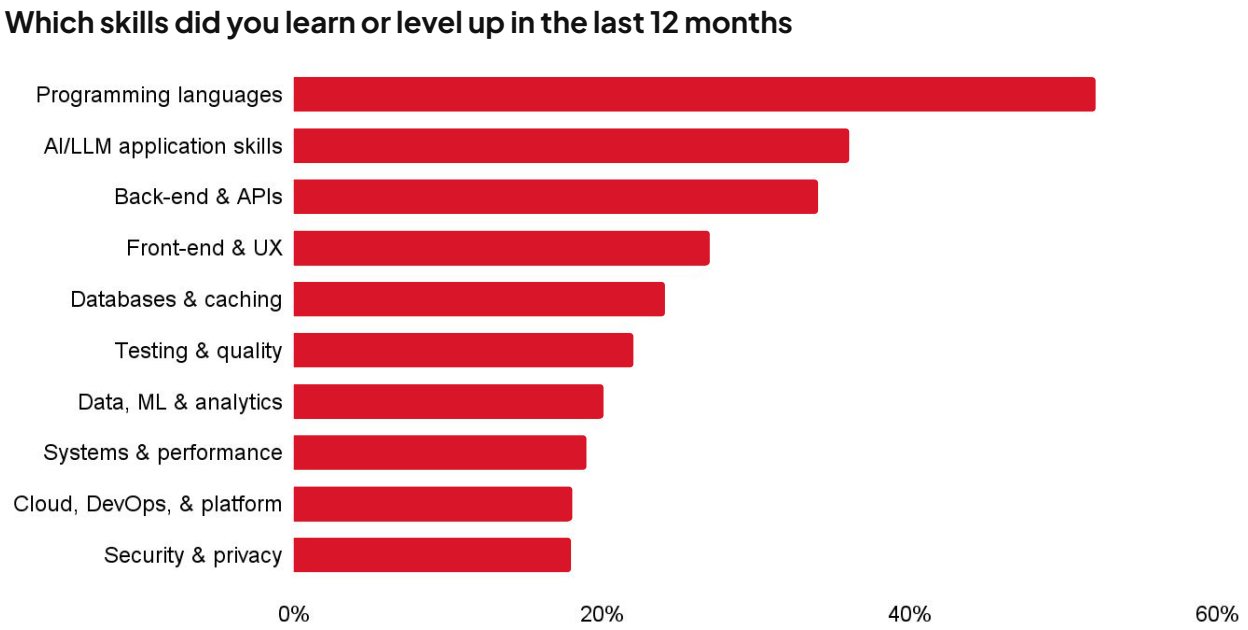
While AI transforms their work, developers are actively developing their skills. The growth and adoption of AI tools has created more urgency to upskill. As a result, more developers have moved from “planning to learn” to “actively learning.”

With the growth of AI, are you adjusting your skills?



- Yes, I'm actively learning AI-related skills: 38% (up from 28% in 2025)
- Yes, I'm planning to upskill soon: 22%
- Somewhat exploring (not actively): 33%
- No, don't see a need: 7% (down from 11% in 2025)

Where are developers spending their time to level up? Here are the top skills developers learned in the last 12 months:



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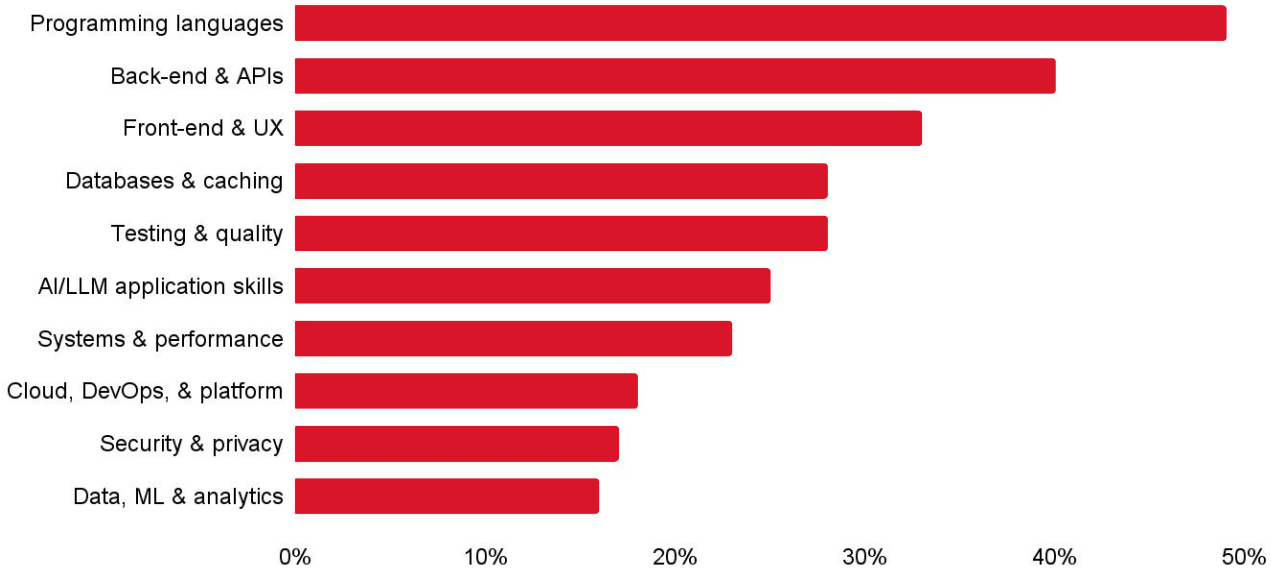
Programming languages remain fundamental, with 52% of the developers we surveyed spending time upleveling their programming language skills in the past year. However, AI/LLM application skills are emerging as a top skill (with 36% of the developers we surveyed focusing in this area).

Which of these skills were put to practice?

Which skills did you actually use in production?



Multiple selections allowed

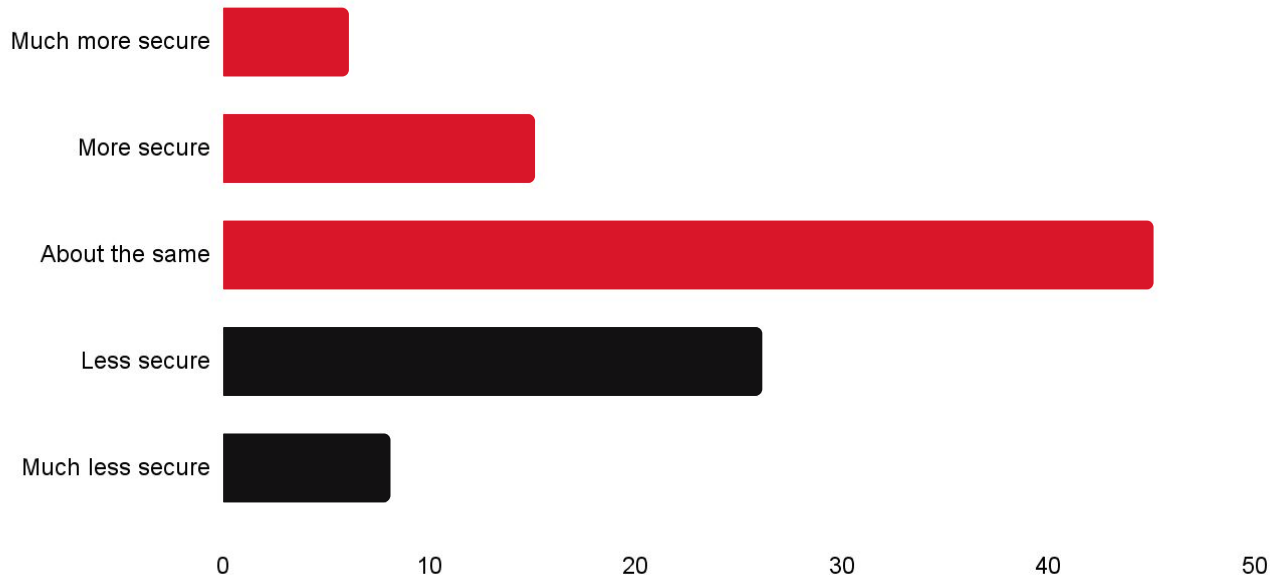
A similar proportion of developers surveyed developed programming skills and used them. Additionally, while 36% learned AI skills in the past 12 months, only 25% have used them in production yet. This 11-point gap suggests AI skills are still being developed and tested before full production deployment.

C.

Tension with Job Security

One of the most significant trends in our 2026 survey results reveals the tension between AI productivity and job security. While AI tools make developers more productive, a significant portion of developers (34%) feel less secure about their careers because of it.

What is your confidence about job security over the next 2 years?

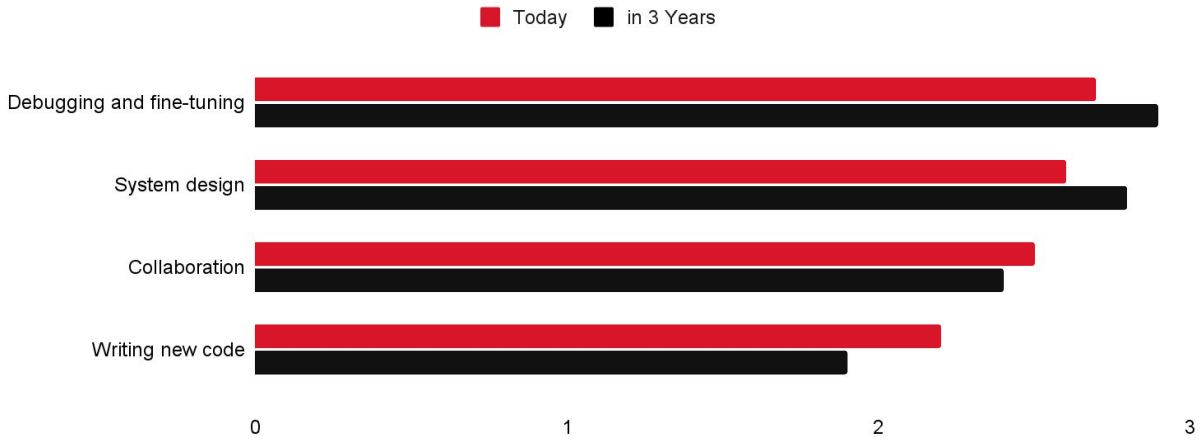


While 54% of developers depend on AI for productivity gains, 34% fear it threatens their jobs. Organizations must address this tension – not just with better tools, but with transparency.

