



BETTER WORKPLACES
BETTER WORLD™

RESEARCH REPORT

RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the workplace evolves, recruiting executives, or those who lead their organization's recruitment or talent acquisition function, are increasingly focused on identifying effective strategies to attract top talent. Their role is pivotal in enhancing competitiveness while ensuring critical positions are filled to advance the organization's mission. This report explores the key priorities of recruiting executives in 2025, the range of challenges they face, and their vision for the future of recruitment and work. Based on the perspectives of 292 recruiting executives spanning diverse industries and organization sizes, these findings provide insight into the critical role of recruiting in today's world of work. In particular, these insights highlight how these leaders are positioning recruitment as a strategic business priority and equipping their organizations to succeed in an increasingly dynamic work environment.

KEY FINDINGS

1. **Recruiting critical talent is the most common top priority for recruiting executives:** One-third (33%) of recruiting executives report that recruiting critical talent is their top priority in 2025, highlighting the importance of securing skilled individuals who can propel organizational growth and success.
2. **Other top priorities include strengthening sourcing and enhancing recruiting strategy:** Beyond recruiting critical talent, more than 1 in 5 recruiting executives report that improving sourcing (21%) or their organization's recruiting strategy (21%) is their top priority for the year. These priorities collectively highlight how many recruiting executives are concentrating on strategies to attract top talent to their organizations.
3. **Many recruiting executives list wage inflation and talent shortages as major challenges:** Across macroeconomic to personal challenges, recruiting executives report wage inflation and a lack of talent as among their top challenges. Fifty-seven percent cite wage inflation as a macroeconomic challenge. In addition, more than half (56%) report that talent shortages in the market are a challenge, with 1 in 5 (20%) citing this as their most pressing macroeconomic challenge. Sixty-one percent say that a lack of qualified job candidates is an organizational challenge. Furthermore, 28% say collaborating with hiring managers and other stakeholders is a functional challenge.
4. **Many recruiting executives anticipate AI will transform recruitment and hiring processes:** Recruiting executives are optimistic that artificial intelligence will play a larger role in recruitment and hiring, including more than three-quarters (78%) who believe there will be more applicants using AI to apply to open positions and 73% who believe AI will be used more often in their own recruitment teams to perform relevant tasks. Beyond AI, many of these leaders anticipate more organizations will post salary ranges or pay bands on job postings, along with more requirements for in-person or onsite work.



INTRODUCTION

The recruitment function has long been a critical driver of long-term organizational success. Today, recruiting has evolved into a strategic imperative that affects all parts of an organization. Leaders overseeing this critical function face the ever-evolving challenge of identifying, attracting, and selecting top-tier talent for their organizations. Talent acquisition leaders and chief human resources officers (CHROs) play a crucial role in securing an organization's most valuable asset: its people. The significance of these leaders has been further amplified by enduring labor shortages. Since March 2018, apart from the early phase of the pandemic, the U.S. has consistently had more job openings than unemployed individuals each month.¹ This persistent imbalance highlights the important role these leaders play in steering their organization's recruitment strategy to secure critical talent.

SHRM's *2025 State of the Workplace* research showed that recruiting was the top priority in 2024, with 43% of HR professionals identifying it as a main focus area.² This underscores recruitment's pivotal role within both the HR function and throughout the organization as a whole. With recruitment prioritized so highly within HR, leaders in this area bear the critical responsibility of envisioning strategies and taking action to enhance their organization's ability to attract top talent amid difficult labor market conditions.

To navigate an ever-changing talent landscape, recruitment executives must strategically align their priorities with the organization's overarching goals. In 2025, this need to align efforts is more crucial than ever before as new challenges, such as changes to inclusion and diversity (I&D) standards, have complicated common practices.³ Recruiting executives must adapt to these changes and anticipate future trends to ensure their organizations remain well-positioned to bring in talent that supports long-term objectives.

SHRM conducted research to address these evolving demands and achieve three key objectives:

1. Understand recruiting executives' priorities in 2025.
2. Explore the challenges recruiting executives are facing, from macroeconomic to personal challenges.
3. Determine recruiting executives' perspectives on emerging workplace and recruitment trends.

To study these objectives, SHRM Thought Leadership surveyed 292 recruiting executives (i.e., those who lead their organization's recruitment or talent acquisition function, including CHROs where applicable). The findings from this research are intended to provide recruiting and talent acquisition leaders and professionals with an understanding of the most common priorities their peers have set for their teams and organizations in 2025, as well as to offer insights into the challenges and perspectives this group shares.



¹ [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, on May 30, 2025.](#)

² [2025 SHRM State of the Workplace.](#)

³ [SHRM's BEAM Framework for Inclusion: Aligning Merit with Organizational Excellence, SHRM, Jan. 31, 2025.](#)



RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES





TOP RECRUITING EXECUTIVE PRIORITIES FOCUS ON FINDING TOP TALENT IN 2025

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Setting clear objectives and strategies for the year is a vital responsibility for recruiting executives. The success of an organization may rely on an effective recruiting function, as departments and teams across the business often depend on it to hire top talent. The priorities outlined by recruiting leaders play a decisive role in whether the organization secures the best candidates or faces challenges in filling critical positions with the right people.

This research explored the key priorities recruiting executives set out to achieve in 2025. These leaders identified their top goals, spanning a range of recruiting topics from sourcing strategies to enhancing internal processes.

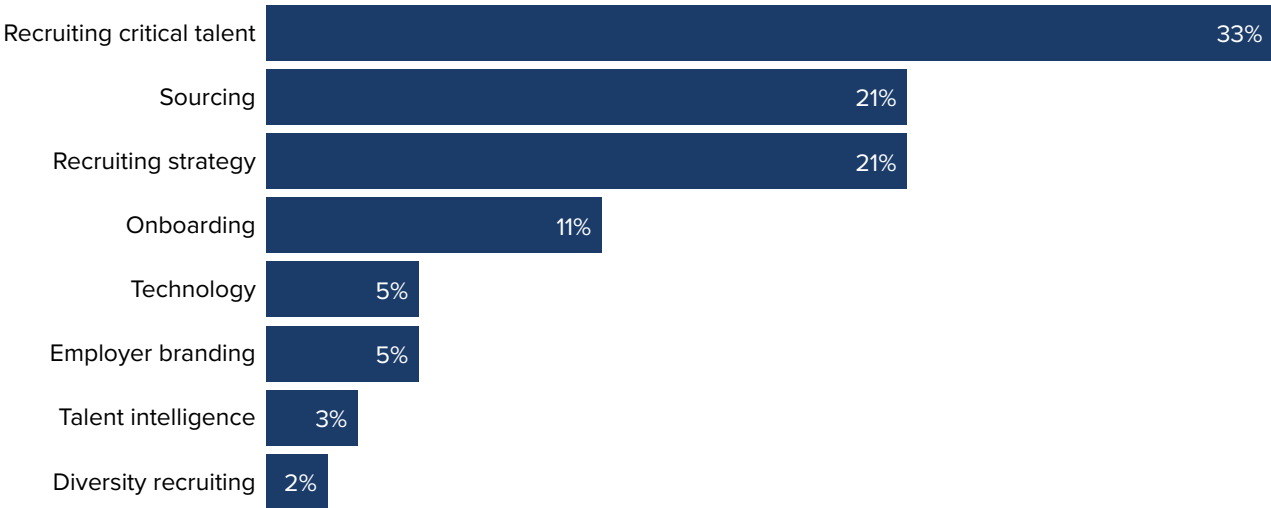
One-third of recruitment leaders say recruiting critical talent is their top priority for 2025.

