

2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING: **INSIGHTS TO MAXIMIZE RECRUITMENT**



QUICK BRIEF

METRICS AND DEFINITIONS

This brief highlights key insights from SHRM's 2025 benchmarking data. These results provide key metrics that are pertinent to recruitment executives who manage recruiting functions for organizations. Although the labor market has cooled from the overheated post-pandemic period, it remains tight by historical standards, with more job openings than there are unemployed people, particularly in some industries.¹ In fact, nearly 7 in 10 organizations (69%) report difficulties recruiting for full-time regular positions, according to the [2025 Talent Trends](#) report from SHRM. As competition for talent continues, this data brief can help equip recruiting executives and other talent acquisition professionals to guide their own organizations and make the necessary adjustments to maximize recruitment efforts to attract top talent.

Below are some key terms and descriptions of metrics that will appear in this brief.

Organization size: Organizations were grouped into four categories based on their number of employees. Small organizations have 2 to 99 employees, medium-sized organizations have 100 to 499 employees, large organizations have 500 to 4,999 employees, and extra-large organizations have 5,000 or more employees. Some of the data metrics in this brief are discussed by similarities and differences among the different organization sizes.

Cost-per-hire: Cost-per-hire represents the costs involved with a new hire. These costs may include the sum of third-party agency fees, advertising agency fees, job fair costs, online job board fees, employee referral costs, travel costs of applicants and staff, relocation costs, recruiter pay and benefits, and talent acquisition system costs divided by the number of hires. This is reported separately for nonexecutive positions and executive positions.

Recruiting budget: The percentage of total human resources (HR) budget allocated to recruiting functions. This is calculated by dividing the recruiting budget by the total HR budget.

Percentage of organizations with dedicated recruiters: The percentage of organizations with recruiters who are in-house, direct employees of the organization (i.e., they are on the organization's payroll, not contracted).

Requisitions per recruiter: Requisitions per recruiter is the average number of requisitions a recruiter is responsible for in a year in organizations with at least one dedicated recruiter.

Positions externally filled: The percentage of full-time and part-time open positions in an organization that were filled with candidates not already employed by the organization. This metric is reported for nonexecutive positions and executive positions.

Positions internally filled: The percentage of full-time or part-time open positions in an organization that were filled with candidates already employed by the organization in other positions. This metric is reported for nonexecutive positions and executive positions.

¹Note: Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) showed that the number of job openings exceeded the number of unemployed individuals, indicating there is still a persistent labor shortage ([August Labor Market Review: Job Growth Slows Significantly](#), SHRM, Aug. 4, 2025).

Time-to-fill: Time-to-fill represents the number of days from the time the job requisition was opened to the time the offer was accepted by the candidate. This number is calculated using calendar days, including weekends and holidays. This metric is reported for nonexecutive positions and executive positions.

- » **Position open to position approved-to-fill:** The number of days from the time the requisition was opened to the time the requisition was approved.
- » **Position approved-to-fill to job posted:** The number of days from the time the requisition was approved to the time the job was posted.
- » **Job posted to screening started:** The number of days from the time the job was posted to the time that screening candidates started.
- » **Screen applicants (time):** The number of days it took to screen all job applicants.
- » **Conduct interviews (time):** The number of days it took to conduct all interviews for all job candidates.
- » **Make final decision and extend offer (time):** The number of days from the end of the interviews to when final decisions on job candidates were made and offers were extended.
- » **Offer to acceptance (time):** The number of days from the time an employment offer was extended to job candidates to the time candidates accepted the offer.

Percentage of organizations measuring quality of hire: The percentage of organizations that track the value a new hire provides to the organization.



UNDERLYING DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The following analyses highlight key insights derived from SHRM's 2025 benchmarking data, which builds upon and refines SHRM's prior benchmarking research. 2025 data was collected through an electronically fielded survey from a random sample of active SHRM members from Jan. 9 to March 3. Given the robust data collected in this research, an additional stratified sampling approach was implemented to oversample members who held a VP or higher position within their organization. In total, 2,371 members responded to the survey. The data is not weighted and respondents were not required to provide data on every metric, meaning the sample size for each individual metric may vary. Respondents represent a diverse range of industries, sectors, and organization sizes across the U.S.

