



WHAT CANDIDATES WANT 2025



WGCW INTRODUCTION

In 2025, the US labor market experienced a notable slowdown in hiring, making it the weakest year of job growth since 2020. As a result, workers are staying in their roles out of necessity rather than choice. Our research for 2025 finds that a majority of the professionals we surveyed plan to look for a job with better pay within the next six months, a sentiment reflecting restricted labor mobility in a weakened market. So when economic conditions eventually recover, are employers at risk of losing critical talent?

The answer depends on a company's talent strategy. While compensation is the most important factor influencing employment choice, our survey of 570 North American engineers,

technical, and professional talent revealed additional considerations organizations should weigh when assessing their employee value proposition. These include a desire for a better work-life balance, career progression opportunities, and a company culture that aligns with candidates' values and priorities. An especially important requirement is work flexibility, and our research found that after salaries and benefits, remote and hybrid schedules are the most important considerations when choosing a new role.

Creating a better talent experience should be a priority for all human capital leaders. This effort needs to include pre-hire and post-

employment touchpoints. Our data shows that online job boards continue to be the most preferred way for searching new roles, followed by social media, a channel for which a company's brand is critical to its attraction strategy. A positive Glassdoor rating or a poor experience shared on reddit can make all the difference in a candidate's choice. Organizations should take steps to strengthen their social media presence and plan to better attract talent through the way they recruit. Pay or a salary range should always be included in a job posting, but details around responsibilities, skills, and experience are key to reaching a higher level of qualified candidates. Our survey showed that during

the application process, most prefer to be contacted through email, and a drawn-out hiring process will negatively impact people's employment decision. Candidates want no more than two stages of interviews before a decision is made.

Bartech Staffing's research indicates a strong desire among workers to find better paying jobs with more flexibility in the near future. Knowing this, employers can take steps to minimize voluntary attrition while enhancing attraction strategy. Companies should view today's softer labor market as an opportunity to accelerate these initiatives in preparation for higher demand in 2025. Read on for actionable insights that will improve your workforce strategy.



HEADLINE RESULTS

Looking for Work



71%

expect to look for a new role in the next 12 months, with...

57%

expect to look within the next 6 months

Satisfaction at Work



51%

say they are satisfied with their current position



22%

state that they are dissatisfied with their current position

Working Location



22%

are fully remote



29%

are hybrid



40%

are fully onsite

HEADLINE RESULTS

Looking for a New Role

Reasons for looking and **what matters most**



want higher pay



prioritize salary



want a better work-life balance



prioritize benefits



want to advance their career



prioritize opportunities for career advancement

Recruitment Process

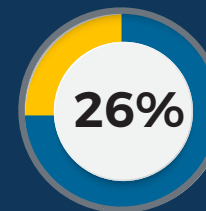


63% believe 2 stages of interviews are acceptable

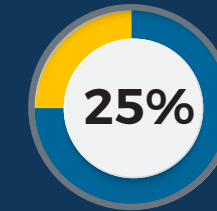


55% prefer recruiters use email to initiate contact

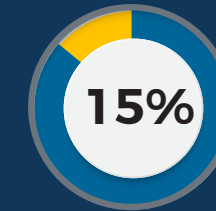
How candidates research an organization before applying:



turn to employee reviews



assess company culture and values



weigh organizational financial health

HEADLINE RESULTS

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)



54%

believe the industry is becoming more diverse and inclusive

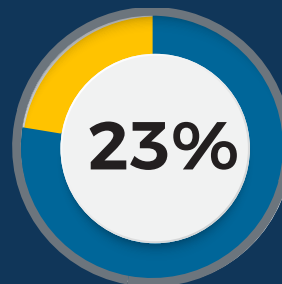
Artificial Intelligence

AI's impact on the way we work



30%

think AI will improve task efficiency



think it will lead to layoffs





DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Satisfaction at Work

The **youngest generation** is only slightly more satisfied with their role than those 25 and older



63%

are currently in the job market



54%

of those under 25 are satisfied with their current role

The highest percentage of those expecting to look for work are those **55+**



76%

expect to look for a new role in the next 12 months



There was no notable differentiation in the current employment satisfaction level between genders.