Securing talent essential to organizational success emerged as the top priority for recruiting executives across all key practice areas in the function for 2025. In fact, one-third (33%) of recruiting leaders cite recruiting critical talent as their primary focus, highlighting the growing emphasis organizations are placing on finding the right individuals to drive growth and success.

Recruiting Executives' Top Priorities in 2025



Respondents could select one option that best described their top priority within the recruiting function for 2025.



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results are based on responses from 292 recruiting executives. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

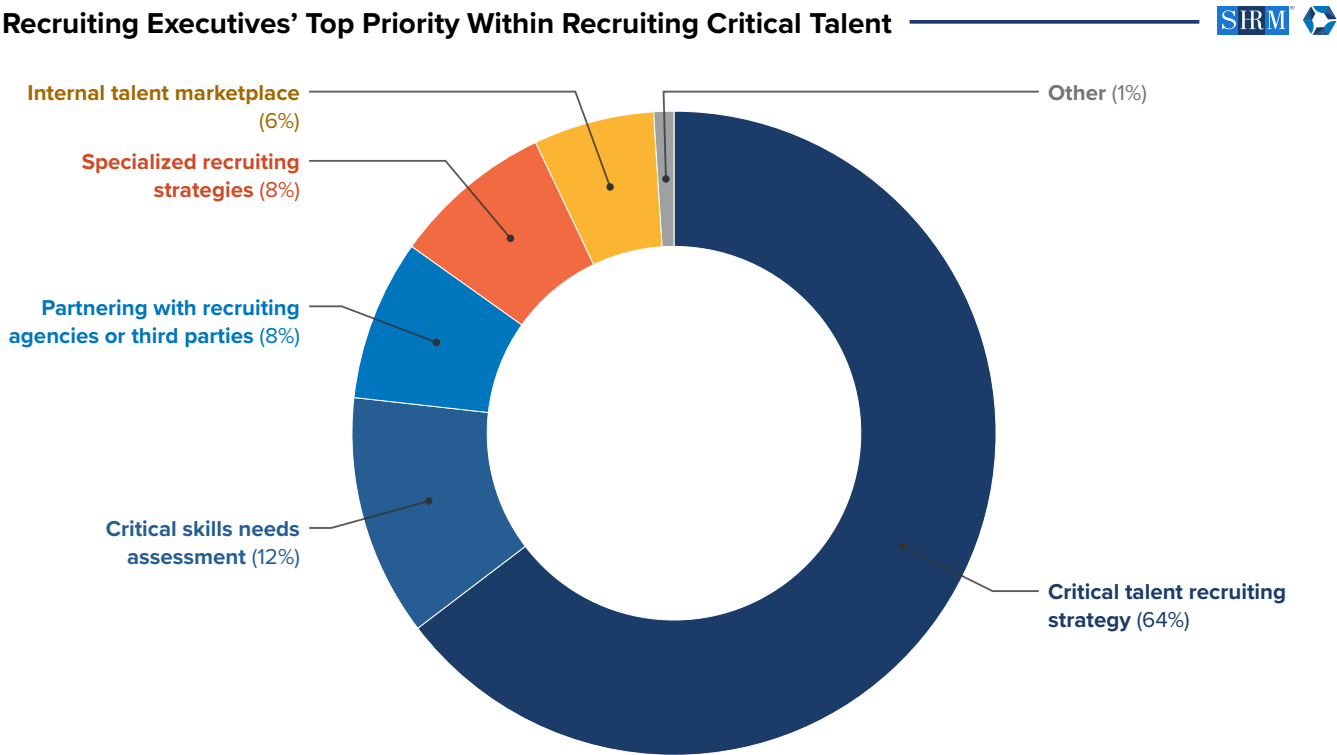
This top priority underscores the ongoing challenge of executing effective recruitment strategies, particularly when it comes to securing essential talent in a difficult labor market. As of March 2025, there have been approximately 650,000 more job openings than unemployed people in the U.S. per month in the last year, on average.⁴ What's more, more than two-thirds of organizations report having had difficulty recruiting for full-time positions over the past year.⁵

⁴ [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, on May 12, 2025.](#)

⁵ *2025 Talent Trends*, SHRM (forthcoming).

SHRM’s 2025 *State of the Workplace* research highlights these ongoing challenges in recruitment and the consequences when they are not effectively addressed well. Despite 43% of HR professionals citing recruiting as a top priority for 2024, only 56% rated their organization’s recruitment efforts as effective or very effective. Role vacancies also have a significant impact on the workforce, leading to higher rates of burnout among employees.⁶ The lingering effects of talent absences have made filling critical roles a top priority for many recruiting executives.

Most recruiting executives prioritizing critical talent in 2025 are focusing on developing solutions and actions to address their organization’s talent shortages. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of these leaders cite their critical talent recruiting strategy as the main area of focus within this topic. This strong majority demonstrates that many recruiting leaders are proactively planning and implementing strategies to address the critical talent needs they are experiencing. Less emphasis was placed on other aspects of the critical talent priority, with just 12% of these leaders prioritizing critical skills needs assessments, 8% focusing on partnerships with agencies or third parties, 8% enhancing specialized strategies such as apprenticeships, and 6% seeking to strengthen internal talent marketplaces as their primary focus in 2025. Given the uncertainties about the future of work and the labor market, many recruiting leaders are taking steps to ensure they have the necessary talent their organizations need to succeed in the years to come.