The analyses in this brief use median values to define central tendency and identify trends in the data over time. Central tendency refers to a statistical measure that identifies the center point in a data series. The median is a commonly used measure of central tendency, as it represents the middle value when the data is ordered from lowest to highest, helping to avoid the influence of extreme outliers that can have a greater impact on the average value. For example, if measuring a set of salaries, the median would be the salary that falls exactly in the middle of the range and avoids being skewed by very high or very low values. By using the median, we improve comparability across different time periods, especially when accounting for changes in methodology and metric calculations since 2017. Additionally, using the median helps mitigate the impact of shifts in SHRM membership used for this research over time, ensuring stronger consistency and reliability in the findings.



KEY FINDINGS OVERVIEW

1. Hiring costs are shifting: Nonexecutive cost-per-hire has decreased, while executive cost-per-hire has more than doubled since 2017.
2. More than half of organizations have dedicated recruiters, and requisitions per recruiter increase with organization size.
3. In 2025, executive and nonexecutive time-to-fill are both about a month and a half, a sharp contrast from previous years when executive roles took longer to fill.
4. Most positions are filled externally, but hiring internally increases with organization size.
5. Few organizations measure the quality of hiring in 2025.



2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING

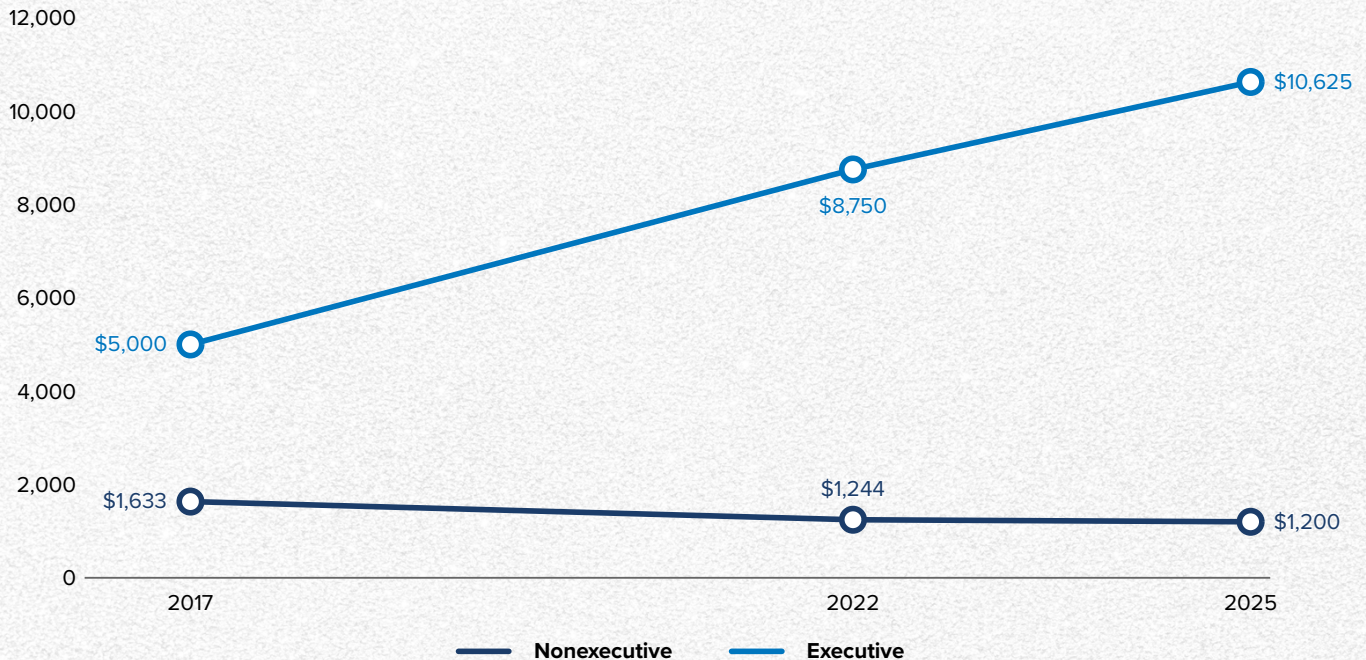


HIRING COSTS ARE SHIFTING: NONEXECUTIVE COST-PER-HIRE HAS DECREASED, WHILE EXECUTIVE COST-PER-HIRE HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED SINCE 2017

Executive and Nonexecutive Cost-per-Hire



Benchmark data showing the median costs (in U.S. dollars) for both executive and nonexecutive hires in 2025, 2022, and 2017.