What are the skills that will matter most in the next 3 years?

We asked developers which skills are most important today versus what they think they'll be most important in three years. In our results, a clear pattern revealed that debugging and fine tuning and systems design will grow in importance, and writing new code will decline.

Which skills are most important to be a strong developer today vs. in three years



Rank the four choices

How will this shape how we evaluate the skills and competencies of developers? The shift from "can you code?" to "can you architect, debug, and optimize?" fundamentally changes what we should assess in technical hiring. Companies still relying on algorithm-heavy, write-from-scratch coding tests are measuring the skills from yesterday – not tomorrow.

02. Rethinking Technical Assessments

a. The Industry is Split on Allowing AI in Technical Assessments

b. What Proves Skill When Using AI?

c. When the Agent Takes the Test

d. Which Assessments Work Best?

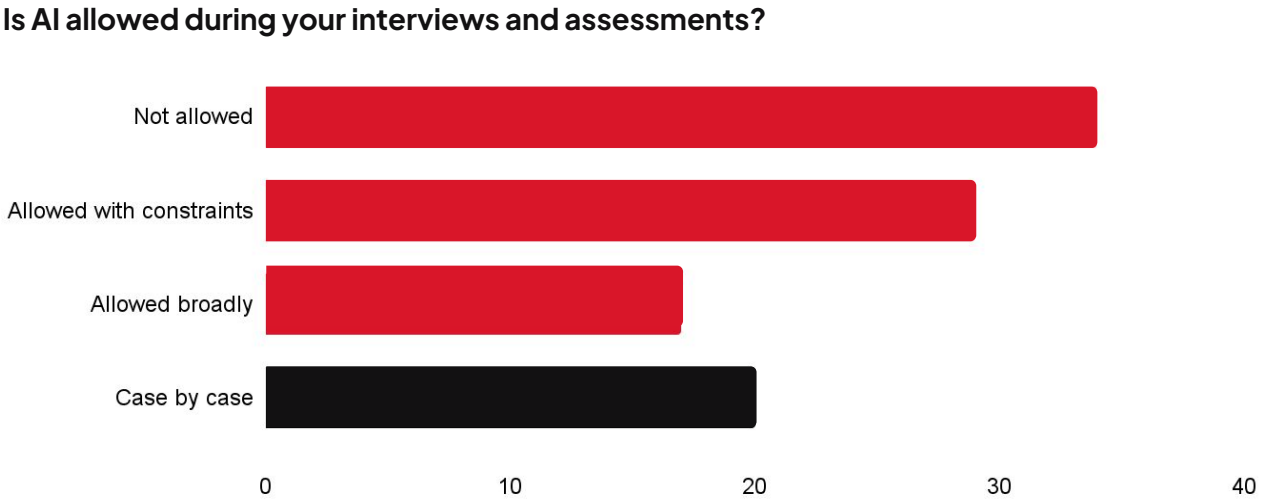
As AI becomes infrastructure, the fundamental question facing technical hiring shifts. For the past two years, we've asked developers and recruiters whether AI should be allowed in technical assessments. This year, the discussion evolves. Instead we're asking How do we allow it? And what does "authentic skill" look like when AI can write code? And which signals prove competency in the AI era?

This year, we introduced a new set of questions this year to explore how AI should be incorporated into technical assessments to mirror on-the-job development tasks.

a.

The Industry is Split on Allowing AI in Technical Assessments

We asked recruiters and hiring leaders: is AI allowed during your interviews and assessments?



The Split

- 34% ban AI entirely
- 46% allow it (broadly or with constraints)
- 20% decide case by case

The industry is in the middle of a transformation right now and, as our data shows, there's no consensus yet on the right approach.

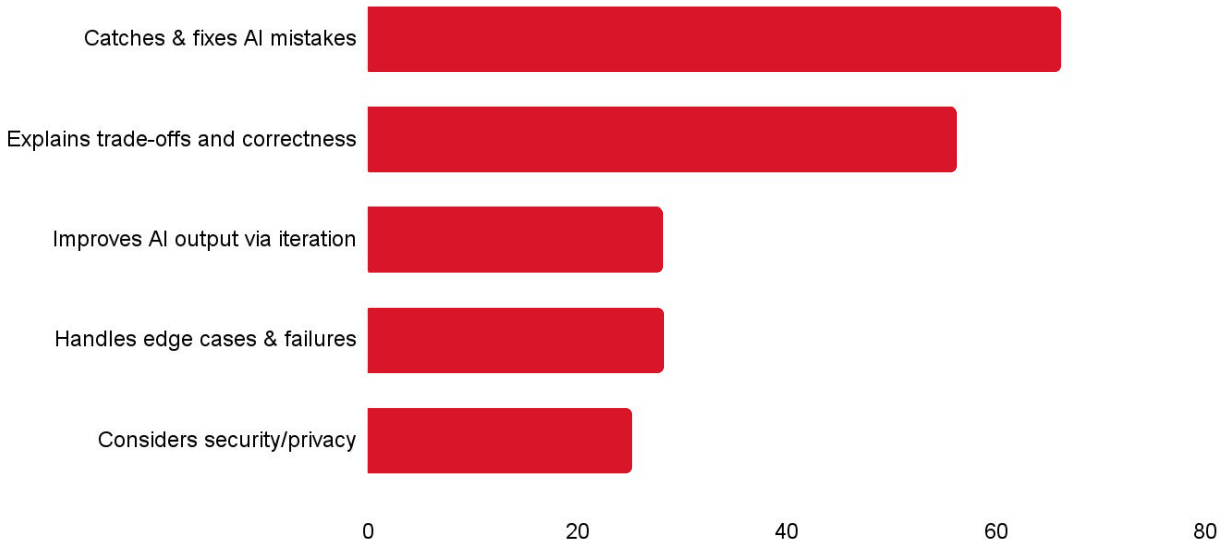
b.

What Proves Skill When Using AI?

While AI transforms their work, developers are actively developing their skills. The growth and adoption of AI tools has created more urgency to upskill. As a result, more developers have moved from “planning to learn” to “actively learning.”

We asked recruiters and hiring leaders: is AI allowed during your interviews and assessments?

Is AI allowed, which signals prove real skill?



The focus has shifted from writing code to the more complex tasks of debugging AI, explaining architectural decisions, and iterating and improving on AI output. This helps to form the new definition of technical competency.

C.

When the Agent Takes the Test

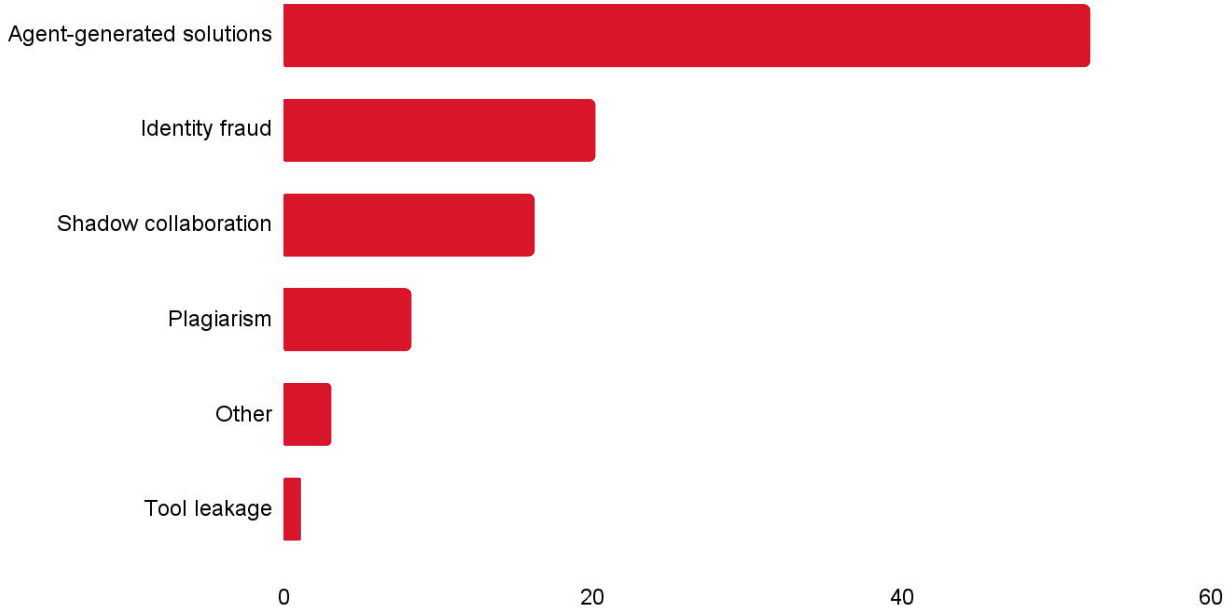
Cheating remains a chief concern among technical recruiters, though the specifics have evolved. This year, the concern is focused on AI agents who can complete entire coding assessments autonomously. As AI agents become more powerful, the line between using tools effectively and letting the tool do everything becomes less clear.

d.

Tension with Job Security

One of the most significant trends in our 2026 survey results reveals the tension between AI productivity and job security. While AI tools make developers more productive, a significant portion of developers (34%) feel less secure about their careers because of it.

What is your top cheating concern in 2026?



AI-generated solutions weren't a category in our last survey. Now, they're the top concern among technical recruiters. As AI agents improve and become more capable, the line between using AI tools to assist the work versus letting the tool do everything will be increasingly blurry.