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM. 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 95 recruiting executives who selected “Recruiting critical talent” as their top priority for 2025. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



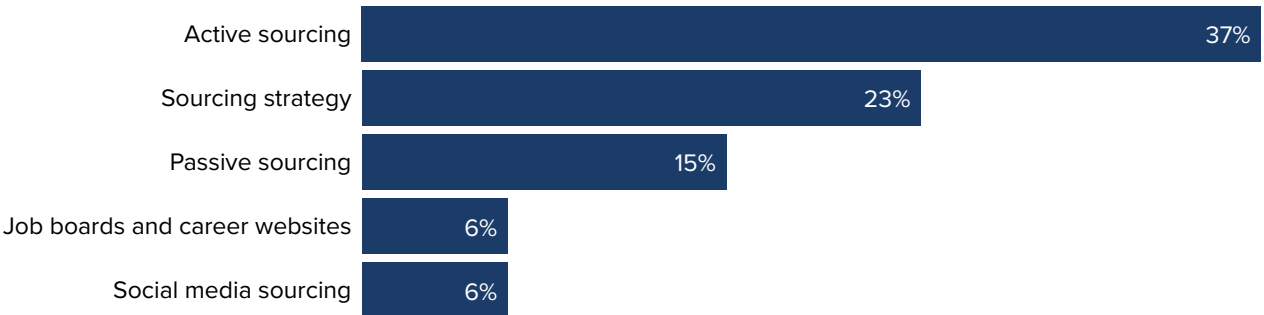
⁶ [2025 SHRM State of the Workplace.](#)

Sourcing is among recruiting executives' other top priorities, with active sourcing a primary objective.

Besides securing critical talent, many recruiting executives (21%) report sourcing efforts as their top priority for 2025. This finding indicates that many of these leaders are actively exploring strategies to identify potential candidates and proactively develop talent pipelines to position their organizations to secure top talent in the future.

A closer inspection of this top priority further reveals the specific areas recruitment leaders are focusing on in 2025. However, unlike the critical talent recruitment priority, specific priorities within sourcing are more varied. For instance, more than one-third (37%) of recruiting executives said their top priority within this area is active sourcing (i.e., finding and engaging with potential job candidates who are actively searching for a new job). Just under one-quarter (23%) of these leaders said their top focus within sourcing was to bolster their sourcing strategy, including their approach to discovering and engaging with potential job candidates. Fifteen percent of recruiting executives said their top focus area within sourcing is passive sourcing or engaging with potential employees who are not actively searching for a new job. Only a small percentage of recruiting leaders identified enhancing job boards and career websites or social media sourcing as their primary focus within sourcing, with just 6% prioritizing each area.

Recruiting Executives' Top Priority Within Sourcing



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 62 recruiting executives who selected "Sourcing" as their top priority for 2025. Top five results are shown and listed in descending order. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

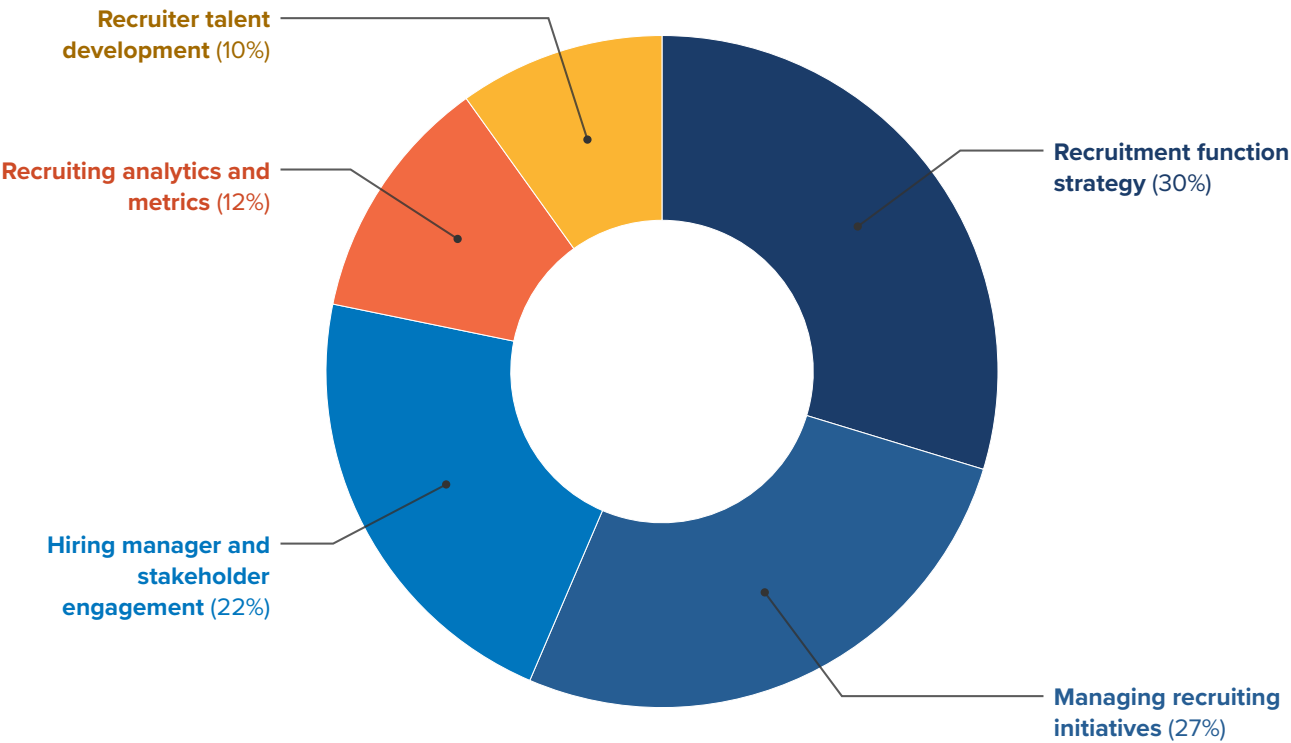


Enhancing the recruitment strategy, particularly within the recruiting function, is one of the top priorities for 2025.

Finally, 21% of recruiting executives report that enhancing their organization’s recruiting strategy, including the methods for attracting, selecting, and hiring job candidates, is their top priority. Along with the other top priorities in 2025, recruiting leaders remain primarily focused on strategies for finding, attracting, and hiring talent. This emphasis on strengthening core recruitment methods contrasts with the lower prioritization of other areas such as onboarding (11%) and technologies to support the recruitment function (5%).

Among recruiting executives focused on developing their strategy, 30% are focusing on refining the recruitment function strategy to ensure stronger alignment with broader business objectives and enhance hiring practices to support organizational growth and values. Managing recruiting initiatives, including assessing and implementing recruitment strategies, is the top priority for 27% of these leaders, while 22% are primarily focused on enhancing collaboration with hiring managers and other stakeholders. Fewer executives said their main focus within the recruitment strategy is to enhance recruiting analytics and metrics (12%) or develop recruiters in their organization (10%).

