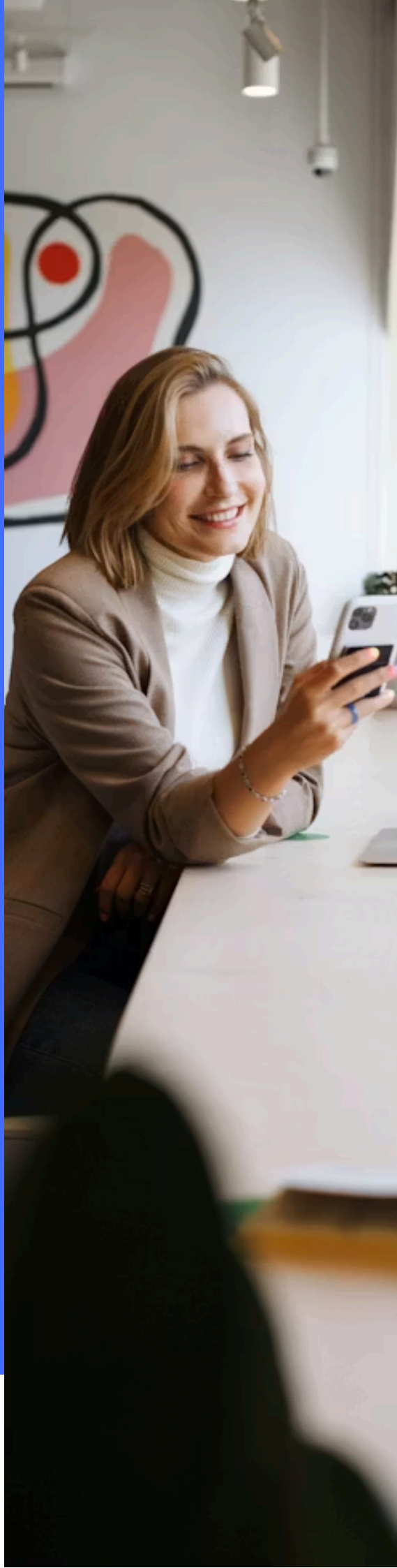
2026 State of Talent Acquisition Report

Insights from 244 Talent Teams across Australia & New Zealand

atcevent.com



Delivered in partnership with

eightfold.ai greenhouse

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Introduction

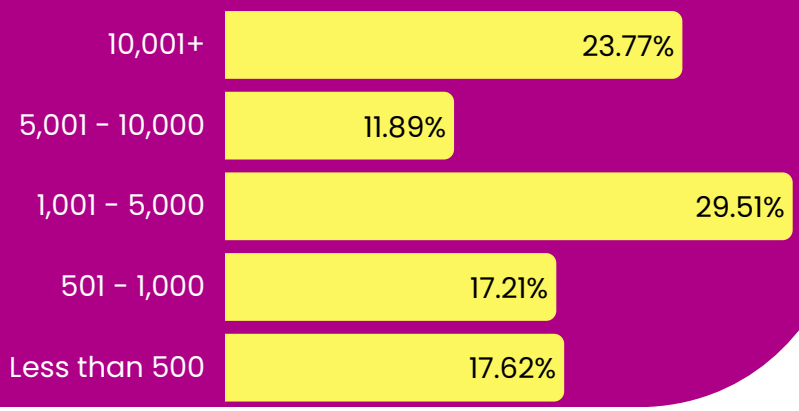
The ATC Events & Media 2026 State of Talent Acquisition Survey launched in March 2026 in partnership with Greenhouse and Eightfold. We received more than 400 responses. Where multiple responses were received from the same organisation, we included only the most senior and complete response.

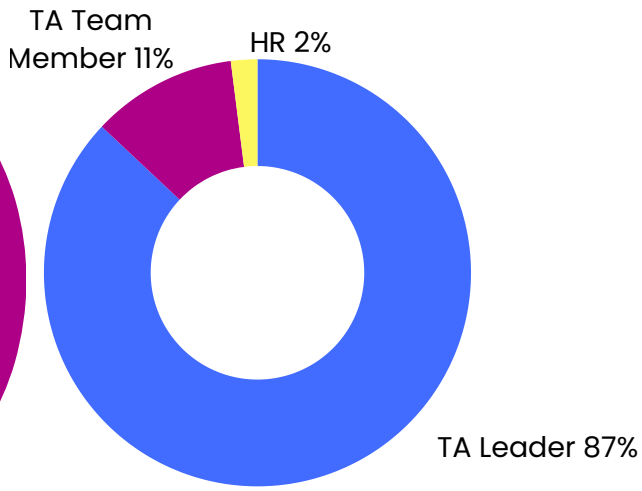
This report draws on responses from 244 Talent Functions across Australia and New Zealand. It provides insight into Talent Strategy Effectiveness, Process Maturity, Candidate Fraud Readiness, AI Adoption, and how the Recruiter role and TA team composition are expected to change.

PwC's 2025 Global CEO Survey found that 42% of CEOs believe their organisation will not remain viable over the next decade without reinvention. At the same time, 38% have expanded into new industries, while more than half report productivity improvements from generative AI.

This report examines how Talent Functions are responding to that need for reinvention and provides benchmark data against which you can assess your own function. We hope you find it valuable.

Organisation Size





A total of

244 Talent Teams

from all around Australia & New Zealand were included in this report.



Jo Vohland

Director, ATC Events & Media



Key Finding #1

Redundancies, Hiring Demand and TA Team Size

The story here is not one of expansion or contraction, but of selective transformation. Businesses are restructuring parts of the organisation while maintaining recruitment capacity to support new priorities.

A few things stood out when we looked at the data for the organisations that expected hiring demand to decline.

- 63.2% of the organisations that selected automation as a key reason people were made redundant across the organisation also expect hiring demand to decrease in 2026.
- Organisations that made redundancies to redistribute funds to Digital/AI Transformation also leaned towards lower hiring, with 50.0% expecting reduced recruitment activity.
- Offshoring followed a similar pattern, with 50.0% expecting hiring to decline.

Overall, it's clear that companies are changing where they deploy their people, not simply how many people they employ as they reshape their organisations.

Importantly, this transformation is not yet flowing through to Talent Acquisition itself, where 75.72% of TA teams surveyed expect to either maintain their team size or grow in 2026.

Keep reading...

Organisation-wide Redundancies

In the last 12-18 months, what caused your Organisation to make redundancies? Tick the major factors only.

Respondents could select multiple reasons; percentages do not total 100%.

	#Orgs	%Orgs
• Business Restructuring/Operating Model change	186	76.2%
• End of major projects or programs	51	20.9%
• No roles redundant across the entire business	36	14.8%
• Downturn in business	33	13.5%
• We offshored work	22	9.0%
• Automation	19	7.8%
• Redistributing funds to Digital/AI transformation	16	6.6%
• Other	10	4.1%

TA Team Size - Expanding or Contracting?

Are you expecting any changes to your TA Team size in the next 12 months?

- STABLE: No change to TA team size expected **54.7%**
- GROWING: Growing the size of the TA team **21.0%**
- CONTRACTING: Slight reduction **16.9%** and Sizeable Reduction **3.3%**
- UNSURE: **4.1%**

Hiring Demand - Growth or Decline?

In 2026, what is your organisation's hiring intention compared to 2025?





Key Finding #2

Talent In Transition

Talent Leaders largely expect AI to reshape how their teams operate rather than replace them, with 45% anticipating teams of a similar size supported by new AI orchestration capabilities, while only 7% expect significant headcount reductions. At the same time, recruiters themselves are expected to change substantially over the next five years, with an average expected change rating of 6.9/10, yet organisational readiness to develop those new capabilities lags behind at just 5.4/10.

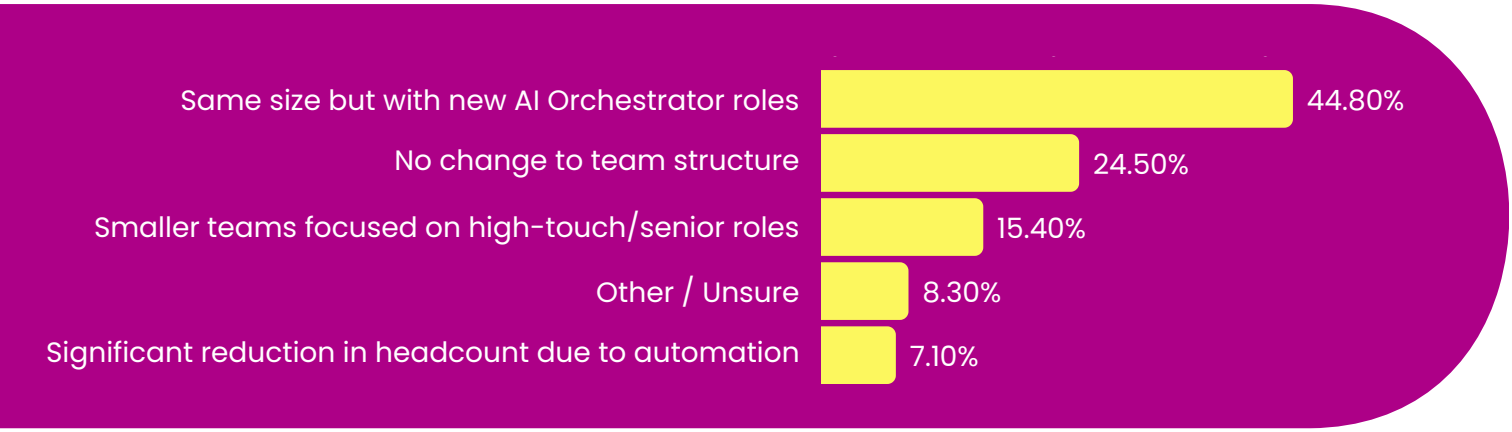
Across the profession, the focus is shifting beyond recruitment execution towards broader workforce value. Talent Advisory (73%), Automation & AI (68%), and Skills Based Organisations (67%) are now mainstream priorities, while task-level work design remains comparatively immature despite being foundational to deciding what should be done by people, AI, or both. Importantly, low focus on Generative AI training should not automatically be interpreted as low maturity, with many organisations reporting they have already completed foundational prompting capability.

The capability gap is becoming clearer. High-performing TA functions are expected to spend less time on administration and more time influencing workforce decisions, building stakeholder partnerships, strengthening hiring manager capability, and bringing talent intelligence into business strategy. The challenge for Talent Leaders is no longer whether Recruiters will evolve, but whether capability development will keep pace with the expanding remit of the function.

Keep reading...