There's no such thing as 'cheating' with AI. I want candidates to use AI tools to solve a problem end-to-end. Strong candidates will be able to produce a solution, critique it and suggest alternatives, and articulate their process.

Will Chilcutt, Principal Engineer, Yahoo

Why the quality of assessments matters more than ever

The issue of agent-generated solutions is driving significant changes in how companies evaluate technical talent.

Here's what's changing:

- Companies are shifting away from algorithmic puzzles toward multi-file, real world scenarios that mirror actual engineering work
- AI-enabled assessments are growing – candidates can use AI tools, but evaluators see their prompt history and decision-making processes
- The focus on realistic coding projects test judgement, not just syntax

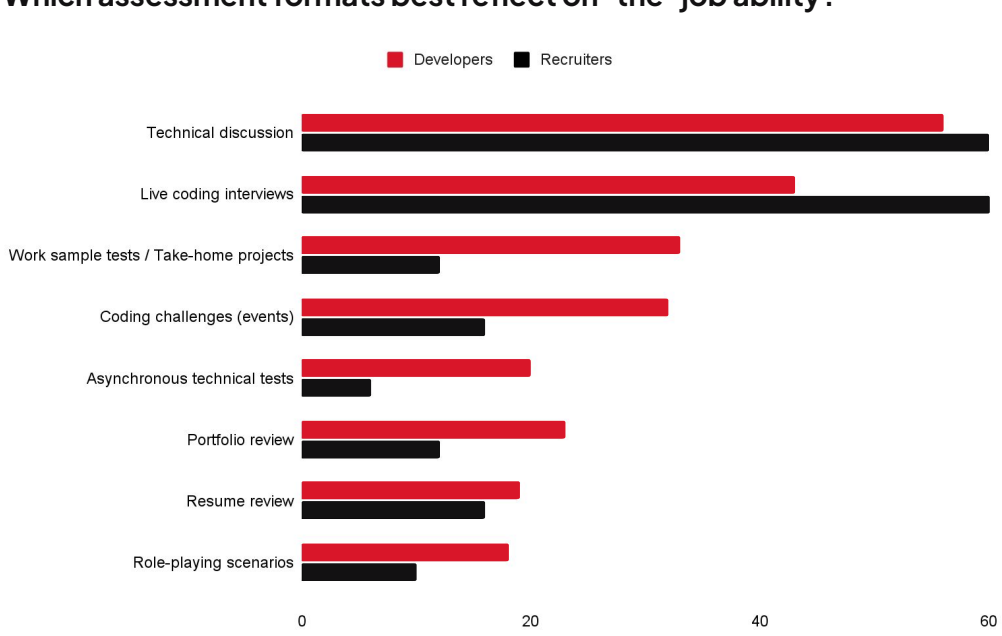
Over the past two years, the conversations around AI in technical assessments have evolved from "Should we allow AI in interviews" to "How do we assess AI-augmented engineering skills?"

d.

Which Assessments Work Best?

One of the most critical questions in technical hiring is also the most challenging: which assessments actually predict on-the-job success? Our data reveals significant alignment between developers and recruiters on what works.

Which assessment formats best reflect on-the-job ability?

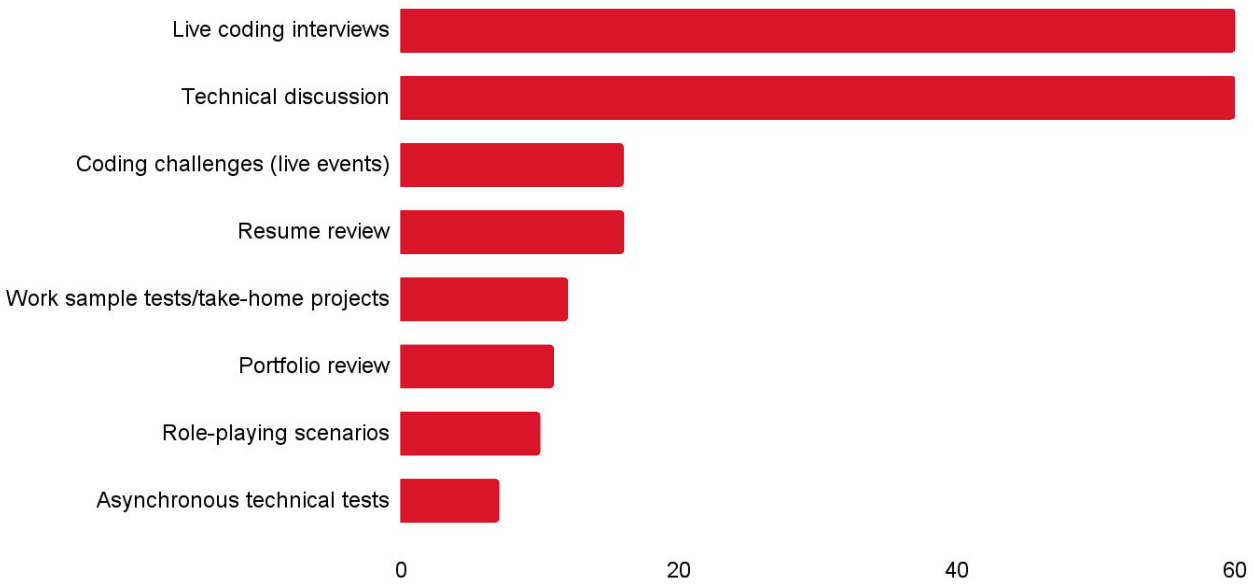


When given multiple selections, developers strongly prefer interactive formats, like technical discussions and live coding. They want to demonstrate their skills through live conversations and real-time problem-solving, rather than asynchronous exercises or through their credentials.

Recruiters are largely aligned with developers on which assessments predict on-the-job performance, with live coding interviews and technical discussions also taking the top two spots. However, the resume review plays a larger role on the recruitment side than it does for developers.

Developer + Recruiter perspectives

Which assessments best predict on-the-job performance?

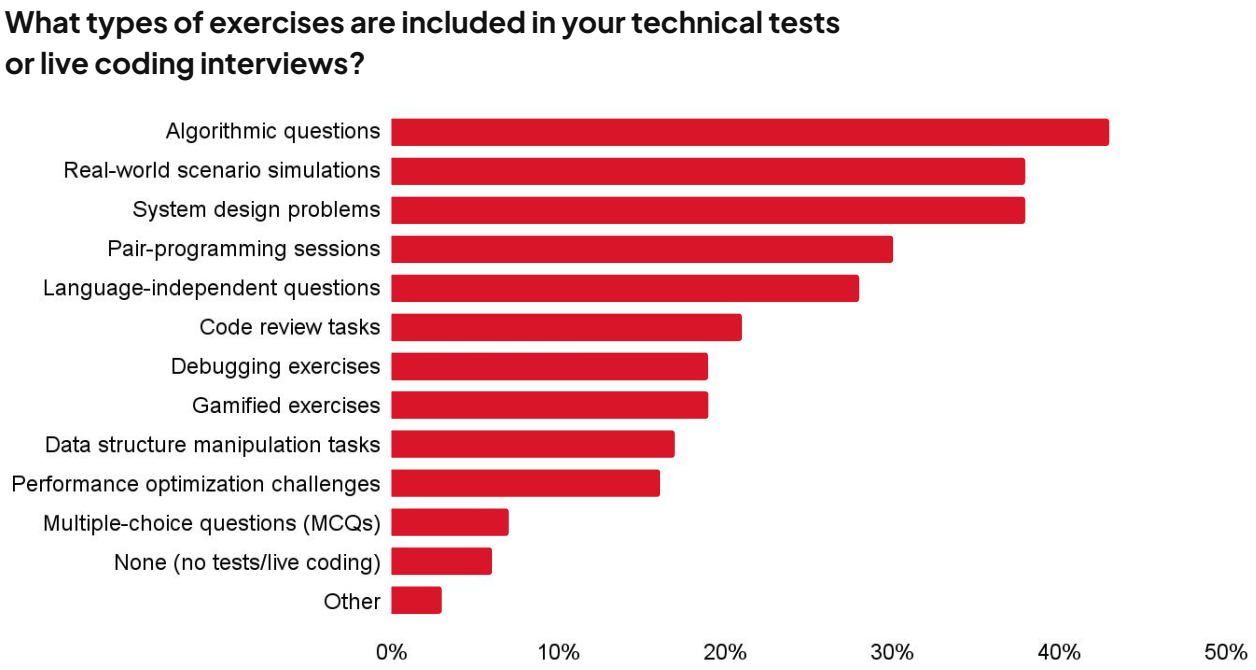


Of our recruiters surveyed, 69% use the resume review to assess technical talent, but only 16% think it predicts performance. While resumes may serve as a necessary filter at the start of the candidate's journey, survey respondents agree that they're not the best signal of job-relevant skills.

What's in the tests?

We asked recruiters about the types of technical assessments they're conducting, and what they include.

What types of exercises are included in your technical tests or live coding interviews?



Multiple selections allowed

Despite industry-wide criticism of algorithmic interviews as poor predictors of job performance, 43% of teams are still relying on these results. Meanwhile, system design and real-world scenarios are gaining ground but haven't yet displaced algorithms as the dominant assessment format.

Real-World Scenarios are Gaining Traction

38% of the recruiters we surveyed are adopting real-world scenario simulations, which signals some progress toward assessing what matters. These exercises typically include:

- **Multi-file codebases (not single-function puzzles)**
- **Realistic debugging challenges**
- **Working with existing code (not greenfield only)**
- **Integration with actual frameworks and tools**
- **Problems that mirror day-to-day work**

When combined with the 30% using pair-programming and 38% testing system design, there's a meaningful shift toward assessments that more accurately reflect actual engineering work.

When I'm doing phone screens, people are amazed that they're actually coding real problems instead of answering trivia questions. It's a much better way to see how someone really works.

Chris Van Pelt, CTO, CrowdFlower

Defining AI proficiency in hiring

AI has become foundational, and leading companies have moved beyond asking whether candidates can use AI. Instead, they're measuring how effectively candidates can use it. This requires a shared framework for defining AI proficiency.