Recruiting Executives’ Top Priority Within Recruiting Strategy 



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 60 recruiting executives who selected “Recruiting strategy” as their top priority for 2025. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



Recruiting executives' top priorities for 2025 underscore recruitment's crucial role in driving organizational success by attracting top talent to advance their mission. Many of these leaders are placing a strong emphasis on securing critical talent essential for their organization's long-term growth and competitiveness. Additionally, there is a significant focus on refining recruitment strategies, not only for top-tier talent but also to enhance sourcing and to align the recruitment function with broader business objectives. These priorities underscore the critical role of recruiting executives in guiding their organization to success by securing the right talent for the demands of today's evolving workplace.





RECRUITING EXECUTIVES FACE UNIQUE CHALLENGES TO SECURE TOP TALENT

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Recruiting executives play a critical role in developing strategies to tackle the diverse challenges organizations face in their recruitment efforts. With competition for top talent persistently intense, these leaders are essential in helping their organizations overcome obstacles ranging from macroeconomic challenges to operational hurdles. The ability to anticipate and address these challenges is critical, as the decisions recruiting leaders make have the potential to impact whether their organizations secure the talent needed to drive success. In this research, recruiting executives identified the key challenges they face and the most pressing issues shaping their roles today.

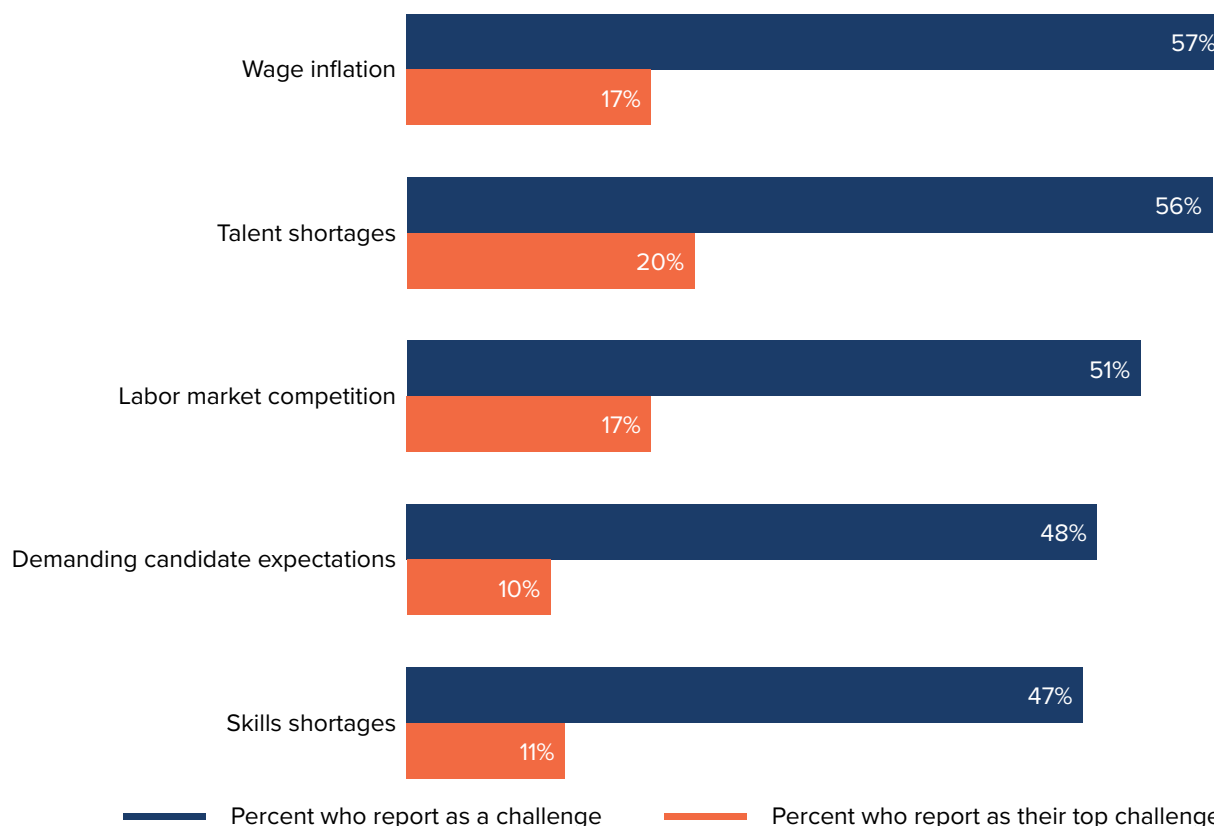
While wage inflation is a challenge, many top macroeconomic challenges involve handling shortages and remaining competitive.

Consistent with past SHRM research on CHRO challenges,⁷ wage inflation stands out as the most common challenge for recruiting executives, with 57% highlighting this macroeconomic topic as a difficulty in their role. Nearly as significant, 56% of recruiting leaders identify talent shortages in the market as a challenge, with 1 in 5 (20%) naming this as their greatest obstacle, making this the most pressing issue they face. Additionally, over half (51%) of recruiting executives report struggling with competition in the labor market. Other top macroeconomic challenges include meeting demanding job candidate expectations (48%) and addressing skills shortages in the market (47%).



⁷ [CHRO Priorities and Perspectives, SHRM, 2025.](#)

Recruiting Executives' Top Macroeconomic Challenges



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVE: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