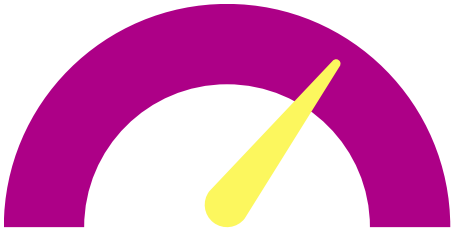
TA Team Composition

How do you expect the rise of AI agents to change the composition of your TA team by 2028?



Preparing Recruiters for the Future

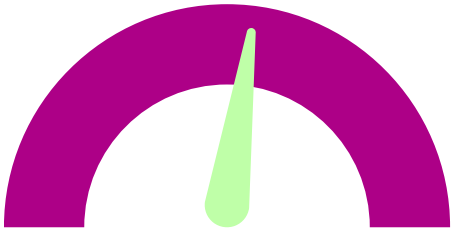
How much do you anticipate the role of the Recruiter changing over the next 5 years?



Average: 6.9

Recruiter Role Change

How prepared are your development plans to help Recruiters with these new skills and responsibilities?



Average: 5.4

Recruiter Development Plan





"There is a constant demand for improvement and evolution. Our TA team is training on AI prompt stacking currently."

54%

Have trained their Recruiters in Generative AI & Prompt training

22%

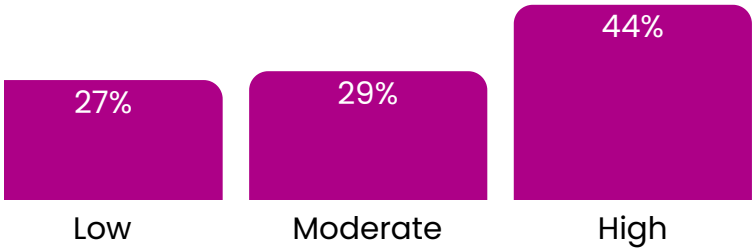
Have no plans to train their Recruiters in Generative AI & Prompting, leaving it to the individual to invest in themselves.

Focus Areas

On a scale of 1-10, what is your HR/Talent Team's current focus?
(1 = low focus / 5=moderate focus / 10= very high focus)

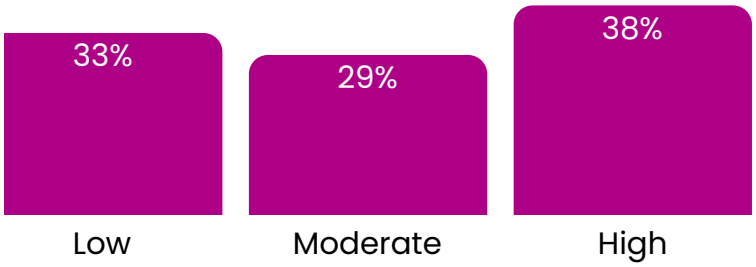
Talent Advisory

73% of TA Teams are building Talent Advisory Capability



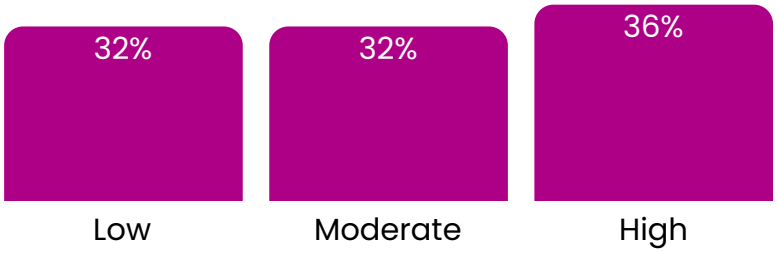
Skills Based Organisation

67% of TA Teams are currently on their Skills Journey



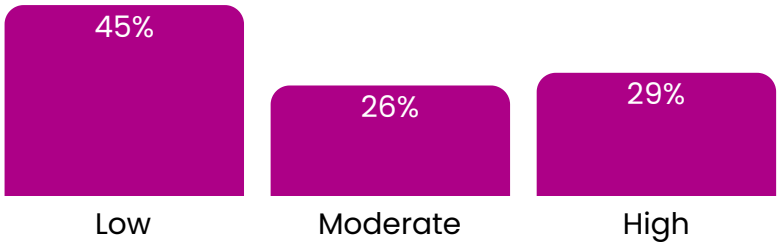
HR/TA Automation & AI

68% of TA Teams are currently on their Automation & AI Journey



Proper Use of GenAI & Prompting

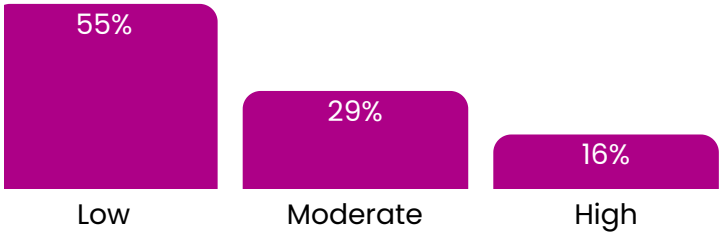
55% of TA Teams are currently on their Generative AI & Prompting Journey



🔎 Low focus does not mean disinterested; in fact, almost half of the low focus respondents rated this way as they have already rolled out and completed their GenAI and Prompt Training!

Breaking Roles Down to Task Level

45% of TA Teams are on their way to Understanding Work at the Task Level Journey



🚨 Breaking roles down into tasks doesn't mean automating everything. It creates the visibility needed to make deliberate decisions about which activities are best performed by people, AI, or both.

Stakeholder Relationships

On a scale of 1-10, how strong is the working relationship between the following Stakeholders?

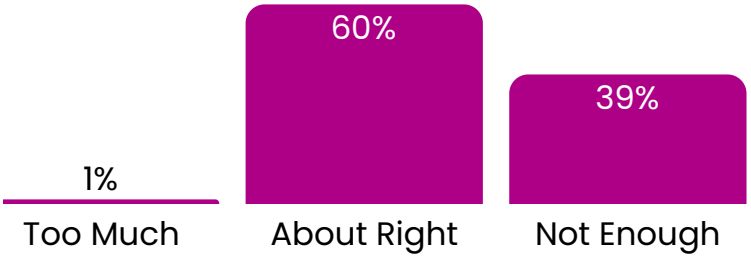




Strength of Stakeholder Relationships

Time Spent

39% of TA Teams are not spending enough time with Hiring Managers and Business Stakeholders.



The Work We Must Leave Behind

Stronger stakeholder relationships don't happen because Recruiters are told to spend more time with Hiring Managers. They happen because Talent Leaders deliberately create space for them to have higher-value conversations.

The first step is determining *the work we must leave behind.* AI, automation, and process redesign should progressively remove repetitive administration and transactional activities from the role. The capacity created should then be intentionally reinvested into work that strengthens business decision-making.

Key opportunities:

- Participate earlier in workforce planning and business planning discussions.
- Bring talent market intelligence, workforce data and hiring insights to business decisions.
- Establish structured intake conversations that define success before recruitment begins.
- Build Talent Boards and regular business reviews to create ongoing shared accountability.
- Develop Hiring Manager capability so ownership of hiring becomes a partnership rather than a hand-off.

However, more time with Hiring Managers does not automatically create better Talent Advisory. Recruiters can spend hours discussing vacancies yet never influence the workforce decisions that matter. Advisory is defined by the quality of the conversation, not the quantity of time spent together.

Talent Advisory

A Capability, Not a Destination

Rather than thinking of Talent Advisory as a destination, think of it as an operating capability that enables Talent Acquisition to contribute more strategically.

Whether an organisation is moving towards being a Skills Based Organisation, redesigning work for AI, strengthening workforce planning, or improving internal mobility, Talent Advisory is the way TA participates in those conversations, not the end goal itself.

> *Training alone does not create Talent Advisors. Talent Advisory requires a mindset shift, an operating model shift, a measurement shift, and a leadership expectation shift.*
>
> **TCS Insights**



Becoming a Talent Advisor

How to get started

TCS Insights, one of Australia's leading Talent Advisory consultancies, has identified seven core elements that help Talent Teams strengthen their advisory capability.

1. **Strong Business Partnership**
The Talent Partner has developed sufficient trust with the business to explore alternatives rather than simply accepting a hiring request. Strong relationships create the confidence to discuss Build, Buy, Borrow and Bot options rather than defaulting to recruitment.

2. **Changing Work**
Whether the skills needed to perform the work can or will be automated is becoming an increasingly important consideration. A combination of market intelligence, business knowledge and the smart use of AI can provide valuable clues about which elements of the work may be redesigned, augmented or automated over time.

3. **Market Intelligence**
Understanding the external demand and supply of talent, competitor activity and where your organisation's Employer Value Proposition sits in the market is essential. Market intelligence helps determine whether buying capability externally is realistic, whether alternative workforce options should be explored, and how competitive your organisation is likely to be.

4. **Time Pressure**
The speed at which the work needs to be delivered can significantly influence the workforce solution. Where the work is genuinely critical and needs to commence immediately, contingent capability or a hybrid approach may provide a better outcome than waiting for a permanent hire.

5. **Internal Capability**
Understanding the availability and visibility of existing capability within the organisation is becoming increasingly important. Remember, the solution may not be one employee; it may involve several people with adjacent skills and available capacity working together to deliver the required outcome.

6. **Commercial Constraints**
Budget limitations, headcount restrictions or competing investment priorities often influence which workforce options are viable. Increasingly, the question is not 'Who can we hire?' but rather 'How can we best invest the resources available to deliver the required outcome?'

7. **Start with the Work, Not the Role**
One of the biggest mindset shifts in Talent Advisory is changing the first question. Instead of asking "What role do we need to fill?" start by asking "What work needs to get done?" That simple shift opens the door to a much broader workforce discussion.

Recruitment may still prove to be the right answer. But equally, the best solution may involve developing existing capability, using contingent resources, partnering externally, redesigning the work or automating part of the process.

What will Separate High Performing Teams from the rest by 2028?

Heading Upstream

Ability to be involved in workforce planning as the number of employees reduce due to AI, I think TA will need to evolve and broaden their scope in terms of function.

Internal Mobility as first resort - utilising HRIS skills software to support mapping of internal talent to proactively move internal employees into new growth areas.

Moving towards total talent orchestration (rather than just filling open reqs).

Talent Advisory

By 2028, high-performing TA teams will distinguish themselves by shifting from transactional hiring to strategic talent intelligence, utilising autonomous AI agents to handle logistics while human recruiters focus exclusively on skills-first decision-making and high-touch relationship building.

Advisory - stepping outside the usual TA 'tasks' and being curious, leading by reports and data, and 'human' voice to be a partner within the business.