SOURCE: 2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING: INSIGHTS TO MAXIMIZE RECRUITMENT, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

The cost-per-hire landscape has shifted significantly over time. In 2025, the cost-per-hire for nonexecutive roles was \$1,200, reflecting a 27% decrease since 2017 and a modest decline from \$1,244 in 2022. By contrast, the 2025 cost-per-hire for executive roles reached \$10,625, representing a striking 113% increase from 2017 and a 21% rise from 2022. These figures reveal a growing disparity in hiring costs, with the ratio of nonexecutive to executive cost-per-hire climbing to 8.9 in 2025, compared to 7.0 in 2022 and just 3.1 in 2017. In 2025, the gap was most pronounced in large and extra-large organizations, where the ratios were 17.7 and 18.3, respectively, underscoring the increasing costs associated with executive recruitment in these environments.

Takeaways/Implications

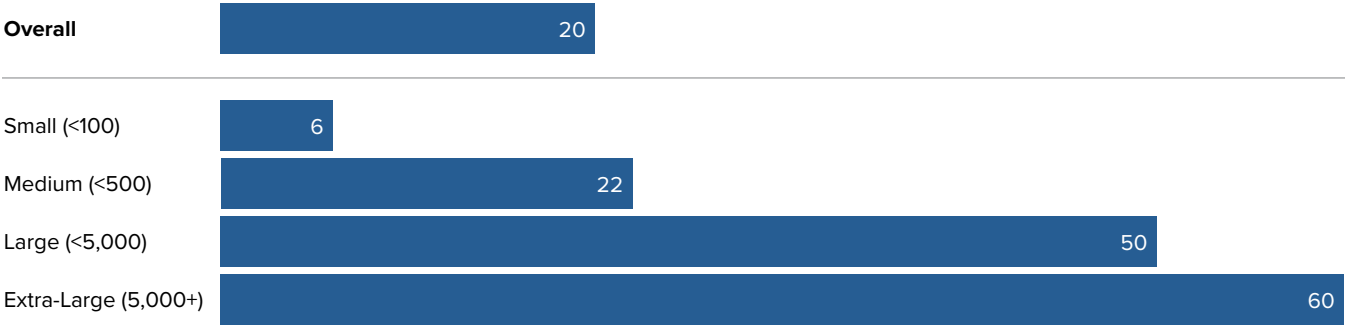
- The widening gap in cost-per-hire between executive and nonexecutive roles highlights the growing complexity and resource intensity of executive recruitment (particularly in large organizations). As the cost of executive hiring continues to rise, it becomes more important to ensure that recruitment strategies are efficient and aligned with business needs.
- The declining cost-per-hire for nonexecutive roles may reflect improved efficiencies — such as streamlined processes or technology adoption — which could serve as a model for optimizing other parts of the talent acquisition function.

MORE THAN HALF OF ORGANIZATIONS HAVE DEDICATED RECRUITERS, AND REQUISITIONS PER RECRUITER INCREASE WITH ORGANIZATION SIZE

Requisitions per Recruiter



The median number of requisitions in a year per recruiter by size of organization. Results shown for overall (across all organizations), small, medium, large, and extra-large organizations.



SOURCE: 2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING: INSIGHTS TO MAXIMIZE RECRUITMENT, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Just over half (55%) of organizations reported they have dedicated recruiters (i.e., employees of the organization as opposed to third-party contractors). This percentage has varied a little over the years, with 48% of organizations having dedicated recruiters in 2017 and 58% having dedicated recruiters in 2022. Organizations with dedicated recruiters reported that the median number of requisitions they managed is 20 per year. However, recruiter workload varies by organization size: Those at small organizations (with fewer than 100 employees) manage the fewest requisitions annually, while those at large (500-4,999 employees) and extra-large (5,000 or more employees) organizations handle significantly more, at 50 and 60 requisitions per recruiter, respectively.