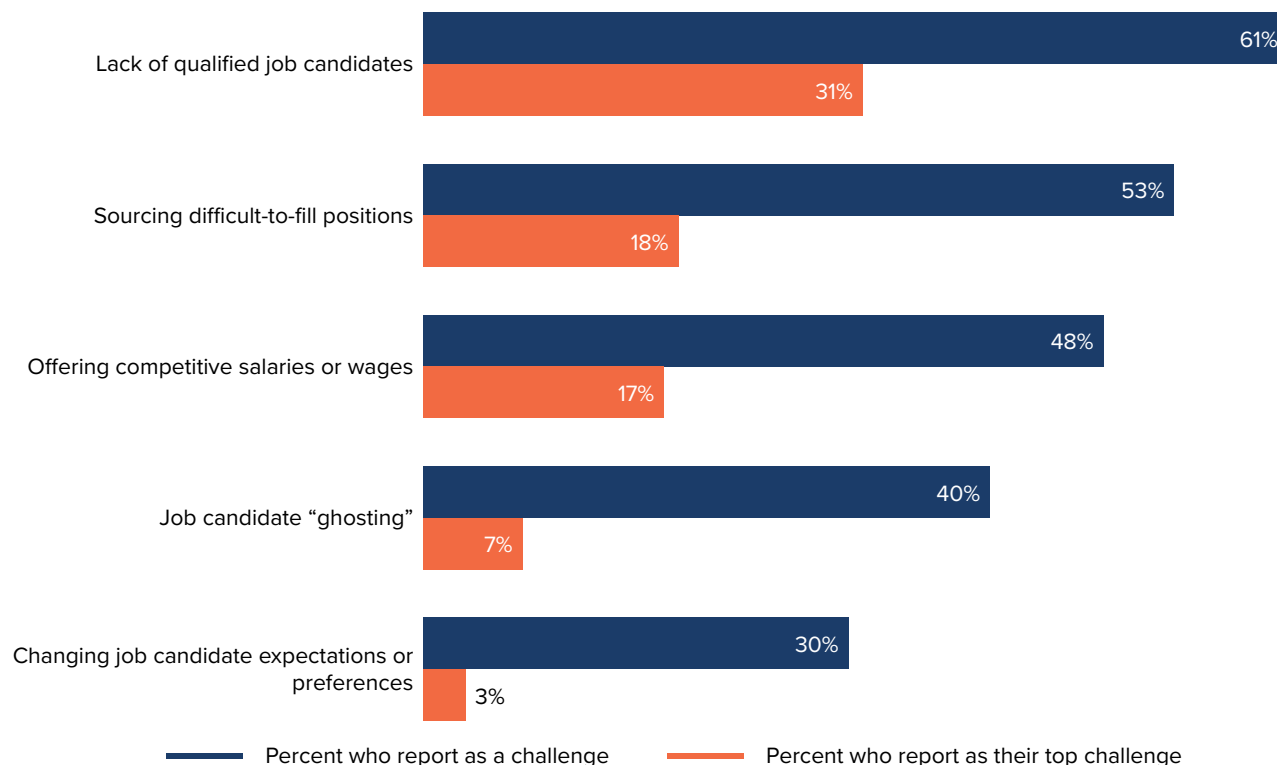
Results based on responses from 292 recruiting executives. Top five results are shown in descending order based on “Percent who report as a challenge.” Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Across the organization, finding qualified talent stands out as the most common challenge recruiting executives face.

Sixty-one percent of recruiting executives report challenges from a lack of qualified job candidates to fill open roles within their organizations. Along with being the most common organizational challenge, this issue is also the most critical for these leaders, with nearly one-third (31%) identifying it as their top concern. Relatedly, 53% highlight difficulty in sourcing talent for hard-to-fill positions as an organizational challenge. Almost half (48%) of recruiting executives say that offering competitive wages or salaries is an obstacle throughout their organizations. Beyond skill and wage concerns, 40% of these leaders identify “ghosting” by job candidates, where individuals abruptly cut off communication without explanation, as a problem for their organization. The fifth most common organizational challenge for recruiting executives is shifting candidate expectations or preferences, with 30% of recruiting leaders saying this is an issue in today’s hiring landscape.



Recruiting Executives' Top Organizational Recruiting Challenges



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 292 recruiting executives. Top five results are shown in descending order based on "Percent who report as a challenge." Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

NONMANAGERIAL MIDLEVEL ROLES POSE THE GREATEST CHALLENGE TO FILL

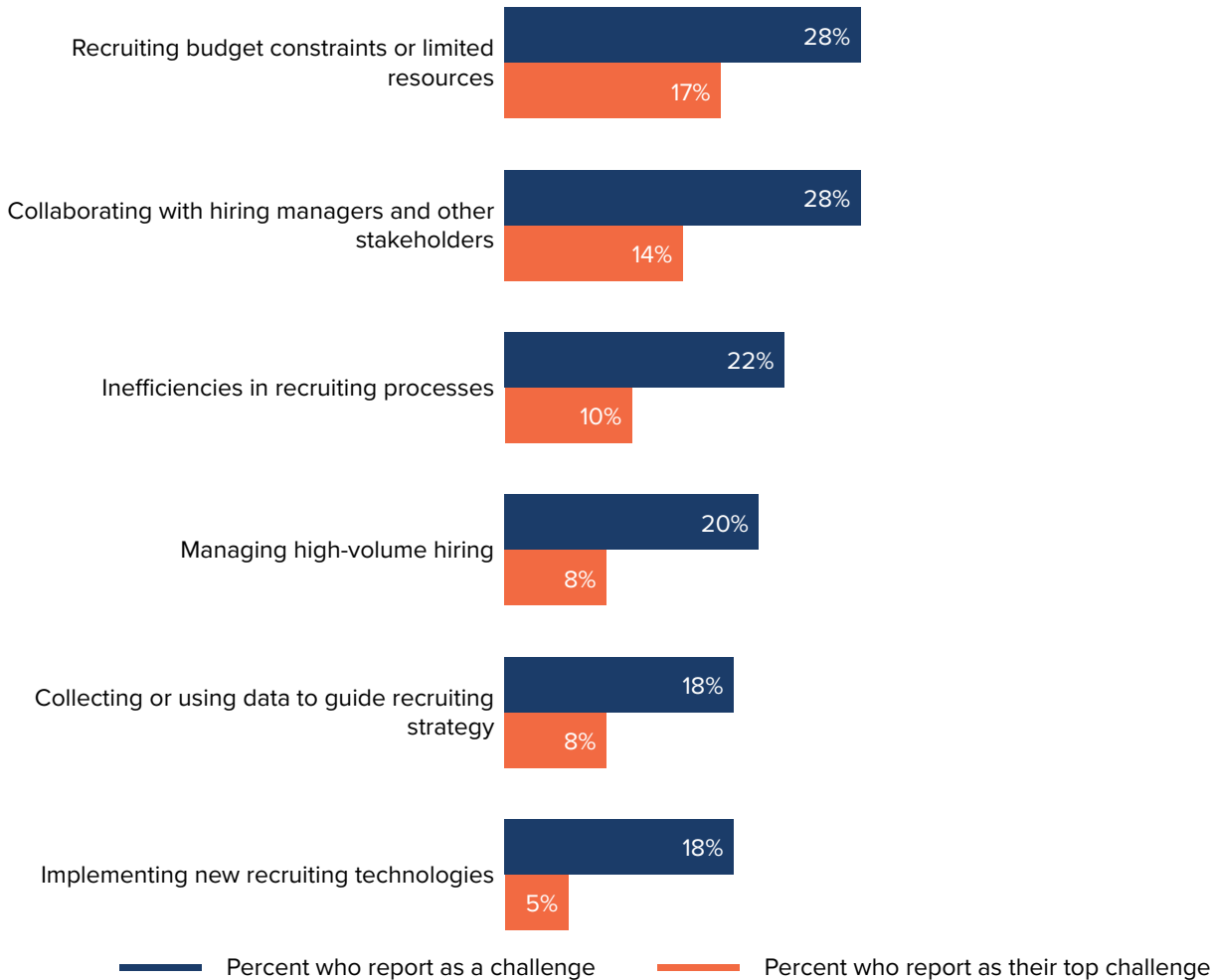
Recruiting executives shared insights into the types of roles that pose the greatest challenges to fill within their organizations. Nonmanagerial midlevel roles are the most difficult to fill, according to these leaders, with 42% identifying these positions as their primary obstacle. This aligns with recruiting executives' top priority for securing critical talent, as midlevel individuals often bring the experience and skills needed to make an immediate and significant impact. Following these types of roles, 23% of recruiting executives cite entry-level positions as the most challenging, while 22% identify managerial midlevel positions. Thirteen percent of recruiting executives said senior or executive-level positions are their hardest types of jobs to fill.