For example, consider these four dimensions of AI proficiency:

1. **Prompting Skill –** Can they guide AI to produce high-quality, relevant results?
2. **Workflow Integration –** Do they use AI as a smart assistant in their daily tasks to improve efficiencies?
3. **Judgment & Verification –** Can they evaluate, edit, and fact-check AI output?
4. **Creativity & Adaptability –** Do they find new, practical ways to apply AI tools?

Companies like MNTN, Meta, and Yahoo are now explicitly testing for these dimensions in their hiring processes, allowing candidates to use AI tools during their technical assessments so they can observe actual AI proficiency.

The impact of hiring for AI proficiency

Forward-thinking companies focused on hiring for AI proficiency are seeing real gains in their time to productivity and overall performance:

1. **MNTN:** Engineers hired through AI-enabled interviews are making meaningful contributions in 1–2 days, rather than weeks
2. **Meta:** Engineers who have proficiency with AI tools ramp up “dramatically faster” and become productive in days, rather than months
3. **Yahoo:** Hires who are proficient in AI navigate large codebases more quickly, accelerating the time-to-ship for new features

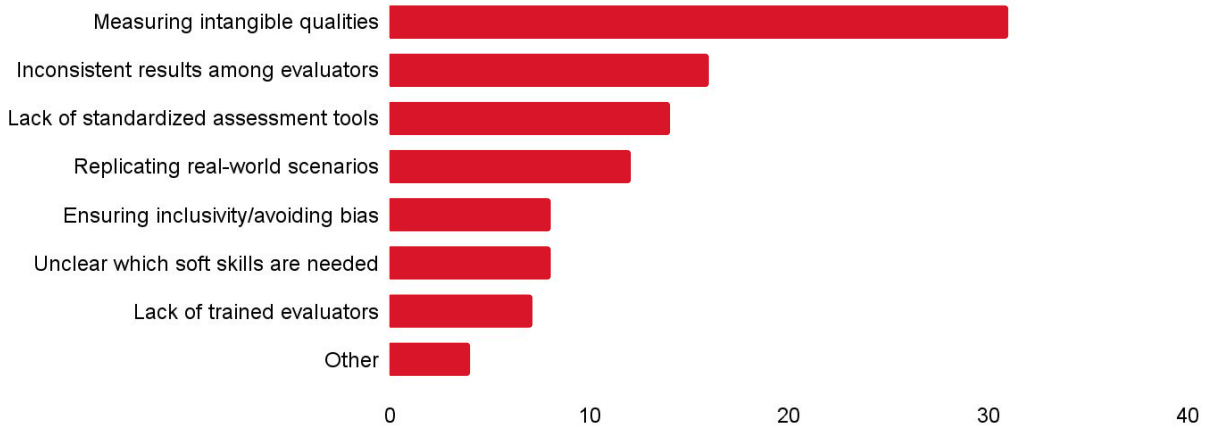
Hiring for AI proficiency isn’t just about filing seats – it’s correlated with faster ramp times and earlier impact. Companies who can identify, close, and onboard the right talent can gain a competitive advantage.

The Challenge With Assessing Soft Skills

Evaluating soft skills continues to be a pain point in technical assessments.

We asked recruiters: **what is your main challenge when evaluating soft skill?**

What is your main challenge when evaluating soft skills?



Recruiters agree that measuring intangible qualities are difficult to assess and measure in an interview.

03.

Talent Mobility and Retention in 2026

a. The Great Stay Could Continue

b. Why Do Developers Leave?

c. Why Do Developers Stay?

d. Which Skills Do Developers Want to Acquire in 2026?

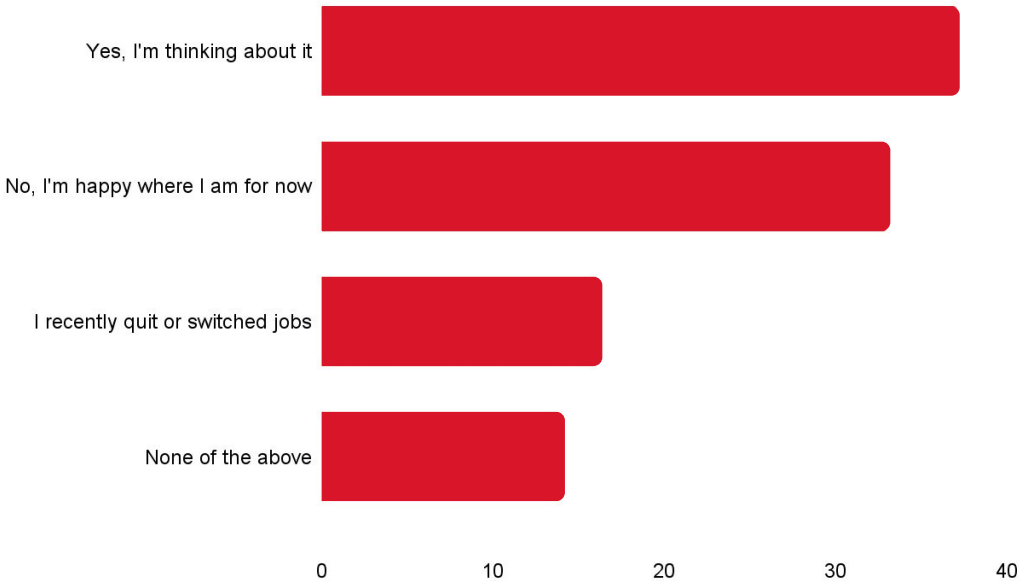
The “Great Stay” that began in 2024 could continue into 2026. While this may signal a stable market, nearly 4 in 10 developers we surveyed are thinking about exploring new opportunities.

a.

The Great Stay Could Continue

Developers who responded to our survey were mostly content in their current roles, supporting the theory that the “Great Stay” will continue into this year.

Are you thinking about quitting your job or exploring new opportunities?



Historical Trend: Declining Mobility

- 2022: 52% considering leaving
- 2023: 49% considering leaving
- 2024: 42% considering leaving
- 2025: 42% considering leaving
- 2026: 39% considering leaving

For the past 5 years, our surveys have reflected declines in the number of developers considering leaving their current positions. This year's number – 39% represents a five-year low.

b.

Why Do Developers Leave?

Developers who are exploring new opportunities are prioritizing career advancement and compensation. However, remote work is also playing a major role.

Why would you consider changing jobs?

Up to 3 selections allowed

How does this compare to our results from last year?

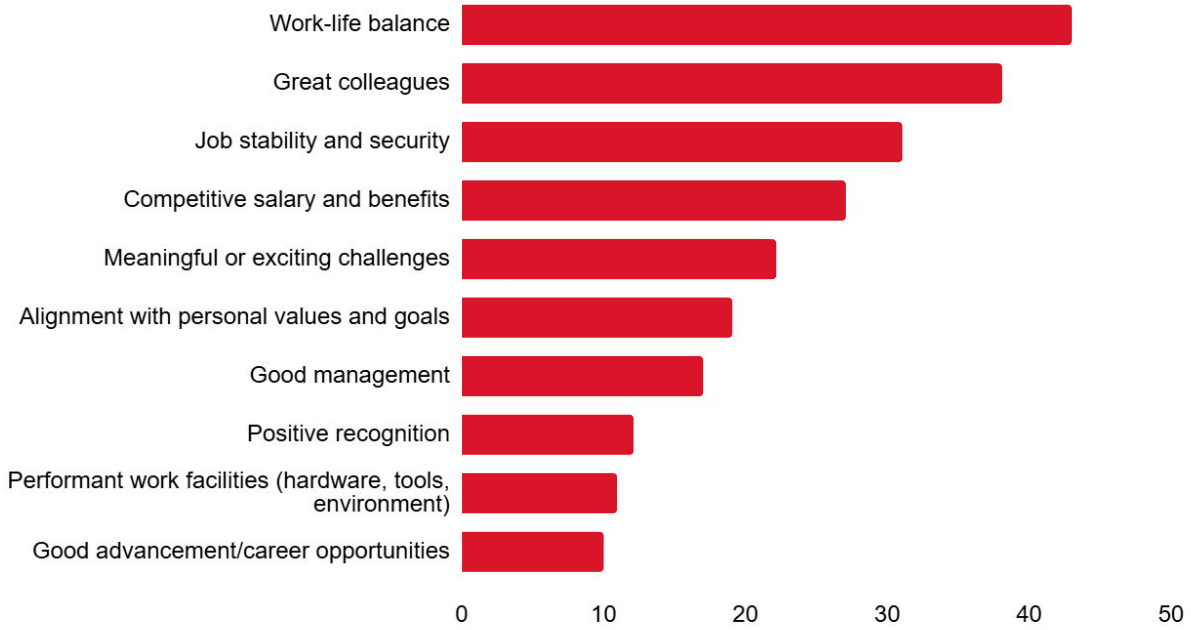
- Career advancement remains #1 or #2 (was 44% in 2025, now 39%)
- Compensation was consistently top factor
- Remote work flexibility emerged as major post-pandemic driver

C.

Why Do Developers Stay?

Understanding key retention factors helps organizations keep their best talent in a competitive job market. Developers cite quality of life, culture, stability, and security as their top three reasons for staying with their current companies.

What makes you stay at your current job?



Up to 3 selections allowed

Interestingly, culture dominates retention metrics among our survey respondents. In fact, the top two factors were consistent with the results we saw in 2025, at 43% and 37% respectively. Job stability entered the top three for 2026, perhaps due to the volatility of the job market.

Early career hiring: Beyond the headlines

You've seen the headlines about tech companies reducing entry-level hiring. However, the full picture is more complex.

Here's what our data shows:

- **28% of hiring leaders cite early-career pipeline building as a priority – it's a top 3 goal**
- **Technical assessments for junior roles remain active**
- **Multiple organizations are expanding – not cutting – new grad programs**

Overall, the market is shifting, not shrinking.