Takeaways/Implications

- The percentage of organizations with dedicated recruiters has been fairly stable since 2017, with 55% reporting they have in-house recruiters in 2025.
- Larger organizations may manage heavier recruiter workloads through greater efficiency, specialization, or technology, suggesting smaller organizations could benefit from a strategic review of their recruitment practices. Alternatively, higher requisitions per recruiter at larger organizations may signal a risk of recruiter burnout, pointing to the need for more efficient requisition management and other supports.

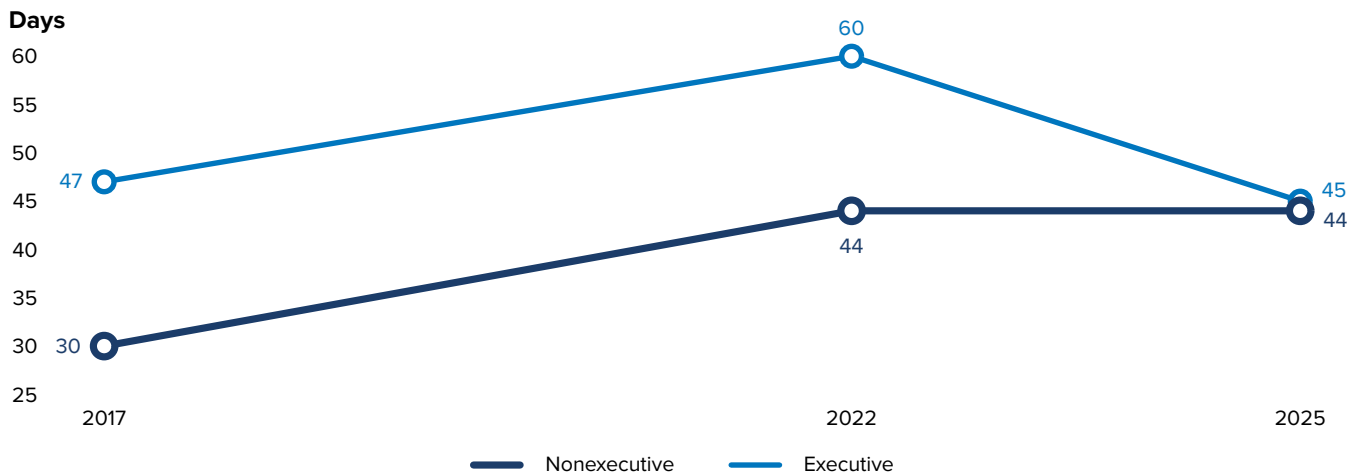


IN 2025, EXECUTIVE AND NONEXECUTIVE TIME-TO-FILL ARE BOTH ABOUT A MONTH AND A HALF, A SHARP CONTRAST FROM PREVIOUS YEARS WHEN EXECUTIVE ROLES TOOK LONGER TO FILL

Time-to-Fill Executive and Nonexecutive Positions



The median number of days it took to fill executive and nonexecutive positions for 2025, 2022, and 2017.



SOURCE: 2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING: INSIGHTS TO MAXIMIZE RECRUITMENT, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Time-to-fill is calculated using calendar days, including weekends and holidays.

In 2025, time-to-fill, or the time the job requisition is opened to the time the offer is accepted by the candidate, is at a median of about a month and a half for executive and nonexecutive positions, signaling greater consistency in hiring practices across job levels. This marks a shift from 2022, when benchmarking data reported a 16-day difference in median time-to-fill between executive and nonexecutive positions.

However, benchmarking data reveals that extra-large organizations take significantly longer to fill roles. Compared to the median across all organizations, extra-large organizations reported a time-to-fill period of 61 days for nonexecutive positions and 60 days for executive positions. When looking at the different time-to-fill stages, extra-large organizations allocate nearly twice as much time getting positions approved-to-fill, getting jobs posted after being approved, and conducting interviews.