Hiring manager collaboration and budget constraints are the top functional challenges recruiting executives face.

Recruiting executives identify two primary challenges within their function. The first is working within constrained budgets or limited resources, a concern 28% of these leaders cite, with 17% calling it their most pressing issue. The second challenge, also cited by 28% of recruiting executives, involves fostering effective collaboration with hiring managers and other stakeholders throughout the hiring process. While budgeting challenges align with research on leading other HR-related functions,⁸ collaborating with hiring stakeholders presents a distinct and critical obstacle for recruiting leaders, often disrupting efforts to attract top talent essential for achieving business goals. Additional obstacles include inefficiencies in recruiting processes (22%), managing high-volume hiring (20%), leveraging data to guide recruiting strategy (18%), and implementing new recruiting technologies (18%). Together, these issues underscore the complexities of modern recruitment and the need for innovative solutions to overcome them.

Recruiting Executives' Top Recruitment Function Challenges



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 292 recruiting executives. Top six results are shown in descending order based on "Percent who report as a challenge." Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

⁸ [CHRO Priorities and Perspectives, SHRM, 2025.](#)

An analysis of qualitative data from those citing hiring manager and stakeholder collaboration as a challenge highlights the key issues most frequently raised by recruiting executives:

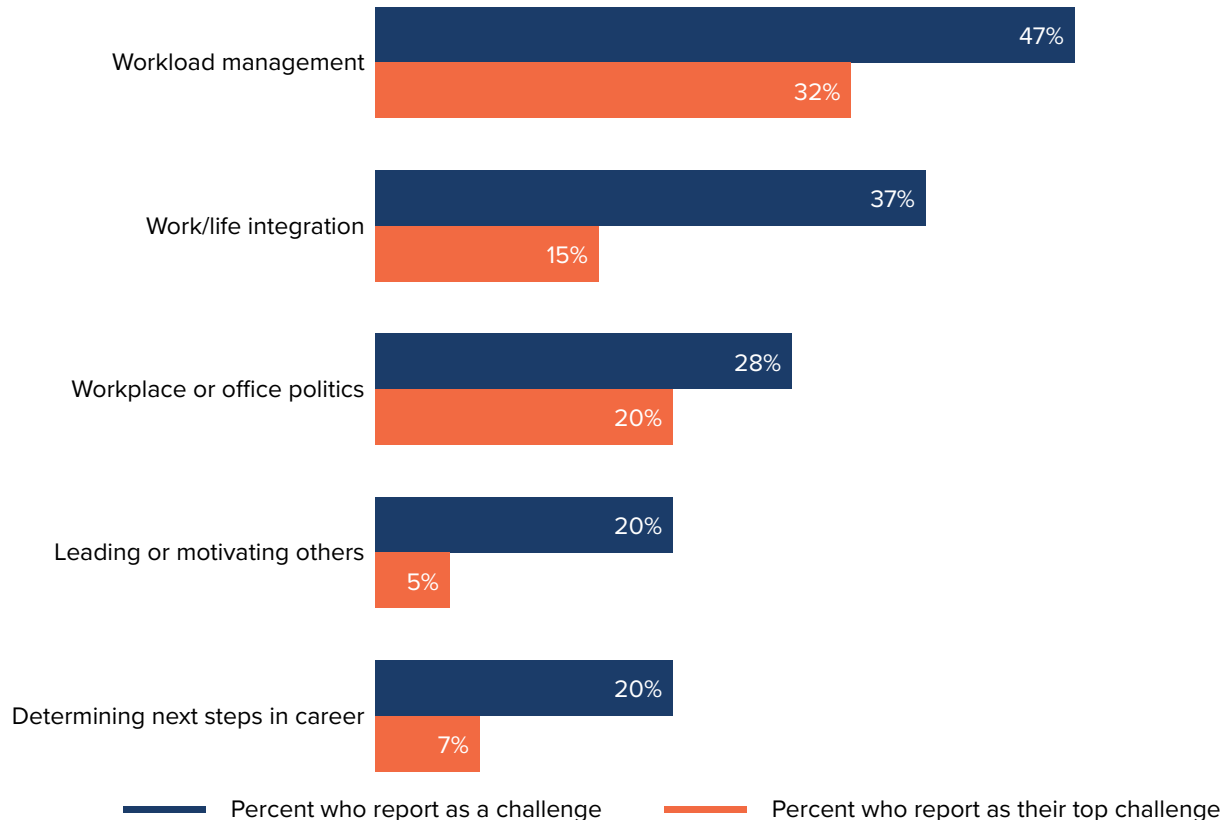
COLLABORATING WITH HIRING MANAGERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	
Enhancing hiring manager engagement and accountability	A recurring topic is the need to improve hiring managers' involvement and ownership of the recruitment process. Challenges include delays in decision-making, insufficient clarity of role requirements, and a lack of urgency, all of which hinder the overall hiring timeline. Organizations want to foster collaboration by providing structured role expectations, reinforcing accountability measures, and offering targeted training programs.
Improving communication and role clarity	Misalignment between hiring managers and HR teams is a significant obstacle. This includes unclear or shifting job descriptions, inconsistent expectations, and a lack of shared understanding about recruitment priorities. Efforts are focused on establishing clearer job criteria, streamlining interdepartmental communication, and ensuring alignment on hiring strategies to minimize inefficiencies.
Streamlining interviewing and selection practices	Many organizations are working to standardize and enhance hiring practices across departments. This includes introducing structured interview guides, teaching effective and unbiased interviewing techniques, and aligning selection criteria to organizational goals. The aim is to reduce delays caused by subjective or inconsistent hiring practices and to improve overall candidate alignment with organizational needs.