According to the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs 2025 report:

- **AI will create 11M new jobs, while displacing 9M jobs (2025–2030)**
- **AI Engineer is the fastest-growing job across 15 countries, including the U.S.**
- **More than 20% of today's U.S. workforce holds job titles that didn't exist in 2000 – many are tech-adjacent roles**

The reality is that entry-level roles now require different skills, and companies now seek grads who combine programming with AI proficiency.

Every time we have an industrial revolution, there are more jobs created than lost. The challenge is that the skills workers need can be quite different. The issue isn't that there won't be jobs. It's that workers need to be prepared to take them.

Carol Stubbings, Global Chief Commercial Officer, PwC

> Rather than abandoning early-career talent, leading tech organizations are expanding entry-level programs. As seen with Shopify's plans to grow its intern and junior developer cohort by twenty-fold, companies recognize that investing in junior talent today builds the senior leaders of tomorrow — and that younger, AI-native workers bring invaluable perspectives and skills.

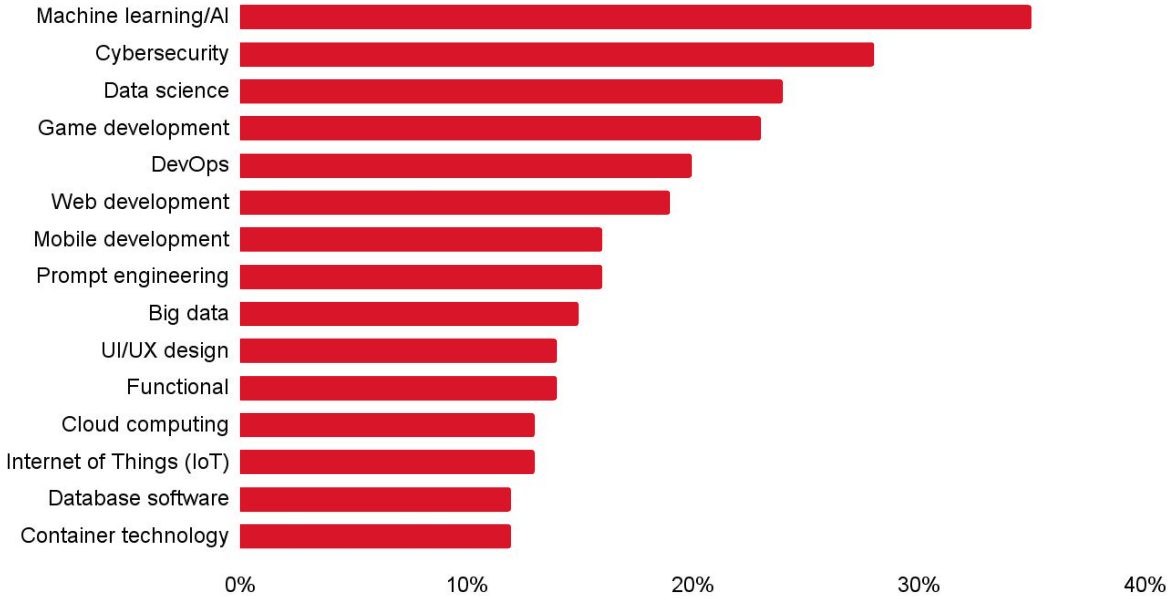
Amanda Richardson, CEO, CoderPad

d.

Which Skills Do Developers Want to Acquire in 2026?

In 2026, developers are focused on expanding technical capabilities, particularly in these areas:

Which technical skill or skills would you like to acquire in 2026?



Multiple selections allowed

Machine learning / AI is the clear priority for developers for 2026. While 37% of developers reported that they already learned AI skills in the past 12 months, there's still room to grow.

This isn't random skills acquisition – it's the market speaking. Companies are actively hiring for AI/ML roles (35%), system design is rising in importance, and early-career developers are building the foundation (programming languages), while acquiring AI skills that will define the next few years of software engineering.

04.

Recruiters & Hiring Teams: Outlook for 2026

a. Budgets Forecasted to Grow in 2026

b. Hiring Priorities for 2026

c. Roles in Demand in 2026

d. Top Recruiting Challenges in 2026

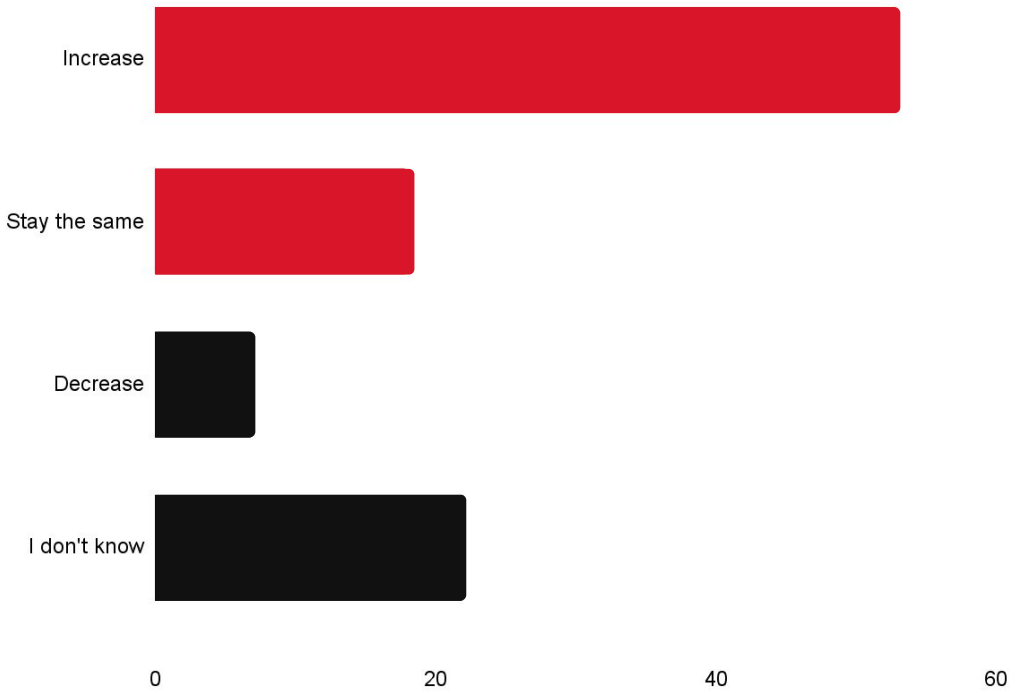
Backend and full-stack engineers remain the most sought-after roles, with AI-oriented positions seeing significant demand.

a.

Budgets Forecasted to Grow in 2026

One of the biggest shifts from last year's survey to the 2026 results is the jump in hiring budgets among recruiters and hiring leaders.

In 2026, do you think your hiring budget will:



Budget Confidence Comparison

- 2024: 26% expected increase
- 2025: 37% expected increase
- 2026: 53% expect increase
- Change: +16 percentage points from 2025

This 16% improvement suggest that companies weathered the uncertainty of 2023–24 and are now investing in technical talent with confidence – particularly in assessing and hiring AI-capable engineers.

Where is the money going?

Budget increases translate into real hiring activity. This investment is also evident through CoderPad platform data. We've seen:

- **43% growth in average usage per customer since 2023**
- **90% increase in usage in the U.S.**
- **Enterprise companies with 10K+ employees leading growth**

Companies aren't just saying they'll hire more engineers – they're actively assessing more candidates. Additionally, large companies are investing heavily in technical infrastructure.

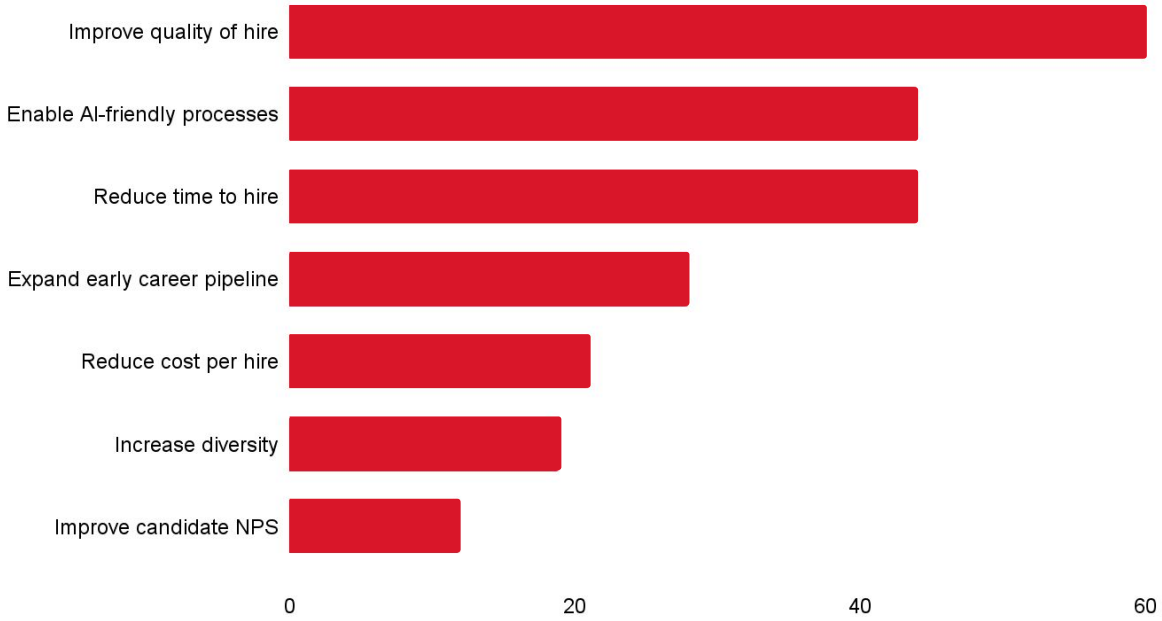
The growth in assessments suggests that companies are being even more selective, not less. They want to hire the right technical talent for the AI era.

b.

Hiring Priorities for 2026

Organizations are clear about their goals, with the top hiring goal for this year focused on improving the quality of hire – 60% of our survey respondents prioritized this over anything else.

What are your top hiring goals for 2026?