Demographic Data: Working Model



67%

have worked as a contractor before



21%

have never worked as a contractor before but are interested

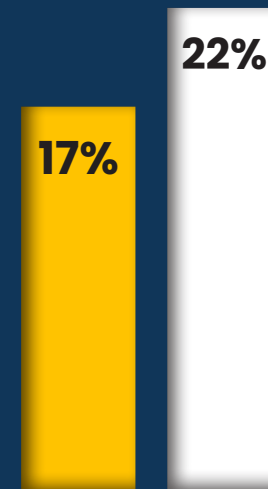


12%

have little to no interest in contracting work

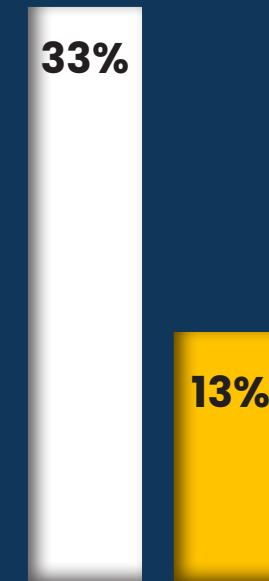
Working Location

Although 40% are **fully onsite**, older talent are more likely to be **fully remote**



17% of those under 25 are fully remote vs. 22% for those 55+

More women are fully remote (33%) than men (13%)



Men are slightly more likely to have hybrid schedules (32%) than women (25%)



Demographic Data: Recruitment Process

Most prefer a speedy but thorough interview process

02 Stage Interview:



say two stages are acceptable

03 Stage Interview:



say three stages are acceptable

01 Stage Interview:



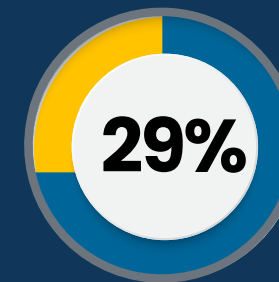
say one stage is acceptable

All age groups say two stages are optimal, however...



...slightly more candidates who are **25-44** think a **three-stage interview process** is acceptable

Younger candidates want the **recruitment process** to be shorter than older candidates



of those under 25 think one stage is preferable vs. an average of 12% among those 25 and older



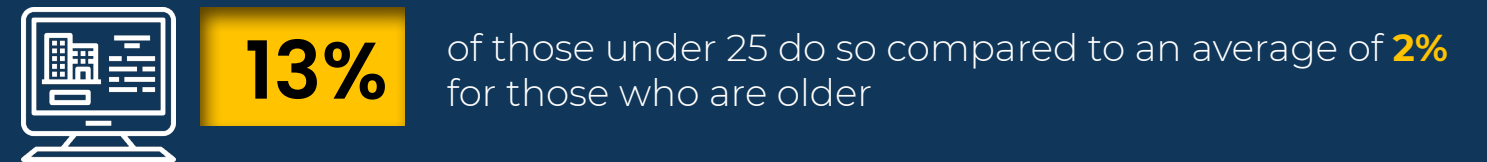
Demographic Data: Recruitment Process

We asked candidates where they first go to when looking for a **new role**:



Online job boards are most preferred among all survey respondents, however, younger candidates leverage social media the most.

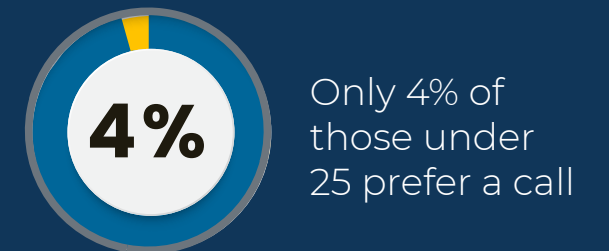
Although researching **company websites** came in third highest, candidates 25 and under look to their personal networks more than the older candidates.