Workload management is the most common and most pressing challenge for recruiting executives.

When asked about personal challenges, nearly half (47%) of recruiting executives identified their workload management as a key obstacle for them, with about one-third (32%) naming it as their greatest personal challenge. More than one-third (37%) point to difficulties with work/life integration, while more than one-quarter (28%) cite workplace or office politics as a significant personal issue. In fact, 1 in 5 recruiting executives (20%) said this topic is their greatest personal challenge, potentially tied to a top functional concern of maintaining hiring stakeholder engagement. Other prominent challenges include leading or motivating others (20%) and determining next career steps for recruiting leaders (20%).

Recruiting Executives' Top Personal Challenges



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 292 recruiting executives. Top five results are shown in descending order based on "Percent who report as a challenge." Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.





RECRUITING EXECUTIVES' VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF RECRUITMENT AND THE WORKPLACE

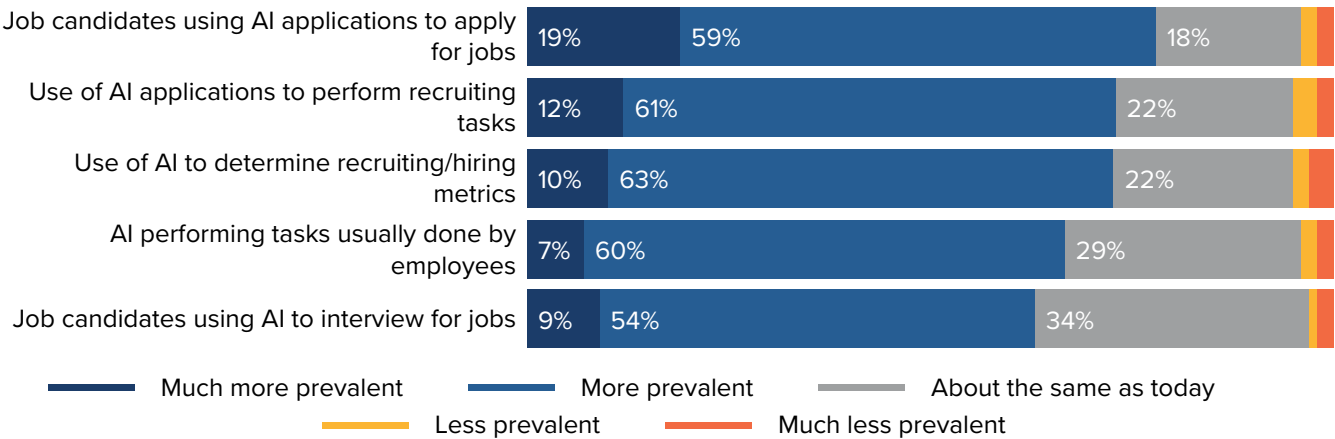
RECRUITING EXECUTIVES' VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF RECRUITMENT AND THE WORKPLACE

Recruiting executives play a vital role in shaping the strategies that enable organizations to adapt to a rapidly changing workplace. Their leadership and vision guide how organizations prepare for and respond to emerging trends, from technological advancements to compliance changes in the workplace. This research aimed to capture recruiting executives' perspectives on both current workplace and recruitment trends and those that are expected to change. Respondents provided their thoughts on these trends, specifying whether they expect each to increase in prominence, remain where it is today, or decrease over time. These predictions offer insights into how recruiting leaders envision the future of recruitment and the implications for talent acquisition and organizational success in the future.

Recruiting executives are optimistic that AI will change the recruitment and hiring process — for both job candidates and employers.

According to SHRM's 2025 *Talent Trends* report, recruiting is the top HR function where organizations are using AI, with 51% reporting its use in this area.⁹ Unsurprisingly, AI trends also emerged as a dominant theme in recruitment leaders' expectations for the year ahead. More than three-quarters (78%) of recruiting executives predict that job candidates will increasingly use AI applications to apply for open positions. Many of these leaders are also optimistic about AI's impact on their own recruitment teams. Nearly three-quarters (73%) expect a rise in the use of AI to perform recruiting tasks, while 72% anticipate AI to play a greater role in determining hiring and recruiting metrics that inform decisions. Two-thirds (66%) of recruitment leaders anticipate AI will take on tasks traditionally performed by employees, with this trend expected to become more or much more prevalent within the next year. Many recruiting executives also anticipate a growing reliance on AI by job candidates during interviews, with 63% expecting this trend to rise. These insights signal a broader expectation among recruiting leaders that AI will play an increasingly prominent role for both job seekers and recruitment teams in the near future.

Recruiting Executives' Predictions of How AI Trends in the World of Work Will Change Over the Next Year



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 292 recruiting executives. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

⁹ 2025 *Talent Trends*, SHRM (forthcoming).

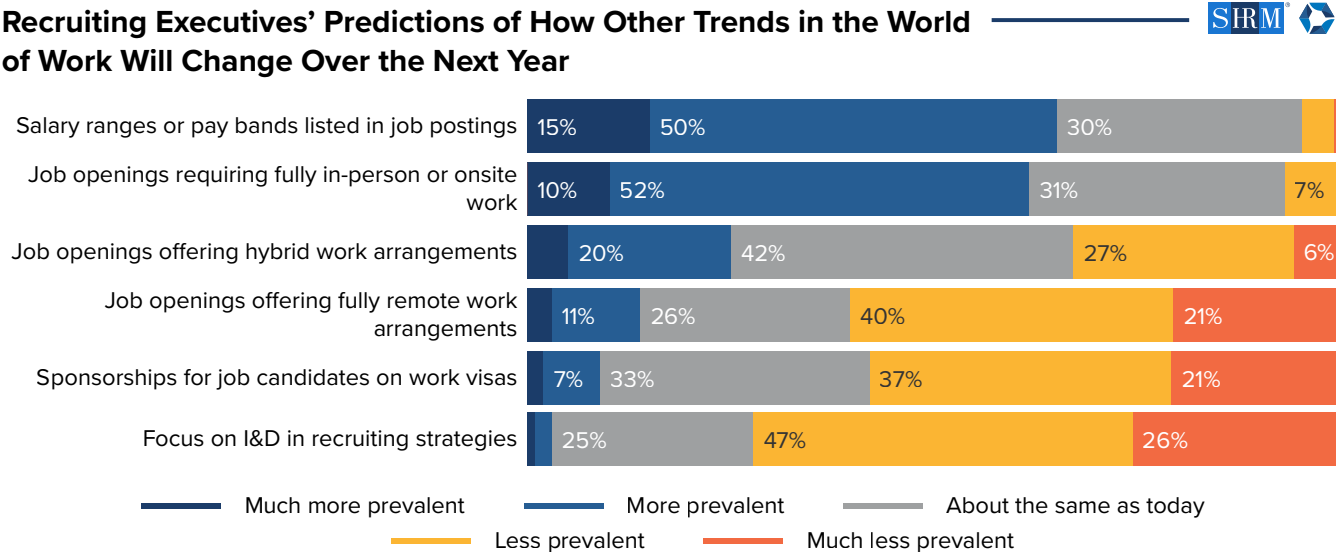
While posted salary ranges and in-person work are expected to increase, topics such as remote work, visa sponsorship opportunities, and I&D recruitment strategies are expected to diminish.