Takeaways/Implications

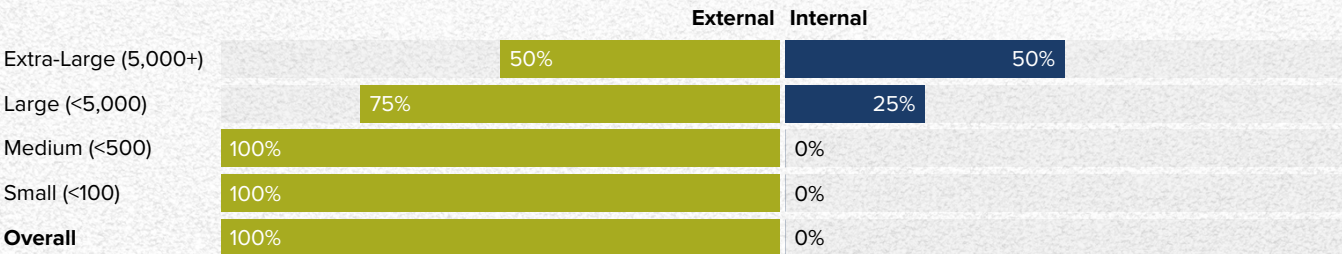
- Although the time-to-fill for executive roles dropped significantly (from 60 days to 45 days), the cost-per-hire increased. This suggests that organizations may have invested more to expedite the process. While this approach may help fill critical roles more quickly, it raises questions about the sustainability around this imbalance of efficiency and costs, particularly if costs continue to climb.
- Time-to-fill is longest for extra-large organizations, which may be tied to heavier recruiter workloads — these organizations assign the highest number of requisitions per recruiter annually — as well as the possibility of greater layers of approval steps. This suggests that without sufficient support and efficiency measures, high workloads can contribute to slower hiring timelines, potentially impacting business needs.

MOST POSITIONS ARE FILLED EXTERNALLY, BUT HIRING INTERNALLY INCREASES WITH ORGANIZATION SIZE

Executive Positions Filled Internally and Externally



The median percentages of executive positions filled internally or externally for overall, extra-large, large, medium, and small organizations in 2025.



SOURCE: 2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING: INSIGHTS TO MAXIMIZE RECRUITMENT, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Nonexecutive Positions Filled Internally and Externally



The median percentages of nonexecutive positions filled internally or externally for overall, extra-large, large, medium, and small organizations in 2025.



SOURCE: 2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING: INSIGHTS TO MAXIMIZE RECRUITMENT, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Despite a tight labor market, both nonexecutive positions and executive positions are more frequently filled externally than internally. The overall median percentage shows that executive hiring is 100% external; a breakdown by organization size shows that large and extra-large organizations fill their open executive job positions internally 25% and 50% of the time, respectively. For nonexecutive positions, organizations overall are more likely to hire from within 7% of the time. Generally, 2025 median rates of internal and external hires remain consistent with the data from 2022.

Benchmarking data further highlights differences based on organizational size. Large and extra-large organizations have higher rates of internal hiring compared to their small and medium-sized counterparts. For example, half of executive hires

in extra-large organizations were internal hires, whereas small and medium-sized organizations exclusively hired externally.