New this year: Enable AI-friendly processes debuts as the second-highest hiring goal for 2026 (tied with time-to-hire) at 44%. While this goal didn't exist in previous surveys, it shows now significant AI has become a hiring strategy. Companies are redesigning their entire recruitment workflow around AI capabilities.

By implementing CoderPad, we are able to assess at scale – we can greet the talent that applies and get them engaged in the process straight away. We validate their baseline capabilities quickly with CoderPad Screen and then are able to get them expedited through to live CoderPad interviews to help validate those skills even further and make faster decisions. This is the heart of the ROI.

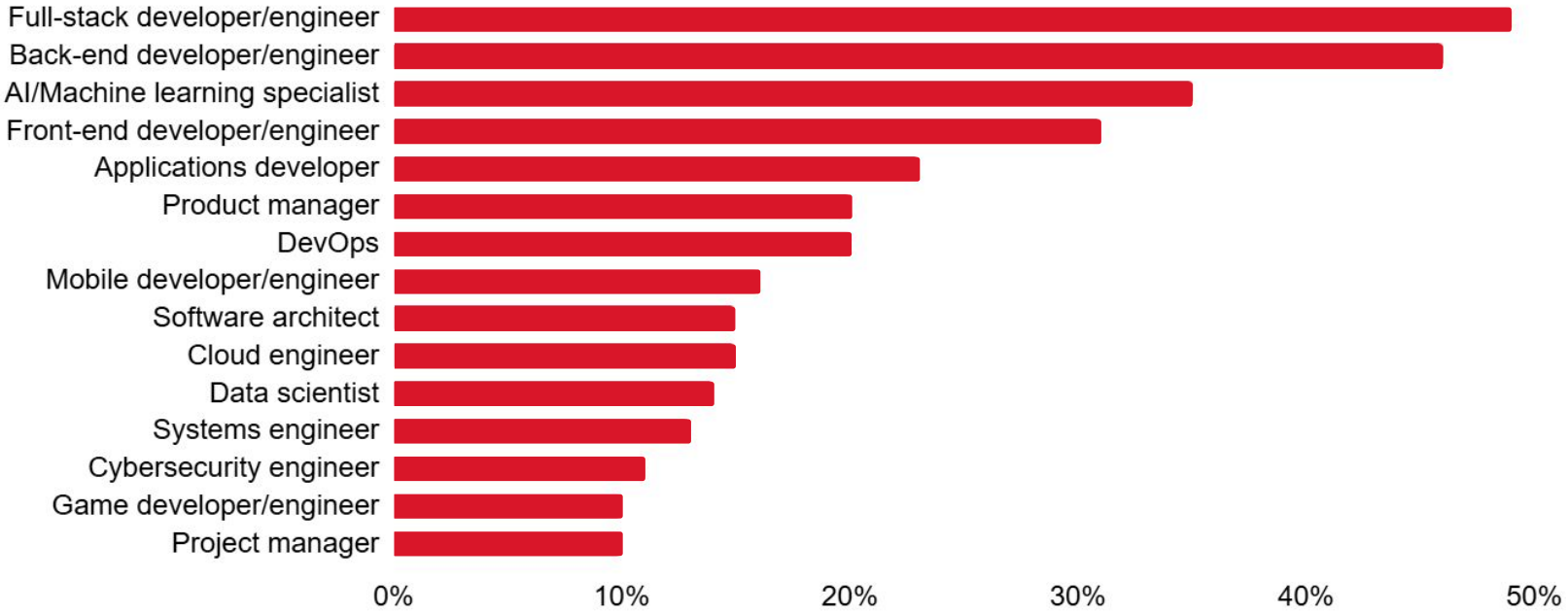
Rodney Walden, Head of Global Talent Acquisition, McAfee

C.

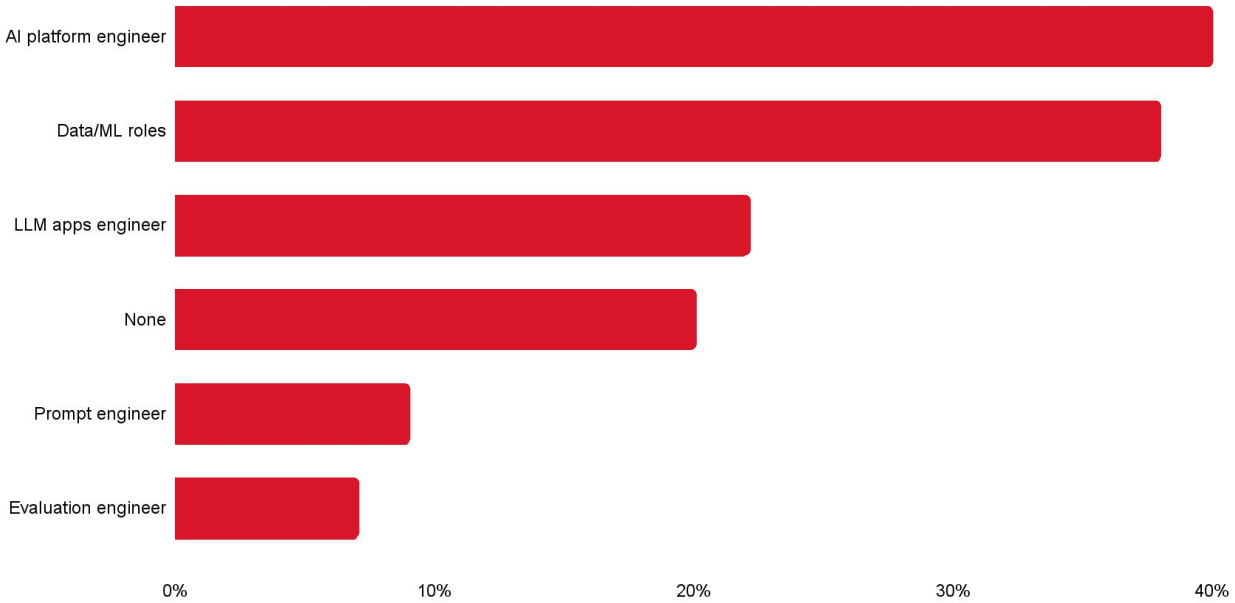
Roles in Demand in 2026

One of the biggest shifts from last year's survey to the 2026 results is the jump in hiring budgets among recruiters and hiring leaders.

Which technical positions are you looking to hire for in 2026?

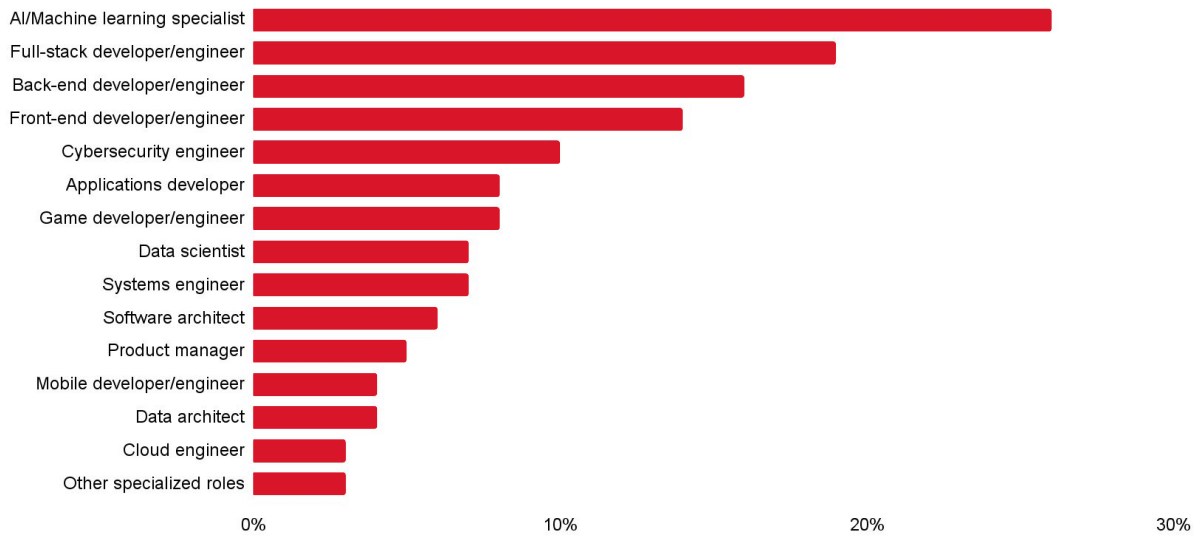


What are your top hiring goals for 2026?



However, recruiters and hiring teams acknowledge the challenges in hiring for 2026. The toughest roles to fill in 2026 are fairly universal, with AI/ML specialists and full-stack developers taking the top spots.

Which positions do you think you'll struggle to recruit for in 2026?



AI/ML roles were the most challenging to faill in 2025 (with 22% of recruiters weighing in on this role). The talent shortage for these roles may be worsening, not improving.

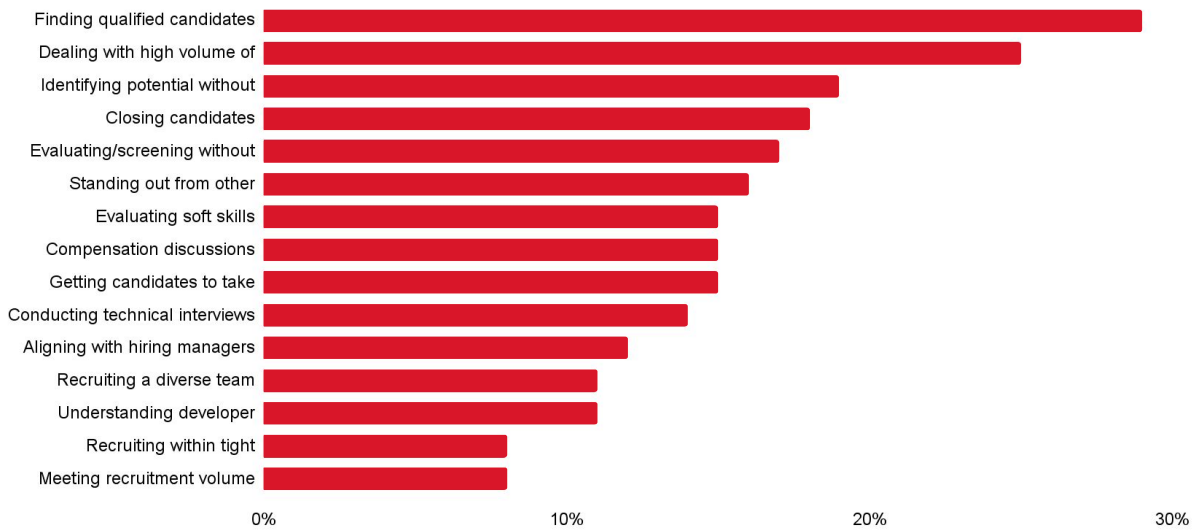
Up to 3 selections

d.