Automation & AI

AI adoption in WoW.

AI skills and AI-ready leadership, customer-centricity, strategic advisory focus, clear Human vs AI experience design.

Using AI to drive alignment between hiring managers and the candidate market. Using AI for insights and data analysis more regularly and quickly.

Human

The human element in the recruitment process. AI is no longer a differentiator; it is BAU and expected to be a key part of your process. High-quality human touch points will become more important than ever.

Radical personalization at scale rather than generic bot generated outreach messages.

The teams that really pull ahead by 2028 will be the ones who get the balance right between smart automation and genuine human connection. Automating all the repetitive, manual tasks will free us up to focus on the work that actually moves the needle. Building relationships, thinking critically, forecasting future skills, and aligning talent priorities with the business. We'll also see a big shift from reactive recruiting to proactive talent planning. The teams that can read what's coming, advise the business early, and stay ahead of skill needs will stand out. Another big differentiator will be doubling down on the candidate experience and knowing when to use technology to enhance it, and when to dial up the human touch. That blend will really help us stand out in a competitive talent market. Finally, taking true ownership of our EVP and activating it consistently across every touchpoint, not just about saying who we are but showing it in every interaction.

What TA Capability Uplift are you focused on right now?

Building AI fluency across the TA team, advancing Skills Based hiring frameworks, strengthening data analytics capabilities, and enhancing recruiter effectiveness as strategic business partners.

Storytelling using data and AI. Strategic partnerships across all business units and COE.

Influencing and challenging hiring managers and candidates - where we really add value

Implementing basics like scorecards & structured process to enabling AI use in our teams.

Strengthening hiring manager capability and accountability.

My 2026 TA capability focus is using human-centred design and design thinking to keep improving our processes with AI.

Building genuine coaching skills. TA over the past 10 or so years has become so transactional that we've lost the capability to do this well.

We are working a lot on process improvements around our recruitment process, especially the planning and sourcing component.

Effective and ethical use of AI.

TA is not a priority for EQL at the moment, unfortunately, so there is limited opportunity for team growth/skill uplift.

Data integrity and use of AI tools to support more proactive recruitment approaches.

How is the role of the Recruiter changing in your Organisation right now?

We now look after REM, Talent Management and Engagement. We will be picking up all Workforce and Resourcing Planning, including budget management and org design. To summarise, OD is being absorbed into our Talent and PEX function

Our recruiters are shifting from transactional hiring to strategic advisory roles, leveraging AI tools for sourcing and screening while focusing more on stakeholder management, workforce planning, and candidate experience.

Recruiters are delivery-focused, working as insight-led, consultative talent advisors, enabled by data, AI, and stronger business partnering. Stronger Consultative & Stakeholder Capability. End-to-End Ownership & Process Mastery. Career Depth & TA Craft Excellence

We are using AI to help streamline manual tasks, which frees up time for us to consult more and work on building trust with our stakeholders.

Due to system automations, we are offering our recruiters less admin and more time to spend with Hiring Leaders, candidates, and internal support teams. Reducing admin burden is a constant strategic driver.

The role is increasingly focused on shaping talent decisions across the business by influencing hiring leaders, improving capability, strengthening process discipline and ensuring a consistent, values-led approach to recruitment across the group. Balancing immediate hiring needs with longer-term workforce thinking, including internal mobility, succession, retention and future capability for growth. My role is becoming less about managing recruitment activity alone and more about leading talent strategy, elevating experience and helping the organisation make stronger people decisions overall.



Key Finding #3

Steady Progress & The Impact of Alignment

Talent Leaders reported stronger Talent Strategies, closer alignment, and improved delivery of talent since our 2025 report. While the overall direction is positive, the majority sit in the low performing or developing categories.

Organisations that reported highly effective Talent Strategies were substantially more likely to report having high Talent Delivery scores. This reinforces the idea that a Talent Strategy is more than a planning exercise. It provides clarity around priorities, improves decision-making and helps Talent Teams focus on the capabilities the business needs most.

Strong delivery may be the result of experienced recruiters, established processes or favourable market conditions. But as organisations face skills shortages, workforce redesign, AI adoption and increasing pressure to improve productivity, execution alone may not be enough.

The strongest-performing organisations appear to combine both. They are not only delivering talent successfully today, but doing so with a clear strategic framework that connects Talent priorities to business outcomes. The challenge for Talent Leaders is ensuring that delivery success is not dependent on effort alone.

Instead, it should be supported by a Talent Strategy that helps the organisation prepare for what comes next.

Keep reading...

Talent Strategy and Alignment

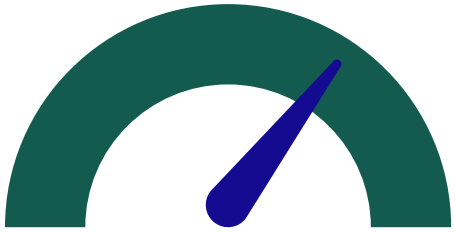
Average rating on a scale of 0-10



EFFECTIVENESS
Average Strength: 6.8

How effective do you consider your organisation's Talent Strategy to be?

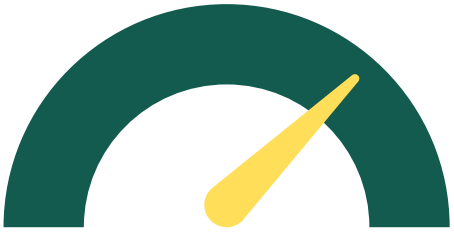
Up from 6.0/10 in 2025



ALIGNMENT
Average Strength: 6.9

Strength of alignment between the Talent Strategy and the Organisation's 5-year Business Strategy.

Up from 6.0/10 in 2025

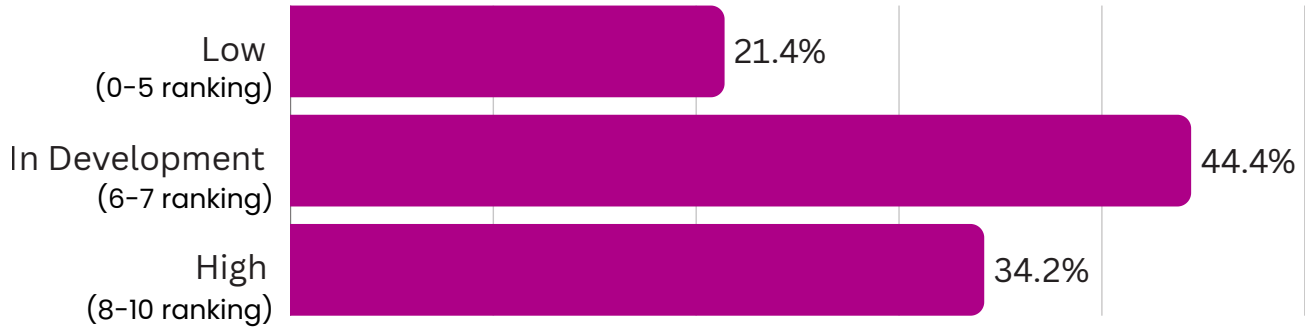


DELIVERY
Average Strength: 7.3

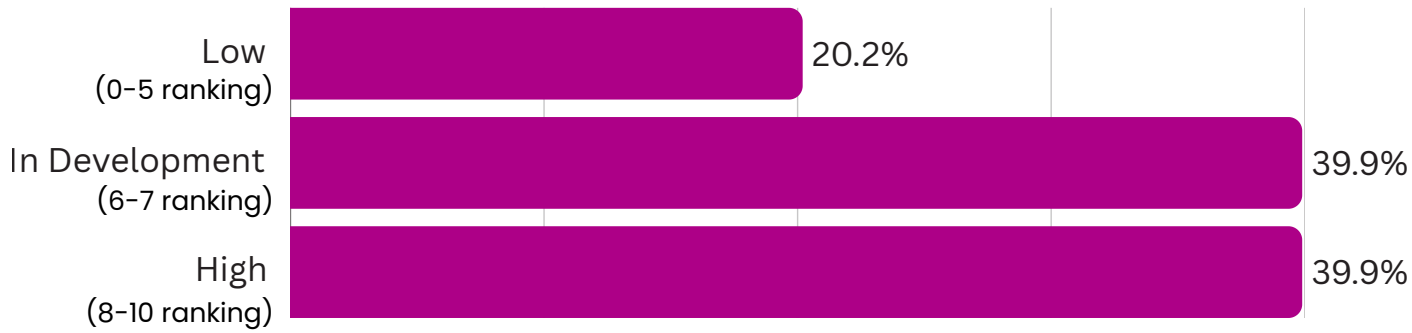
Past 12 months: Deliver the right talent at the right time in order for the business to win in its market?

Up from 7.1/10 in 2025

How effective do you consider your Organisation's Talent Strategy to be?



Strength of alignment between Talent Strategy and 5-year Business Strategy.





For the circa 20% of Functions that report low effectiveness and low alignment, they risk being caught in a reactive cycle, focused on filling today's orders with little to no visibility into where the business is heading in the next 5 years.

The Impact of Alignment

Alignment appears to be the bridge between strategy and execution. For organisations where their Talent Strategy is closely aligned to the 5-year Business Strategy, they report that their TA Strategy is more effective and they have greater ability to deliver the right talent at the right time.

Effectiveness of the Talent Strategy

Low Alignment
(0-5 ranking)

High Alignment
(8-10 ranking)



Organisations with a high alignment rate their Talent Strategy 44% more effective (7.6 vs 5.3). The data suggests that strategy quality is driven not just by having a Talent Strategy, but by ensuring it is directly connected to business priorities.

Ability to Deliver the Right Talent at the Right Time

Low Alignment
(0-5 ranking)

High Alignment
(8-10 ranking)



High alignment is also associated with stronger execution. Delivery capability increases from 6.6 to 7.6, suggesting that organisations with aligned strategies are better able to translate planning into hiring outcomes.



If your organisation changed its business strategy tomorrow, how quickly could your Talent Strategy adapt?



Key Finding #4

Process Maturity Builds Hiring Confidence

One of the clearest relationships in this year's survey is between structured hiring practices and confidence in quality hiring outcomes. We looked at two key questions:

1. Process Maturity against a range of key factors
2. Confidence that the current hiring process consistently delivers high-quality, long-term hires aligned to business goals.

We found:

🚫 89% of organisations are experiencing candidate fraud or misrepresentation

🚨 Only one-third of organisations report high confidence

✨ The higher the process maturity, the higher the hiring quality confidence.

While nearly half of organisations consider themselves high performers in delivering talent to the business, confidence that those hires will prove to be high-quality, long-term hires is noticeably lower. The findings suggest delivering talent and delivering the right talent are related, but not the same measure of success.