Takeaways/Implications

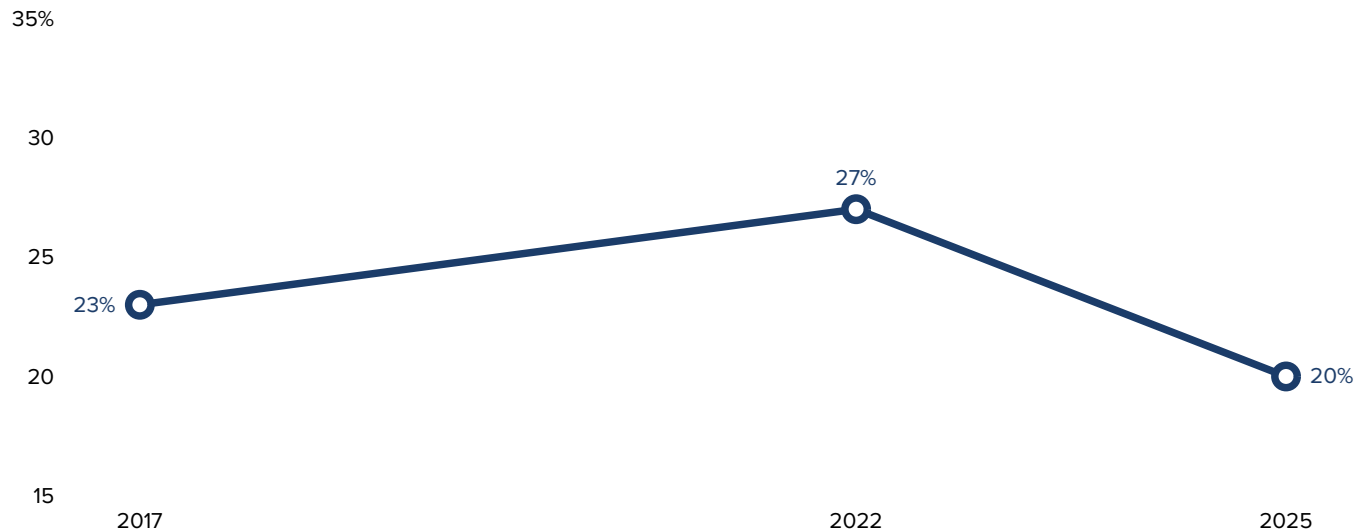
- Organizations have an opportunity to better leverage their internal talent and fill open roles from within by strengthening their upskilling, professional development, and mentoring strategies. Investing in these strategies can better prepare internal talent for more advanced roles.
- Extra-large organizations are the most likely to fill open roles with internal talent. This may be due not only to their larger size and broader range of roles but also to more established processes that support employee development and internal mobility.

FEW ORGANIZATIONS MEASURE THE QUALITY OF HIRING IN 2025

Organizations Utilizing Quality-of-Hire Measures



The percentage of organizations that reported using quality-of-hire measure in 2025, 2022, and 2017. This percentage reflects the organizations that said “yes” out of all the organizations that responded to the question.



SOURCE: 2025 RECRUITING EXECUTIVES BENCHMARKING: INSIGHTS TO MAXIMIZE RECRUITMENT, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

More than half (61%) of recruiting executives say a lack of qualified candidates for open roles is an organizational challenge and nearly one-third (31%) say it is their most pressing challenge, emphasizing the importance of top quality in new hires.² However, fewer organizations are using quality-of-hire measures. The percentage of organizations using quality-of-hire metrics dipped in 2025 to 20% compared to 2017 (23%) and 2022 (27%). This indicates that less than a quarter of organizations assess the value their new hires provide to their organization. Among the 14 types of quality-of-hire measures provided in the survey, the three most often utilized were interviews to evaluate performance, performance appraisal scores, and retention rates.

Takeaways/Implications

- Few organizations utilize a data-driven strategy to assess the quality of their new hires. Yet, measuring quality of hire enables HR to demonstrate impact, make the case for additional investment, and assess whether changes to sourcing or selection are working.
- Many organizations already collect common quality-of-hire metrics during the performance review process, such as performance evaluations, retention rates, talent scorecards, and 360-degree feedback scores. However, the key is for HR to ensure they are connecting this data to recruiting metrics, such as quality-of-hire, rather than using it solely for performance management purposes. By integrating these data points, HR can gain valuable insights into how well hiring decisions translate into employee success.

² *Recruiting Executives: Priorities and Perspectives*, SHRM, 2025.

CONCLUSION

Recruiting, the process of identifying qualified candidates and filling open roles, plays a pivotal role in driving organizational success. To make informed decisions and continuously improve recruitment practices, access to relevant, actionable data is essential.

Insights from this research offer a snapshot of where U.S. organizations currently stand across key recruitment metrics. These benchmarks empower recruiting executives to evaluate their own organization's performance, identify areas for improvement, and refine their strategies for workforce planning and decision-making.

With this data in hand, recruiting executives and other talent acquisition professionals are better equipped to align their function with organizational goals, address workforce needs proactively, and ensure their organization attracts and retains the right talent to thrive in a competitive landscape.

How to cite this research: *2025 Recruiting Executives Benchmarking: Insights to Maximize Recruitment*, SHRM, 2025.

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