Top Recruiting Challenges in 2026

Despite improvements in AI adoption and tooling, recruiters report that core challenges persist.

What are your main challenges when recruiting for technical roles?



Up to 3 selections

How does this compare to 2025?

- 2025: Finding qualified candidates (48%), Identifying potential (28%), Evaluating soft skills (26%)
- 2026: Finding qualified remains #1 (29%), but volume management (25%) and closing (18%) rise in prominence

While finding qualified candidates remains the top challenge this year, volume management has emerged as a close second. This is likely due to the explosion of AI-facilitated job applications, which has spiked volume across organizations.

AI in Recruiting Operations

a. Recruiter Outlook on GenAI Tools

b. Recruiting Professionals Desire to Use AI Tools Even More

c. Training on AI Tools and Use Has Improved – Significantly

d. The Perceived and Realized Benefits of AI Don't Always Align

e. AI Tools in Practice

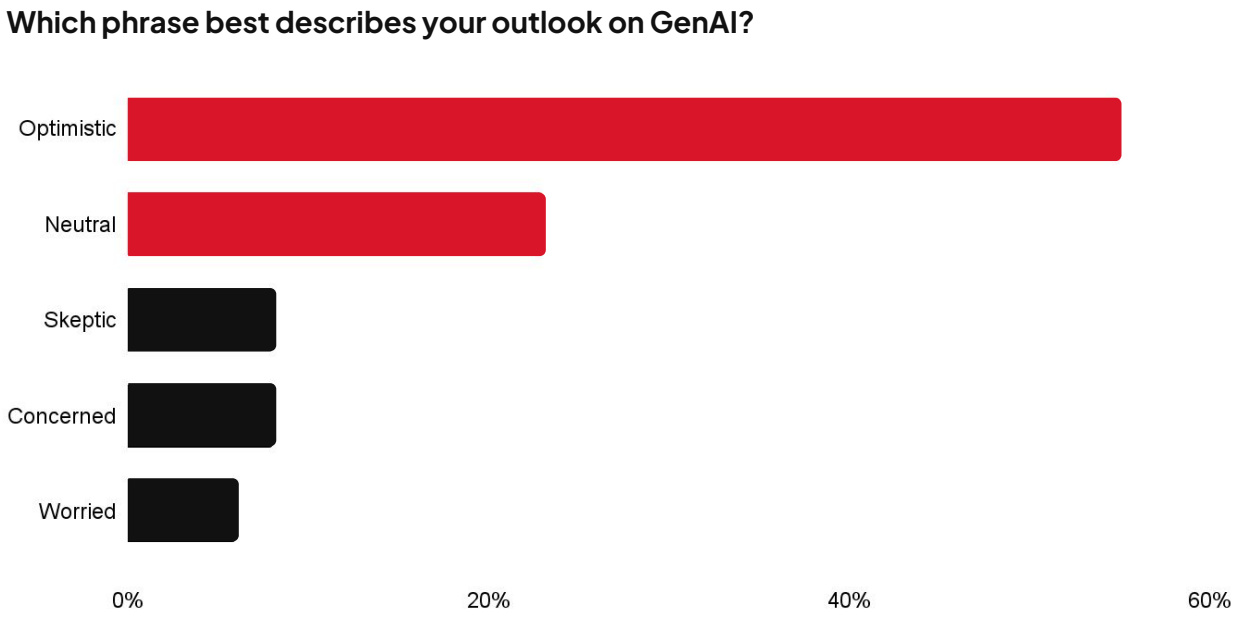
Recruiters report that they are increasingly adopting AI tools in their daily workflows, and training gaps are closing.

a.

Recruiter Outlook on GenAI Tools

Recruiter sentiment toward AI has shifted positive.

Which phrase describes your outlook on GenAI?



Optimism grows:

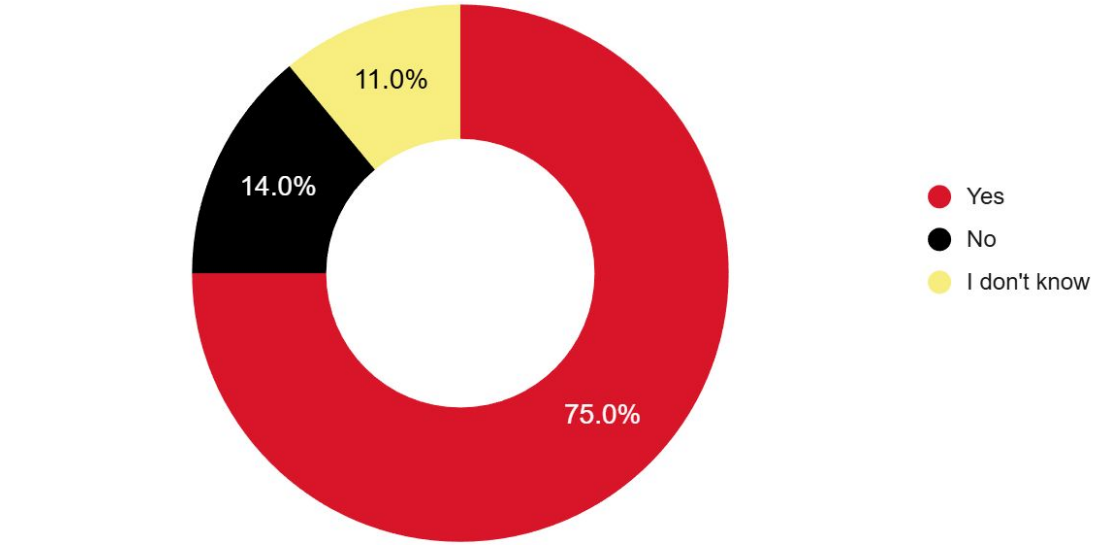
- 2025: 43% optimistic
- 2026: 55% optimistic
- Change: +12 percentage points

b.

Recruiting Professionals Desire to Use AI Tools Even More

Recruiters aren't just optimistic – they reported that they want to incorporate more AI solutions in their daily workflows.

Would you like to use more AI as part of your job?



Desire Comparison

- 2025: 65% want more AI
- 2026: 75% want more AI
- Change: +10 percentage points

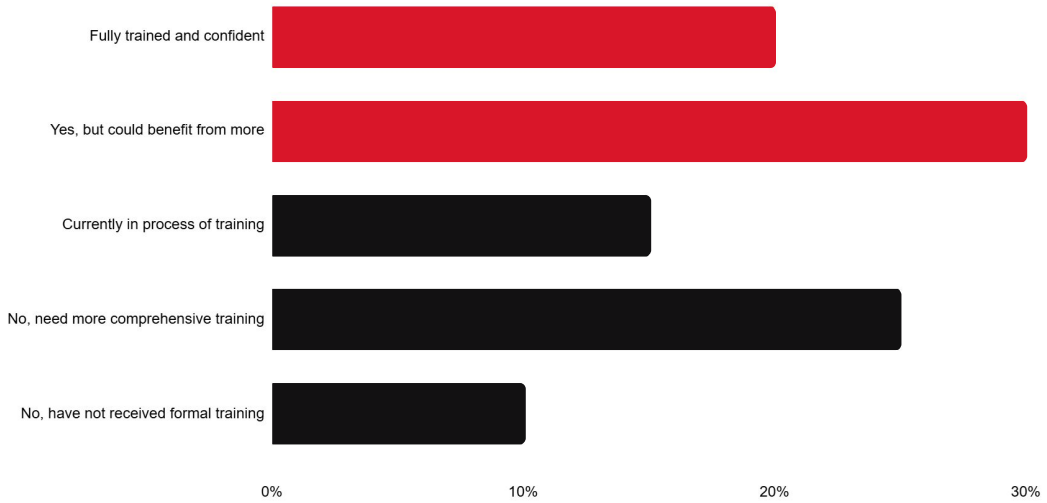
C.

Training on AI Tools and Use Has Improved – Significantly

Recruiters also reported significant progress in AI knowledge and training among their teams.

Do you feel your recruitment team is properly trained to use GenAI?

Do you feel your recruitment team is trained to use GenAI?



Training Gap Closes

Total undertrained (need more + no training):

- 2025: 57% undertrained
- 2026: 35% undertrained
- Improvement: -22 percentage points

The AI training gap has improved significantly year over year (22%). However, this lags the broader market. According to the BCG AT at Work Report 2025, 72% of professionals are regular users of AI at work, but just 36% feel they are properly trained. That gap between usage and training signals a challenge and opportunity. Professionals are learning on the job, but companies that provide structured enablement could more effectively attract and retain talent.