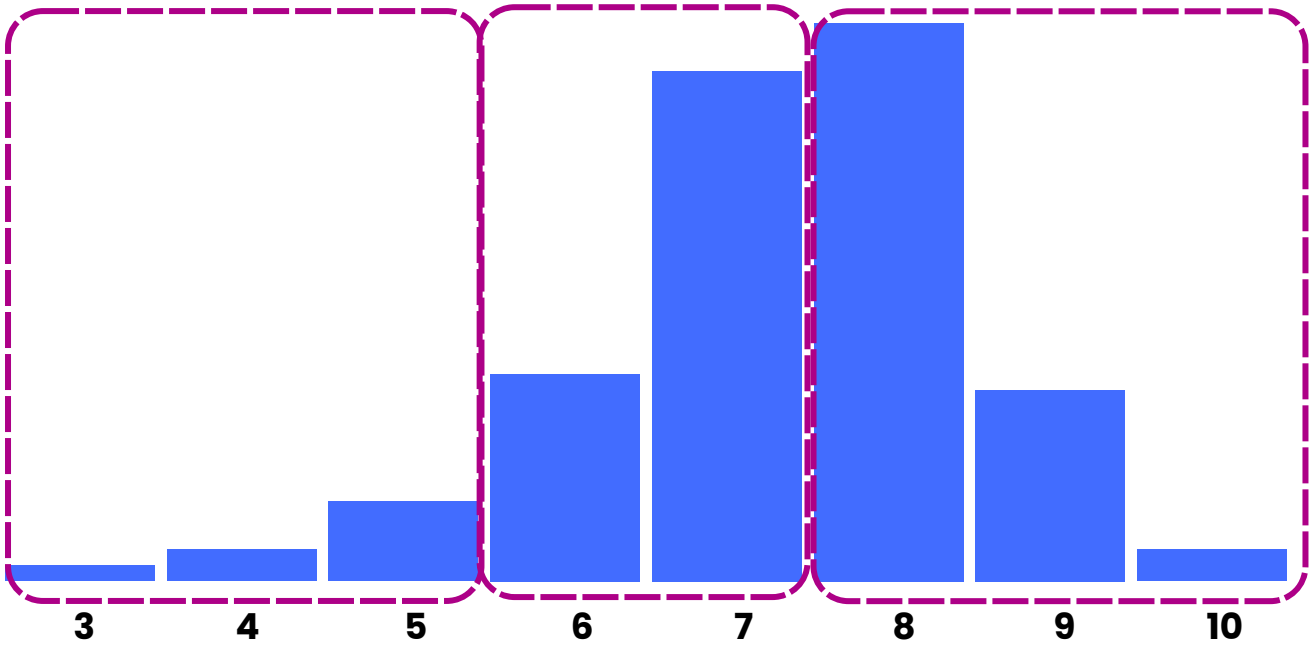
Candidate fraud adds another layer to this confidence equation. As misrepresentation becomes harder to detect, mature hiring processes need to do more than move candidates through efficiently; they must create enough evidence, verification, and governance for leaders to trust the hiring decision.

Keep reading...

Delivery

Question: Over the past 12 months, to what extent did your Talent Function deliver the right talent at the right time in order for the business to win in its market?
Average Result: 7.3/10

In the previous section, we reported that the average delivery rating was 7.3/10, but let's take a look at the spread of responses.



7.4% Low Performers **44.6% Developing** **48% High Performers**

2024-2025 Delivery Data: There is a small shift in the right direction from the 2025 survey, where 13% self-reported as low-performing, 46% developing, and 41% high-performing.



If your goal was to increase hiring confidence by one point over the next 12 months, where would you invest first?

Process Maturity

Question: Which of the following are consistently embedded in your hiring process? Select all that apply:

· Structured interview plans are defined before roles are approved
· Standardised scorecards are required for all interviews
· Hiring decisions are documented using evidence
· Interviewers are trained in evaluation criteria
· ATS provides insight beyond time-to-hire (e.g., pipeline quality, source effectiveness)
· Clear guidelines exist for when and how AI can be used in hiring

Here's how Talent Functions Responded:

• Low Process Maturity:	0–1 practices embedded	24.8%
• Developing Process Maturity:	2–4 practices embedded	60.3%
• High Process Maturity:	5–6 practices embedded	14.9%

Structured hiring remains a work in progress across much of the market.
85.1% of organisations have not yet reached High Process Maturity based on the core elements selected for the survey.

Quality Confidence

Question: How confident are you that your current hiring process consistently delivers high-quality, long-term hires aligned to business goals?
Average Result: 6.7/10

- Low Confidence (Higher Hiring Risk) 21.9%
- Developing Confidence (Moderate Hiring Risk) 43.0%
- High Confidence (Lower Hiring Risk) 35.1%

Process Maturity increases Hiring Quality Confidence



Given the strong relationship between process maturity and quality hiring confidence, this represents a significant opportunity. Increasing process maturity may be one of the most practical levers available to improve hiring consistency, reduce hiring risk and build confidence in long-term hiring outcomes.

Process Maturity increases Hiring Quality Confidence

The six practices measured on this page have a name: structured hiring.

1. Structured interview plans are defined before roles are approved
2. Standardised scorecards are required for all interviews
3. Hiring decisions are documented using evidence
4. Interviewers are trained in evaluation criteria
5. ATS provides insight beyond time-to-hire (e.g., pipeline quality, source effectiveness)
6. Clear guidelines exist for when and how AI can be used in hiring



They may look like separate process choices, but together they do something more important: they create a hiring process you can trust. The data shows why that matters. As process maturity rises, so does confidence in hiring quality, climbing from 5.97 for teams with low process maturity to 7.86 for those with high maturity. It is one of the clearest relationships in the report, and for Greenhouse it is the point.

Confidence in hiring is not instinct, market conditions or recruiter experience. It is a process outcome. Structured hiring helps teams generate better evidence, make more consistent decisions and reduce risk, especially now that AI sits on both sides of the hiring process.

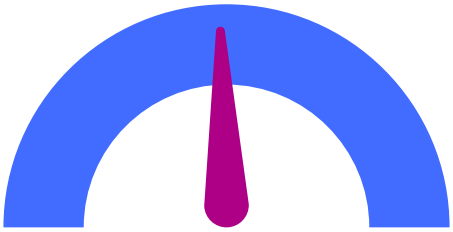
Most of the market is closer than it thinks. With 60.3% already embedding two to four practices, high maturity is often just one or two habits away:

- scorecards required for every interview, or
- clear guidelines for when and how AI is used in hiring

Embed them, and better hiring becomes repeatable rather than occasional. That is when confidence stops being aspirational and starts becoming operational.

Candidate Fraud

How prepared is your org to detect and prevent candidate fraud and misrepresentation today?



Average Preparedness: 4.9/10

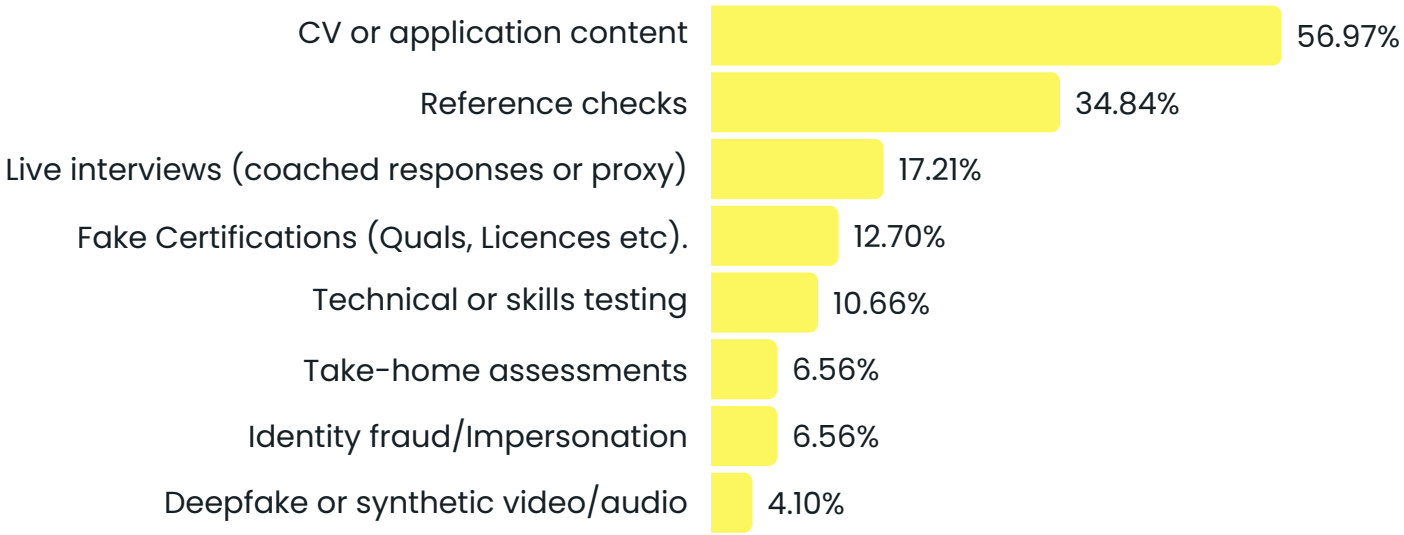
The larger the org size, the higher the preparedness.

- Less than 500 Employees: 4.57 average
- 10,000+ Employees: 5.34

Only two out of 244 organisations rated themselves as highly prepared (scores of 8 or 9 out of 10).

Where has candidate misrepresentation most commonly appeared?

Organisations are identifying misrepresentation at multiple stages of recruitment, suggesting every step of the hiring journey now requires stronger verification and governance.



We have had examples of candidates who have had their CVs specifically tailored to the job advert, yet didn't actually have any of the experience they claimed. During phone screens, we can often tell when candidates are using LLMs to answer questions, particularly background questions about the company.

AI use in an interview where the candidate can be seen typing and the AI responding out loud. Candidate using AI to generate a resume, including skills and experience they don't possess.

Fraudulent qualification and Falsified National Police Clearances.

We have seen a large rise in candidates attempting to complete references themselves, or using friends and family.

Different person turns up on joining date as to the one we interviewed.

Candidate Fraud continued...