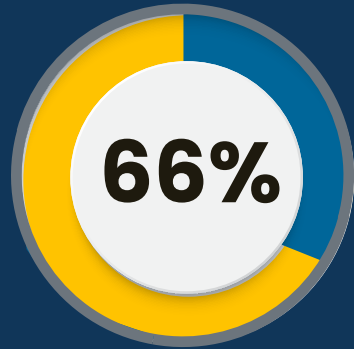
Preferred primary first contact from recruiters:



Phone contact is more preferred among older generations



Demographic **Data:** Recruitment Process



When asked how the **recruitment process can improve**, most candidates (66%) cited enhanced quality and speed of communication.

Surprisingly, only 6% candidates want enhanced DE&I candidate selection



33% want faster response times and shorter hiring cycles



34% want more transparency and communication



When researching potential employers,



26% of candidates rely on employee reviews



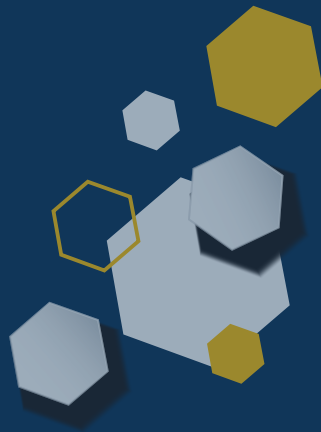
Close behind,



25% prioritize the company culture and values



15% consider the company's financial health as an essential factor

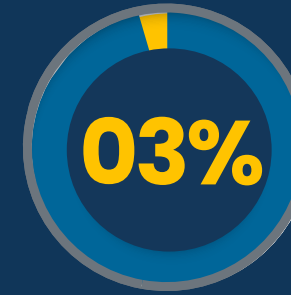


Demographic Data: Priorities

What matters most when **looking for roles**



All age groups cited **salary and benefits** as the top two factors, respectively, when looking for a new role.



Employer brand and reputation were two of the lowest-ranking factors, with just 3% considering these as priorities.

Flexible working matters more to women than men:



45%

25%

The **opportunity for career advancement** is important, with men ranking it higher than women.



39%

29%



Work-life balance

22% under 45 rank it high priority

15% over 45 say it matters



Demographic Data: DE&I Impact

When asked if their industry is becoming increasingly **diverse and inclusive**:



54% agree

Younger candidates are more adamant, with **68%** of those under 35 in agreement, while **49%** of older peers say the same.

Some of the **changes candidates have observed** in the past year include:



14%

of women candidates disagree that DE&I is advancing



9%

of male candidates disagreed that DE&I is advancing

33%

say their companies are making an effort to **increase** diversity

23%

of candidates have **received DE&I training**

22%

say hiring processes have become **more diverse**



Demographic Data: Artificial Intelligence

Perception of **AI's impact on their role** over the next 12 months.



30%

believe AI will improve task efficiencies



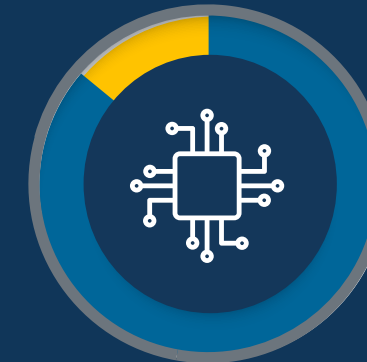
23%

believe AI will create layoffs



28%

believe AI will improve data analytics



15%

believe AI will fill skills gaps



ABOUT **BARTECH STAFFING**

 **Bartech Staffing**

POWERED BY  Impellam Group



We are Bartech Staffing, a recruiting innovator and premier staffing firm. We serve as a strategic partner to domestic, global, and multinational companies that hire engineering, technical, and professional talent.

Bartech's approach is centered on building strong, personalized relationships with both our clients and candidates. We get to know your specific hiring needs and use this knowledge to create successful connections that empower growth and success.

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