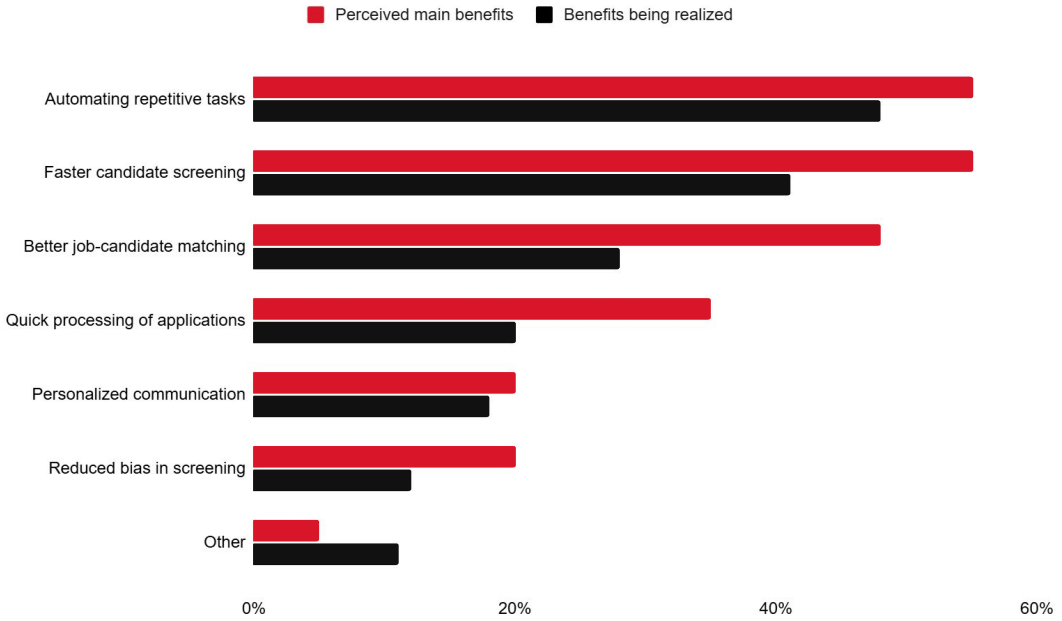
d.

The Perceived and Realized Benefits of AI Don’t Always Align

When we asked recruiting professionals about the benefits they perceive from AI and the benefits they’re actually realizing, we noticed a gap. This reveals where expectations are currently exceeding reality.

What are the perceived benefits of AI in recruitment? What are the benefits of AI that you're actually realizing?

What are the perceived vs. actual benefits of AI in recruitment?



AI is delivering close to expectations in two key areas: automating repetitive tasks (55% of survey respondents perceive a benefit, while 48% realize a benefit) and faster candidate screening (55% of those surveyed perceive a benefit, and 41% realize a benefit).

However, AI is falling short of expectations in other areas, including better job candidate matching (a 20% gap between perception and reality), quick processing of candidates (a 15% gap), and reduced bias (an 8% gap).

Overall, these results suggest that advanced use cases for AI in recruiting need more effective implementation, better tools, or recalibrated expectations.

> At Cresta, talent acquisition teams still wrestled with the same bottleneck many recruiting leaders face — limited insight from resumes forced manual gatekeeping at the front of the funnel, even with tooling on hand. As Cresta's VP of Engineering described it, "Before using CoderPad Screen, the Cresta talent acquisition team had to carefully review each and every resume to determine who should be passed along to the engineering team for an interview… Without much context on the candidate's actual abilities, TA leaders had to make the fast decision of moving a candidate forward or not.

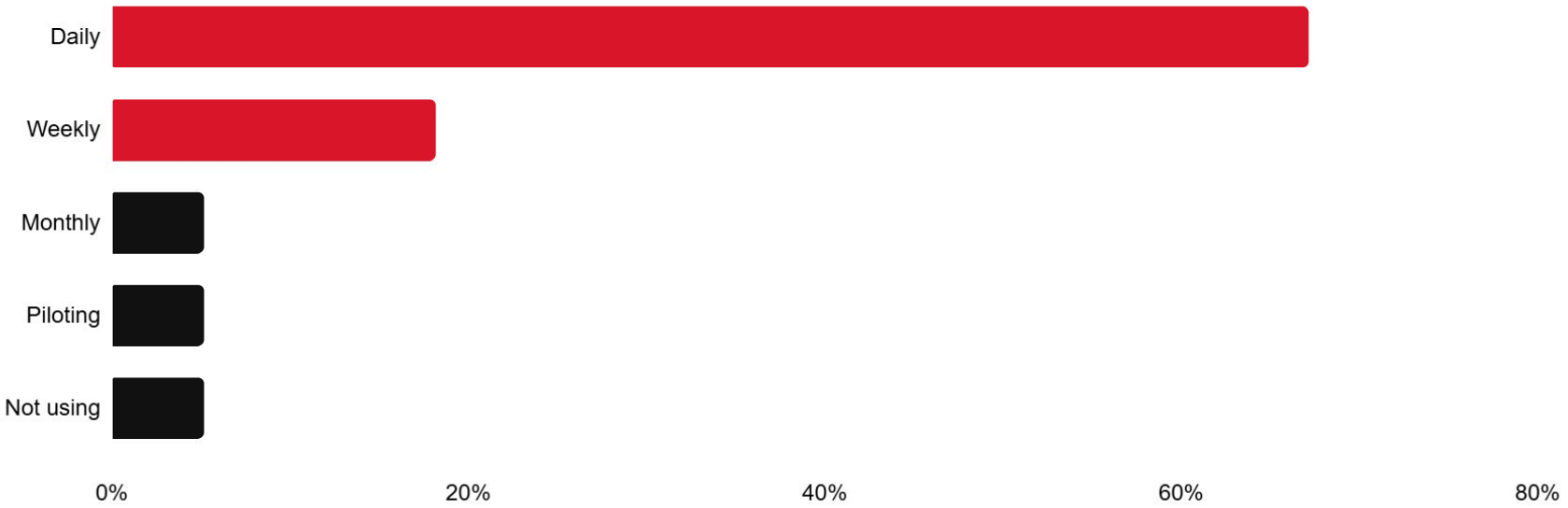
Xiangru, VP Engineering, Cresta

e.

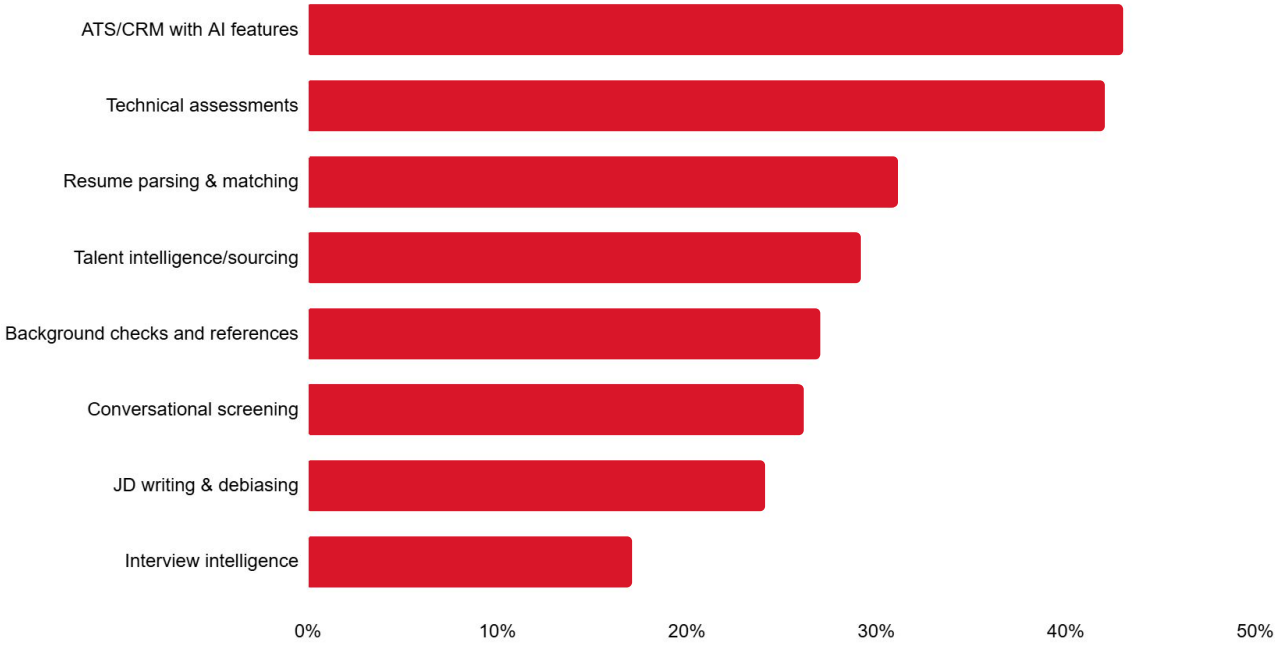
AI Tools in Practice

Two-thirds of recruiters are using AI tools every day – they've become embedded in daily workflows.

How often are you using AI tools?



Which tools are you using in talent acquisition?



The recruiting tech stack is multi-faceted, with AI playing a role in multiple stages. The ATS/CRM is central to the function, along with technical assessments. Beyond those, teams are building their stacks based on specific objectives and hiring goals.

Survey Demographics

The State of Tech Hiring survey for 2026 collected responses from approximately 650 participants globally across two key stakeholders in the technical hiring process:

1. **Developers and technical professionals**
2. Recruiters and hiring managers.

Developer and technical professional profile

Our sample set of developers represents a broad spectrum of experience levels and career stages. Nearly half of our developer respondents (47%) are early-career professionals with 0–3 years of experience. Mid-career developers with 4–9 years of experience comprised 14% of our respondents, and more senior professionals with 10+ years of experience represented 18% of participants. The largest cohorts of developers surveyed were full-stack and back-end engineers.

Survey Demographics

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1. Developers and technical professionals
2. **Recruiters and hiring managers.**

Recruiter and hiring manager profile

Recruiters and hiring managers represented a range of roles and companies. Tech leads were the largest cohort at 22%, followed by talent acquisition and recruitment managers (18%) and developers involved in hiring (17%).

Additionally, the organizations represented ranged from large enterprises (24% of survey respondents), mid-sized companies (24%), small companies with 10–49 employees (18%), and organizations with 250–999 employees (13%). Smaller organizations and self-employed recruiting consultants were represented in the sample in single digit percentages.

Let the skills say it all.