Actions organisations have taken to reduce candidate fraud risk

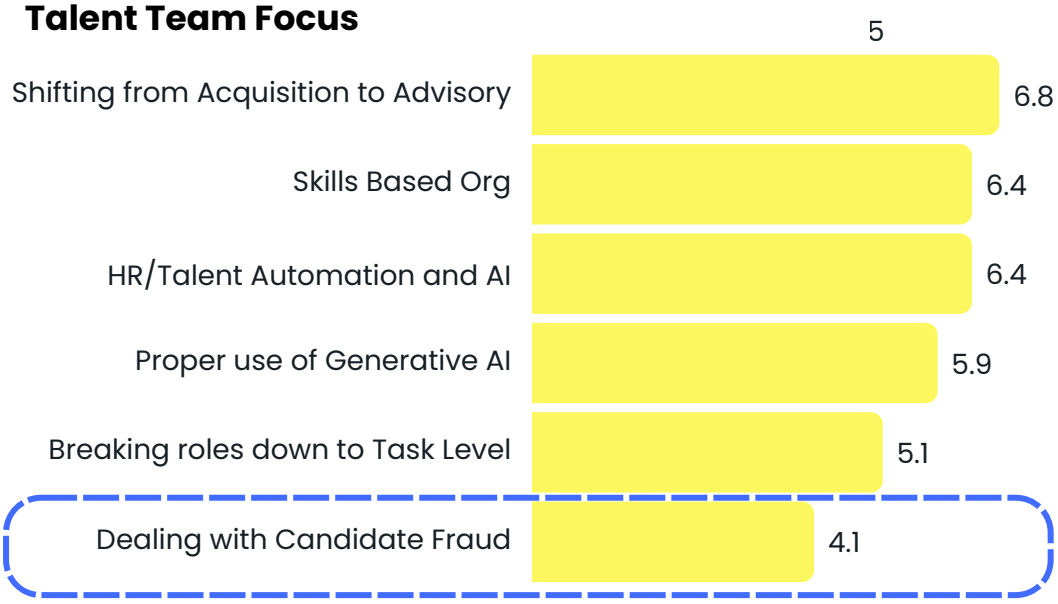
In order of most used to least used methods to reduce candidate fraud risk, organisations are deploying:

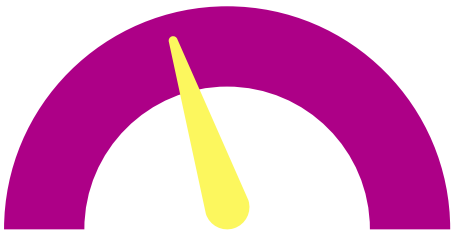
1. Identity verification steps
2. Hiring manager training
3. No formal action taken
4. Updated policy/governance framework
5. AI detection/plagiarism checks
6. Interview authentication safeguards

> *Face to face interviews are more or less mandatory*

> *No appointment is approved if only a remote assessment has been undertaken*

Talent Team Focus





Average: 4.1
Dealing with Candidate Fraud



89% of organisations are experiencing candidate fraud or misrepresentation, and while many have introduced tactical controls, only 27% have updated their policy or governance framework, suggesting most are responding to incidents rather than building a robust long-term capability.



If candidate fraud doubled next year, would your current hiring process detect it or simply process it faster?

Candidate Fraud continued...

To understand candidate fraud, it helps to separate how often something happens from how much it can hurt.

CV and reference embellishment top the list in the report, and while they can still create real hiring risk, they are easier to detect with a structured interview and a live skills assessment.

Now look at the bottom of the chart, because that is where the more serious threat emerges. Identity fraud and deepfakes are experienced by just over 10% of organisations in ANZ today. Globally, they are moving fast. In Greenhouse's survey of more than 4,100 job seekers, recruiters and hiring managers, 18% of hiring managers had already caught a candidate using deepfake technology in a video interview. Gartner projects that by 2028, one in four candidate profiles will be fake.

Unlike the embellishers, these candidates are not trying to do the job at all. They are after access: your systems, your funds, your customer data and your IP. That is a security problem wearing a hiring costume.

It would be easy to overlook this minority finding, but it is worth a second look. So is candidate fraud in general. Dealing with candidate fraud currently sits last on the priority list, while nine in ten organisations are already experiencing a form of it.

> *The teams that move early gain a genuine head start on protection, candidate trust and hiring speed. If sophisticated fraud has not reached you yet, consider yourself lucky rather than exempt, and build verification into your process and systems before it arrives.*
>
> *This is exactly the kind of challenge Greenhouse Real Talent is designed for. Reducing fraud, spam and misrepresentation while helping teams focus on real, qualified candidates and hire with greater confidence.*

greenhouse

More applicants, more noise, less certainty?

Hire for what's next.



Greenhouse is bringing new capabilities to help talent leaders across Australia and New Zealand cut through the noise, move faster and hire with confidence.

Model Context Protocol

A governed way to connect the AI tools your team already uses, such as Claude, ChatGPT and Gemini, so you can generate insights and build AI-powered workflows with permissioned access.

Voice AI

Structured, on-demand voice conversations at the first stage of hiring that capture richer candidate signal, reduce manual screening and give more applicants a fair chance to be heard.

Advanced analytics

Turn hiring data into clear, shareable summaries with suggested next steps, so teams move from analytics to confident decisions faster.

Real Talent

Triple layers of trust, with candidate fraud detection, identity verification and AI-powered candidate matching, so you can make more confident hiring decisions.

Request a demo →

greenhouse.io

For talent teams across APAC



Key Finding #5

The Skills Based Org Continues to Rise

For decades, organisations have been designed around jobs. Work was grouped into fixed roles, people were recruited against job descriptions, and career progression followed relatively predictable pathways. That model served organisations well in a more stable environment. Today, however, technological change, shifting business priorities, AI adoption, and changing workforce expectations expose its limitations.

We are now reimagining organisations as dynamic, skills based systems that orchestrate both human and artificial work, disrupting traditional structures in the process.

Keep reading...

Top Priorities

Of the 244 Talent Functions surveyed, we found:

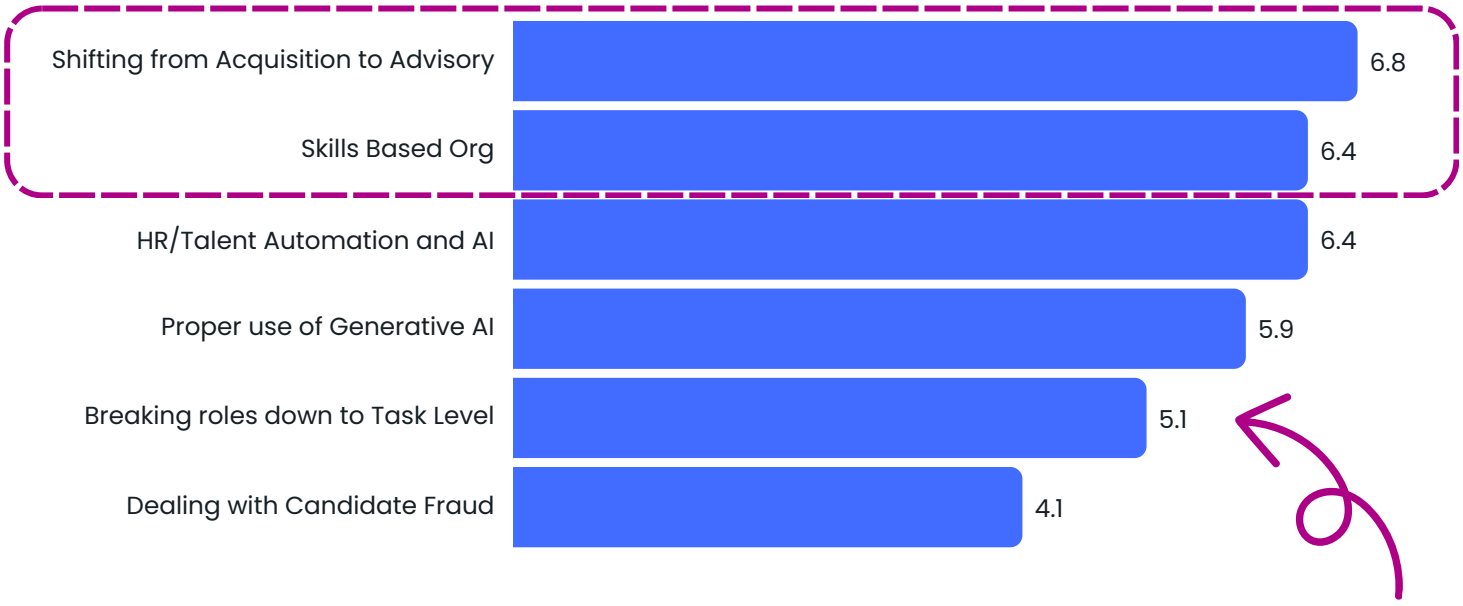
73%
have a strong focus on shifting to Talent Advisory

68%
have a strong focus on AI & Automation

67%
are focussed on Skills Based transformation

The strongest priorities all point in the same direction. Talent Teams are moving beyond filling vacancies towards helping their organisations make optimal workforce decisions: how work should be structured, where capability should come from, and how AI can complement human expertise. Together, they represent the foundations of a more adaptive Talent function.

HR/Talent Team's current focus on a scale of 1-10





Without understanding how work is actually performed, it becomes difficult to redesign work, identify where AI adds value, or build a genuinely Skills Based Organisation.

From Jobs to Work

Why Skills-Powered Organisations Are Emerging

We are beginning to organise work differently.

Rather than viewing jobs as fixed, organisations are increasingly viewing work as a collection of capabilities, skills, tasks, and outcomes that can be delivered by different combinations of people, AI, automation, internal talent, contractors, or external partners.

This is a fundamental shift in how organisations think about workforce capability. A Skills-Powered Organisation is not simply an organisation that has introduced a skills taxonomy or invested in a new technology platform. It is an operating model that uses skills as the common language for workforce planning, talent acquisition, internal mobility, learning, and career development. Instead of asking, "Who can fill this job?", organisations begin asking, "What work needs to be done, what capabilities are required, and what is the best way to deliver it?"

The journey towards a Skills-Powered Organisation is not a single project or technology implementation. It is an organisational capability that develops over time. Most organisations begin by establishing a common skills framework and improving visibility of workforce capability. As maturity increases, skills become embedded into recruitment, career development, internal mobility, learning, workforce planning, and ultimately, decisions about how work itself should be designed.

What does it really mean?

For the most part, the term Skills Based Organisation (SBO) is too binary. It suggests a box you either tick or you do not. The real question is what you use skills data for.

Skills to hire

Matching people to roles on capability, not job title or CV.

Skills to infer strategy

Seeing where capability sits, where it thins, and where you are exposed.

Skills data from inside and outside the business, aligned to business goals, telling you whether you have the talent to execute or a shortfall you need a strategy to close.

The Shift to Agentic Is Real. Skills Based Design Is How Organisations Prepare For It.

For the past few years, agentic AI has been talked about in the future tense. Something organisations were preparing for, planning around, keeping an eye on. That future is now. Agentic AI is already reshaping how work gets done inside Talent Acquisition, and it is moving faster than most operating models can absorb.

This is visible in how quickly skills based thinking has moved from a talking point to a genuine priority, and it is no longer confined to a small group of forward-leaning teams. More than a third of TA functions now rate it a high focus, and two-thirds describe themselves as actively on that journey. The old way of organising work around fixed jobs does not lend itself to the arrival of agents that can perform parts of that work themselves.

That is the real significance of agentic AI, and it is easy to miss if attention stays fixed on the technology itself. The harder question is not what AI agents can do, but who decides which parts of the work they should do.

That decision used to be implicit, buried inside job descriptions nobody revisited for years, and agentic AI removes that comfort. Once agents can take on discrete pieces of a role, someone has to decide, deliberately and quickly, what remains human, and skills based design is what makes that decision possible, because it depends on understanding work at the level of tasks and capabilities rather than titles.

This is where the data offers a useful check, and the answer should give leaders pause. While enthusiasm for skills based design is strong, the foundational work of breaking roles down to task level remains the least mature capability measured, with the majority of functions still rating it a low priority. Many organisations are moving into the agentic era with more conviction than clarity: they know the destination has changed, but very few have mapped the route, and the window to do so before decisions are made for them is closing. That gap matters more than it might appear. If HR doesn't lead the decision on how work is divided between people and AI, someone else will, and not on the basis of what keeps decision-making human where it matters most, but on cost and speed.

HR is one of the few functions with both the language and the evidence to make that case elsewhere in the business, but it can only lead with authority if it has done the same thinking internally first, and done it now.

That is the discipline worth carrying forward now: not adopting the language of skills, but doing the harder work of understanding tasks well enough to decide, deliberately, what belongs to people and what belongs to AI. Agentic AI is not coming, it is already here, already reshaping how work gets structured, with or without a deliberate decision behind it. The organisations that shape that shift on their own terms, rather than discover it after the fact, will be the ones still setting the boundary between people and AI in five years, instead of having it set for them.

Transformation as an Org Capability

PwC's 2025 Global CEO Survey found that 42% of CEOs believe their organisation will not remain viable over the next decade without reinvention.

The challenge is that research by McKinsey found that 70% of business transformations fail.

McKinsey's more recent research suggests the organisations that outperform treat transformation as an organisational capability, not a project. Success depends less on strategy alone and more on execution, capability building, leadership alignment and organisational health. Here's our quick take on the recommendations:

1. **Build transformation capability**
   Successful organisations invest in the capability to execute change rather than relying on one-off transformation programs.

2. **Invest in people, not just projects**
   Capability building is one of the strongest predictors of transformation success, yet many organisations underinvest in it.

3. **Make execution everyone's job**
   The highest-performing transformations create clear ownership, governance and accountability rather than treating change as a side project.

4. **Build organisational health alongside performance**
   Long-term success comes from changing behaviours, leadership and culture, not simply delivering short-term financial outcomes.

McKinsey's findings reinforce that transformation is not simply an operational challenge. It is a capability challenge. Organisations that successfully reinvent themselves invest in capability, leadership and organisational health alongside execution.

This expands the role of Talent. Our contribution is no longer limited to filling roles. It includes helping the business understand the capability it needs, how work should be redesigned, where AI should augment people, and whether capability should be built, bought, borrowed or redeployed.



Key Finding #6

From AI Curiosity to AI Capability

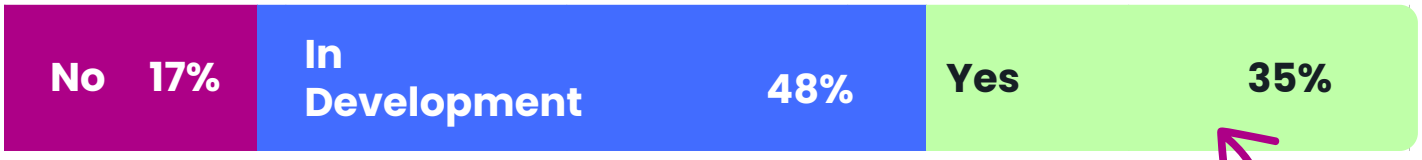
Over the past 12 months, organisations have become significantly more confident in their AI journey. Governance frameworks are becoming increasingly common, while organisations without any AI governance have fallen sharply. At the same time, attitudes are shifting from caution towards adoption, suggesting many organisations have moved beyond experimentation and are now embedding AI into everyday business operations.

This is where the new tension lies. Leaders are no longer asking whether AI should be adopted. Instead, they are concerned about implementation speed, governance maturity, and ensuring HR and Talent are actively involved in shaping AI decisions.

Keep reading...

AI Governance & Mindset 2025 to 2026 comparison

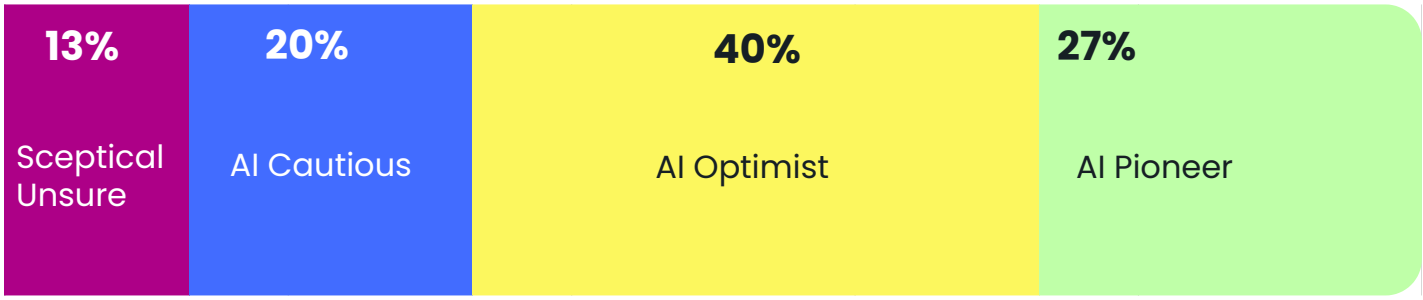
2026: Does your organisation have a clear AI governance framework in place?



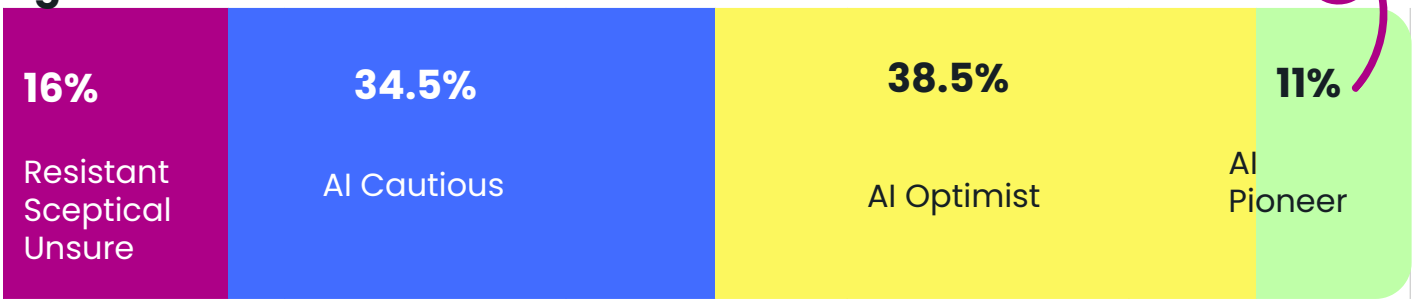
2025: Does your organisation have a clear AI governance framework in place?



2026: What best describes your organisation's mindset toward Agentic AI



2025: What best describes your organisation's mindset toward Agentic AI





What will become your biggest competitive advantage over the next three years: adopting AI faster, or implementing it better?

What about your organisation's approach to AI is keeping you up at night?

Speed

We're not going fast enough to keep up with continuously developing AI tech.

Existing barriers to speed of deployment balanced with governance in a highly regulated environment.

That we are going to go all in without fully scoping the risks/benefits.

The overly risk-averse approach stamps out ideas and innovation that could really change our whole business.

Can't keep up with the sessions and training - very engaged with AI.

How quickly we can get to productivity.

That I'm not keeping pace with the rest of the company.

HR/TA Involvement

HR not being involved in the right meetings and only being brought in at the last minute.

Lack of HR involvement.

Lack of TA involvement.

We have actively engaged the broader organisation in our AI direction by demystifying the technology, building confidence through practical upskilling, and positioning AI as an enabler of higher-value work rather than a threat to roles. But many are slow moving to embrace.

That recruitment activities are excluded from AI standard

Lack of empowerment for TA to implement changes that would improve the candidate and hiring manager experience and improve the quality of hiring outcomes. Many projects in the pipeline for other areas of business, but not TA.

Governance

Unclear governance and accountability around autonomous AI decision-making, particularly in relation to risk, compliance, data privacy, and the extent of human oversight.

Lack of vision and governance. Planned proof of concepts feel a bit narrow in scope.

There is no governance or clarity for staff around what we can and can't do. No training on the AI tool that is available to everyone (Copilot).

Organisationally terrified of it and completely unprepared. The new governance framework is overly risk-averse, highly restrictive, and has arrived years too late to be genuinely useful.

No governance and no active interest in developing employee capability using tools and enhancements.

Consequence

Not enough people embrace it in time that they end up so far behind they'll be replaced.

Because we're at the 'pioneer' level as a tech company, it would be the portion of the workforce that will not adapt to AI - those layers will probably be phased out of the org.

My main concern is the gap between the rapid introduction of AI tools and the slower development of organisational governance, cultural safety frameworks, and staff capability. Without clear policies on ethical use, data privacy, bias mitigation and transparency, there's a risk that AI could unintentionally compromise cultural safety, fairness, or trust in recruitment decisions.

Lack of awareness and how it could impact our industry.

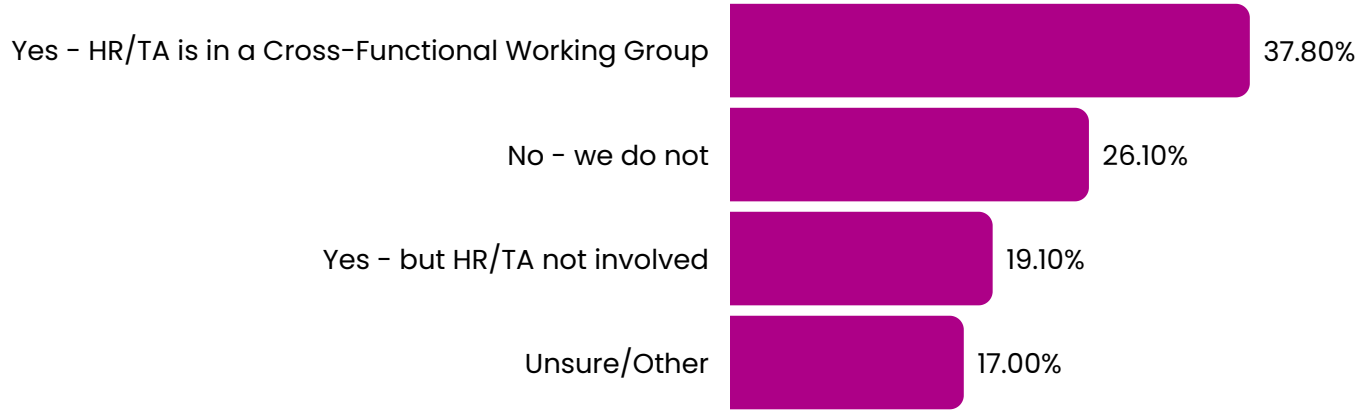
AI Adoption and Readiness

As AI has become a strategic investment for many organisations, the focus has shifted beyond cost and towards how to implement AI responsibly. Data Privacy remains a top priority, but new on the list is the broader impact on Employer Brand and Candidate Experience now that the use of AI is increasing.

In 2025, cost was the dominant concern. By 2026, Talent Leaders are focused on algorithmic bias, privacy, legal obligations, and protecting the candidate experience, suggesting AI has moved from an emerging technology discussion to an operational and governance challenge.

2025 Top Concerns	2026 Top Concerns
1st **Cost of Investment**	1st **Algorithmic Bias & Fairness**
2nd **Data Security & Privacy Concerns**	2nd **Data Privacy & Legal Concerns**
3rd **Potential AI Bias**	3rd **Potential damage to Employer Brand/Candidate Experience**

Does your organisation have an AI Readiness Working Group?

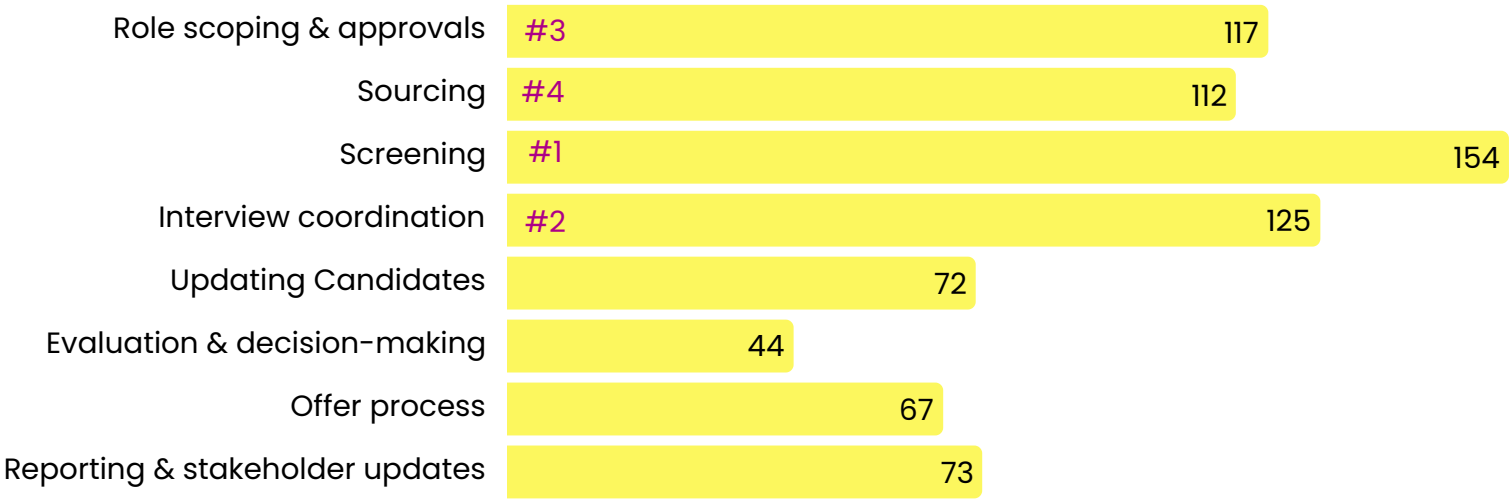


Only 37.8% of organisations include the People Function in a cross-functional AI readiness working group. As AI reshapes how work gets done, governance is about more than deploying technology. It's about deciding what work should remain human, preserving the capabilities that create long-term value, and ensuring today's efficiency doesn't become tomorrow's talent shortage.

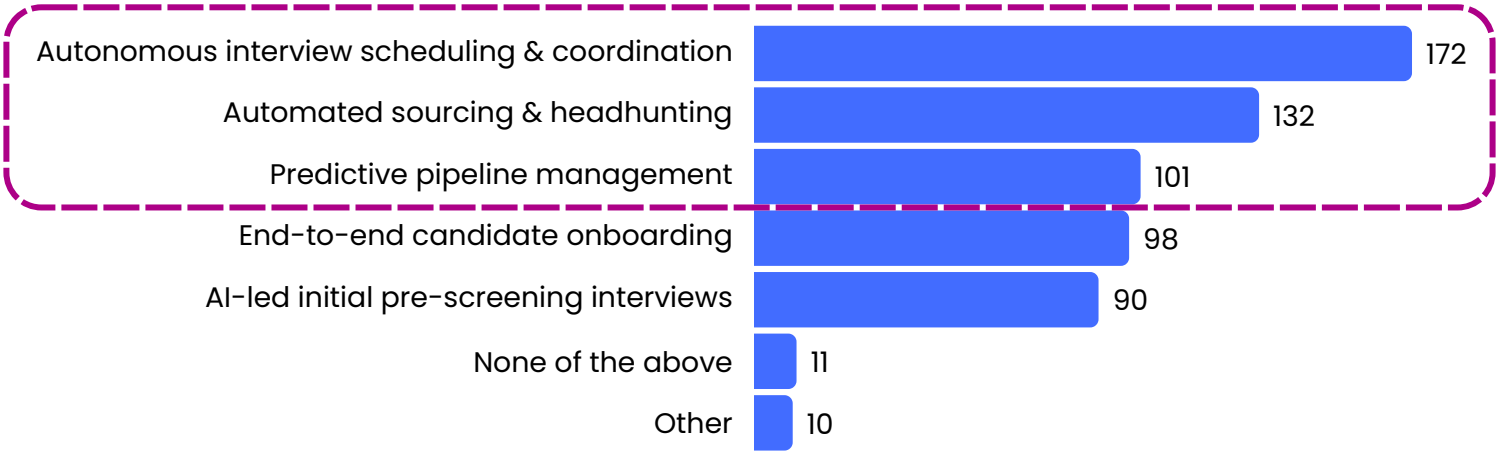
AI Adoption in Hiring

Which stage of your process takes the most amount of Administrative Effort?

Each respondent chose their top 4. Total votes are shown below.



How do you expect Agentic AI to offer the most immediate benefit for the TA team?





What organisational barriers are stopping your team from adopting AI where it could create the greatest immediate impact?

eightfold.ai

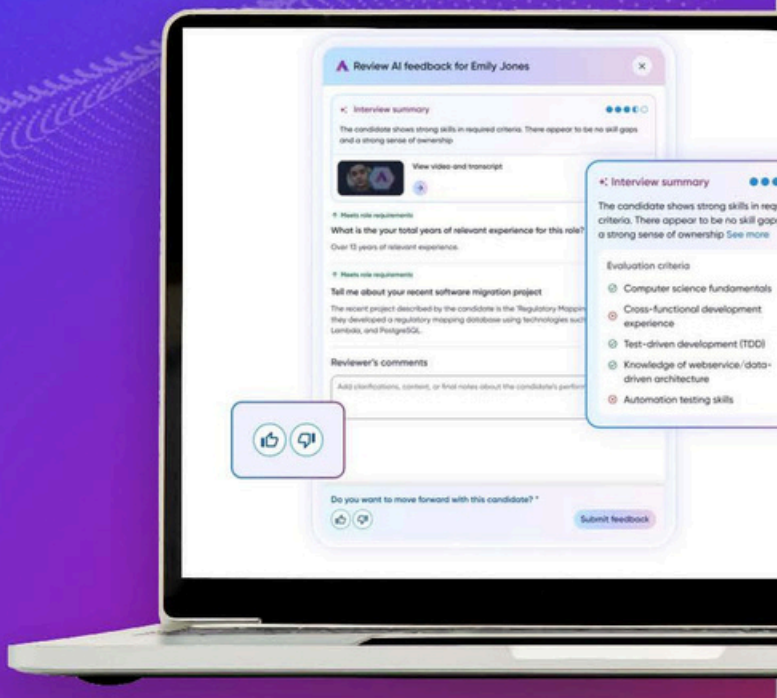
Can AI actually interview candidates? See for yourself.

Most HR leaders evaluating AI interviewing never actually experience the interview themselves, so we flipped the script.

We created a live AI interview you can try for yourself.

Step into the candidate experience for roles like:

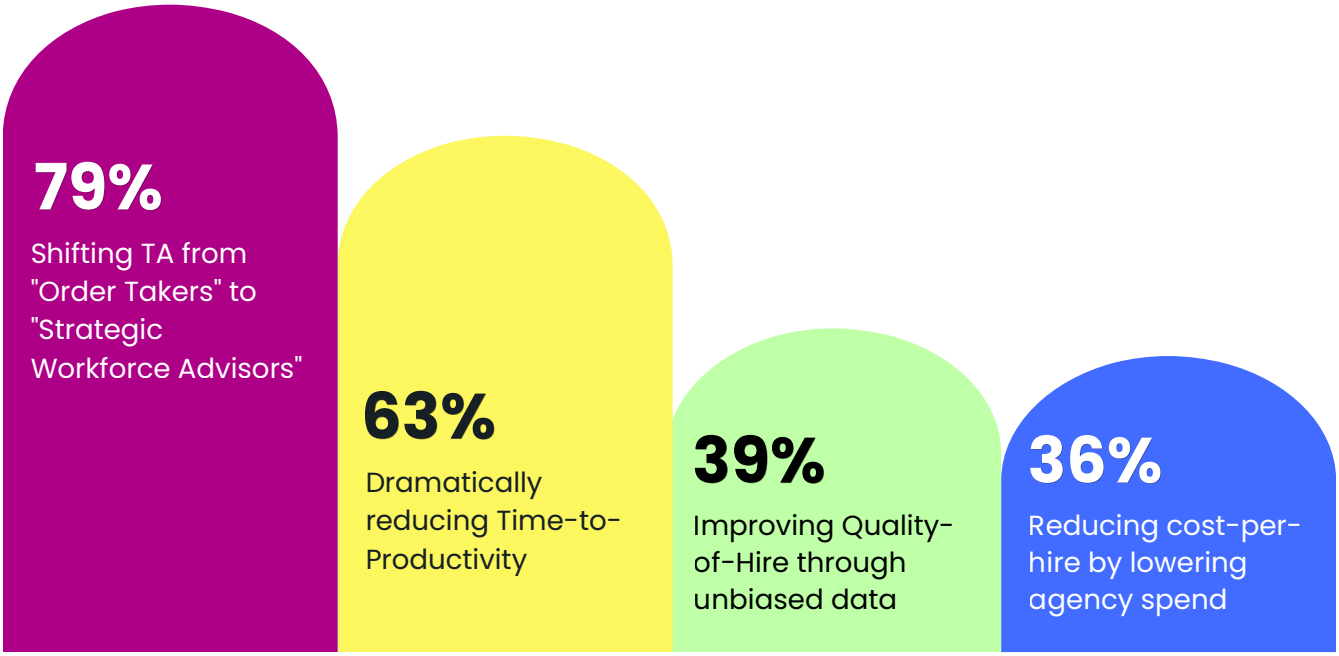
- Talent Acquisition Specialist
- Customer Service Advocate
- Manufacturing Technician
- Sales Development Rep



Simply scan the QR code and start the interview.

TA's contribution to the bottom line

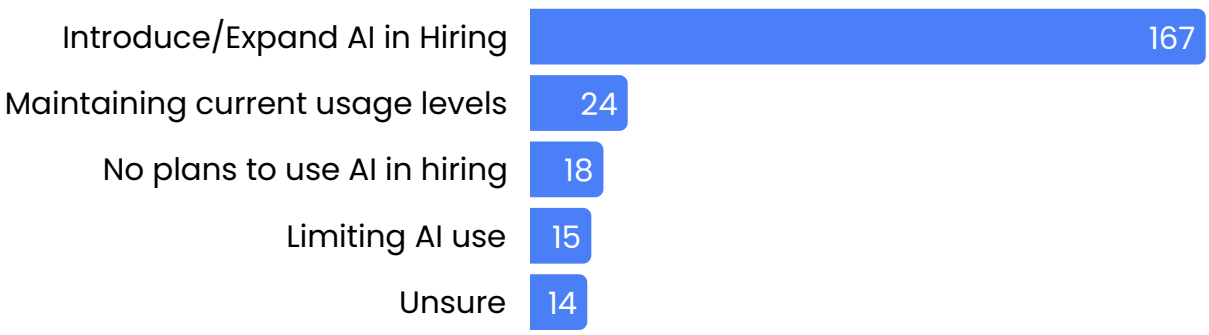
How could Agentic AI support TA's contribution to the business bottom line? Talent Functions voted on each potential benefit individually.



Notably, freeing people up to be advisory (79%) ranks far above cost reduction (36%). Respondents frame agentic AI as a route to role elevation, not headcount savings.

The next 12-24 months

Over the next 12 months, how do you expect AI to impact your hiring process?





From 10 December 2026, organisations that must comply with the Privacy Act and use personal information in automated decision-making that may significantly affect an individual's rights or interests will be required to update their privacy policy.

AI Compliance Checklist

Employers remain responsible for decisions influenced by AI, making governance, transparency and human oversight essential components of a modern recruitment process. This checklist outlines the key actions organisations should take now to strengthen compliance and prepare for emerging regulatory requirements.

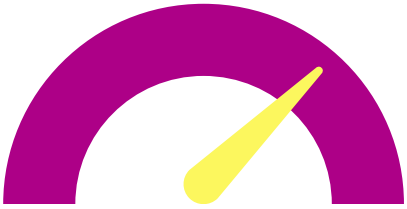
Organisations using AI in hiring should now:

• Identify every AI tool used in recruitment	Required
• Document where AI influences decisions	Required
• Update privacy policy before 10 Dec 2026	Required
• Update candidate privacy notice	Strongly Recommended
• Conduct bias testing	Strongly Recommended
• Maintain human oversight	Strongly Recommended
• Keep audit records	Strongly Recommended
• Train Recruiters and Hiring Managers	Strongly Recommended
• Review vendor contracts	Strongly Recommended
• Establish AI governance	Strongly Recommended

The **Parliament of Australia report** into the Digital Transformation of Workplaces was produced by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training following a national inquiry. While the recommendations are not yet law, they provide the clearest indication of the Australian Government's intended direction for regulating AI in employment. For organisations using AI in recruitment, the report is a valuable resource for understanding proposed reforms, emerging employer obligations, and the governance practices likely to underpin future legislation.

Metrics at a glance

How does your TA Function compare?



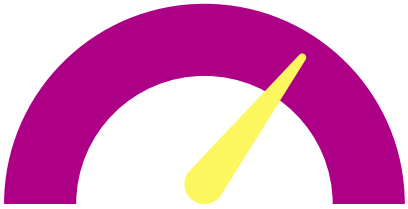
Average: 7.3

Deliver the right talent at the right time



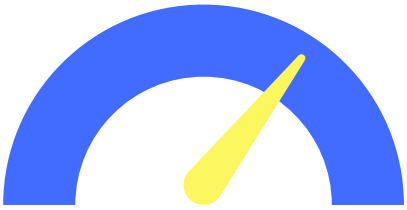
Average: 7.0

Strength of Stakeholder Relationships



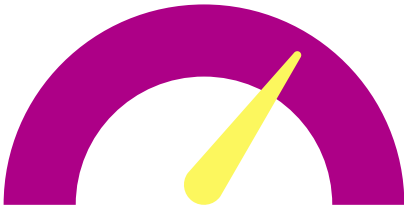
Average: 6.9

Alignment of Talent Strategy to Business Strategy



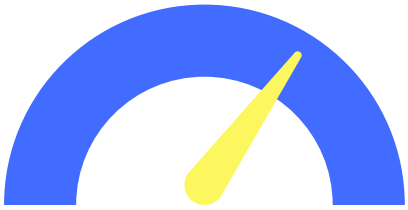
Average: 6.9

Expect the Recruiter role to change



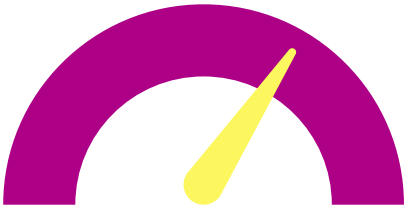
Average: 6.8

Effectiveness of Talent Strategy



Average: 6.8

Shifting from Acquisition to Advisory



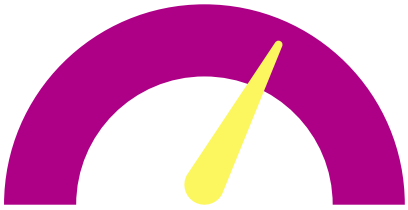
Average: 6.7

Quality Hiring Confidence



Average: 6.4

HR/TA Automation & AI



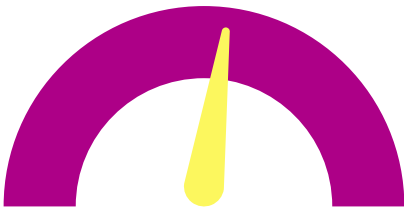
Average: 6.4

Becoming a Skills Based Org



Average: 5.9

Proper use of Generative AI



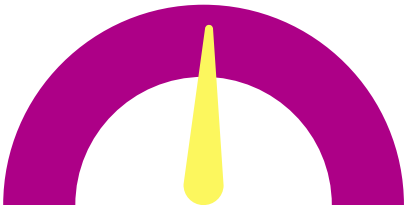
Average: 5.4

Recruiter Development Plan



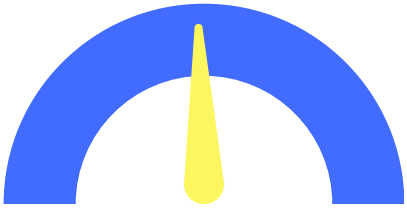
Average: 5.4

ATS Satisfaction



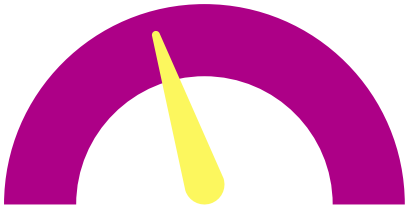
Average: 5.1

Breaking roles down to Task Level



Average: 4.9

Preparedness to detect candidate fraud



Average: 4.1

Current Focus on Candidate Fraud

The Way Forward

The Future of Work Starts with Understanding How Work Gets Done.

Throughout this report, one theme has consistently emerged.
The future of Talent Acquisition is not being shaped by AI alone: it will be shaped by a fundamental shift in how organisations think about work itself.

For decades, organisations have organised work primarily around jobs. Increasingly, they will need to consider the capabilities, tasks and outcomes required, then determine the right combination of employees, contingent workers, external partners, automation and AI to deliver them.

This changes the decisions Talent Leaders are being asked to influence. It changes how organisations design work before hiring begins. It changes how Recruiters advise Hiring Managers. It changes how internal mobility, skills, workforce planning and external hiring work together. Most importantly, it changes where Talent Acquisition creates value.

The findings throughout this report point towards several connected shifts:

- Organisations are beginning to reconsider how work is structured, not simply how many people they employ.
- Recruiters are expected to spend less time administering recruitment and more time influencing workforce decisions.
- Process maturity creates the foundations for confidence, consistency and change.
- Stronger alignment between business and Talent strategy supports more effective execution.
- AI is moving from experimentation towards operational use, although readiness, governance and capability remain uneven.
- Skills Powered Organisations are emerging as a new operating model.
- Talent Advisory is becoming the capability that allows Talent Acquisition to contribute across all of these changes.

The opportunity is not simply to hire differently.
It is to help organisations make better workforce decisions.

The Talent Functions that create the greatest impact over the next decade will be those that move beyond managing vacancies to helping shape how work gets done, who performs it, what capabilities are required, and where people and AI together create the greatest value.

The future of Talent Acquisition is no longer defined by how efficiently we fill jobs. It will be defined by how effectively we connect workforce needs with the capabilities the organisation must source, develop, mobilise or access, whether internal or external, human or artificial.

The ATC State of Talent Acquisition Report 2026

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