Beyond AI, many recruiting executives believe some recruitment trends are poised to grow in prominence over the next year. Notably, 65% of recruiting executives predict that salary ranges or pay bands will increasingly be included in job postings. This shift reflects a broader push for greater pay transparency in workplaces, influenced by the adoption of pay transparency laws across more than a dozen U.S. states, with more states and localities actively considering similar measures.

Additionally, 61% of leaders expect an increase in job postings requiring fully in-person or onsite work. This expectation highlights the impact of ongoing debates over return-to-office mandates and potentially signals a decrease in the number of jobs being performed away from a physical workplace, which has increased in recent years.¹⁰ As more organizations advocate for a return to the physical workplace, shifts in this trend will reveal how these initiatives are being managed, particularly amid employee pushback and research linking these mandates to increased negative outcomes, such as workplace incivility.¹¹

Recruiting leaders also foresee several declining trends that shed light on recruitment and hiring areas likely to diminish in the next year. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of these leaders predict a reduced emphasis on I&D strategies within recruitment efforts. This anticipated decline is likely linked to actions initiated by the federal government regarding this topic since January 2025. Additionally, nearly 3 in 5 recruiting executives (58%) anticipate a decline in sponsorship opportunities for job candidates on work visas over the next year.

Finally, while many recruiting executives expect in-person or onsite work to gain prominence in job postings, the outlook for hybrid and fully remote arrangements reveals the opposite. One-third (33%) of these leaders anticipate a decline in job postings offering hybrid work, where employees combine onsite and remote work. This expectation is more drastic for fully remote job postings, as 61% of recruiting leaders believe these opportunities will become less or much less prevalent in the next year.



SOURCE: RECRUITING EXECUTIVES: PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES, SHRM, 2025. VISIT [SHRM.ORG/RESEARCH](https://www.shrm.org/research) TO LEARN MORE.

Results based on responses from 292 recruiting executives. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

¹⁰ [April 2025 Current Population Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.](#)

¹¹ [Q1 2025 Civility Index, SHRM, 2025.](#)



WHAT'S NEXT FOR RECRUITING EXECUTIVES?

WHAT'S NEXT FOR RECRUITING EXECUTIVES?

Recruitment executives hold a critical role in shaping the strategies that enable organizations to attract and hire top talent. Amid economic uncertainty and the pressures of wage inflation, their leadership and expertise are essential to keeping organizations competitive. These leaders will be instrumental in securing talent equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to tackle both current and future challenges. In today's dynamic labor market, recruiting executives who effectively execute their strategies will position their organizations for sustained success. Based on results from this research, the following trends are expected.

1. **Finding and hiring talent, especially employees with critical skills, will be the top priority for recruiting executives.**

With many recruiting executives continuing to focus on improving methods of attracting and hiring talent, one-third (33%) cite securing critical talent as their most pressing need in 2025. This priority underscores the vital role these leaders play in guiding their teams to secure an organization's most valuable resource: its people. Amid ongoing uncertainty in a dynamic world of work, attracting skilled individuals who can strengthen organizations from day one and position them for future success is essential. However, addressing these needs remains a challenge, as evidenced by persistent talent challenges in the market and throughout organizations. The strong consensus among recruiting executives on the importance of these strategic priorities underscores their critical role in driving organizational success by leading efforts to attract and hire top talent.

2. **AI will transform recruitment and hiring processes.**

As AI and related technologies evolve, recruiting executives anticipate these tools will play an increasingly transformative role in recruitment and hiring. Over the next year, many of these leaders expect AI to take on a wider range of responsibilities in their function, including automating recruiting tasks, supporting decisions by providing relevant data and metrics, and handling duties traditionally performed by employees. Additionally, many foresee job candidates leveraging AI more frequently, whether in crafting applications or during interviews. These trends highlight the urgency for recruiting executives to fully capitalize on AI's potential. By actively exploring new and innovative ways to integrate AI into their strategies, these leaders can streamline processes and strengthen their organization's ability to compete for top talent.

3. **Recruiting functions will emphasize strategy and alignment.**

Recruiting executives are working to enhance their organization's recruitment strategies as a key objective in 2025. In addition to bolstering these strategies themselves, many of these leaders are also aiming to ensure alignment with overarching business goals. With this approach, recruiting executives are positioning their organizations to proactively attract and hire individuals whose skills directly contribute to achieving these objectives. Additionally, recruiting executives are prioritizing stronger collaboration with hiring managers and other stakeholders, addressing one of the most common functional challenges they face. By fostering stronger engagement and collaboration across hiring teams, recruiting executives enhance their organization's ability to quickly secure talent capable of driving immediate success.





CONCLUSION, METHODOLOGY, RESOURCES, AND ABOUT SHRM

CONCLUSION

These findings highlight the critical role that recruiting executives play in guiding their organizations to secure top talent in 2025 and beyond. Many of these leaders are dedicating efforts to initiatives and strategies that attract individuals with critical knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to propel their organizations forward in an evolving world of work. With AI and advancing technologies set to drive ongoing transformation across workplaces and recruitment functions, organizations across all industries face the challenge of building a workforce equipped to adapt and thrive. By refining recruitment strategies, these executives are unlocking new opportunities to connect with and secure the talent necessary for sustained organizational success.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 292 heads of recruiting was surveyed between Feb. 21 and March 8, 2025. The survey was fielded electronically using the SHRM Voice of Work Research Panel. For the purposes of this survey, participants were required to lead their organization's recruiting function, either as their defined role or as a part of their broader responsibilities. Participants represent organizations across multiple types of industries, sectors, sizes, and locations. Data was not weighted.

How to cite this research: *Recruiting Executives: Priorities and Perspectives*, SHRM, 2025.

SHRM RESOURCES

- » [People + Strategy Podcast: "The Skilled Trade Shortage"](#)
- » [SHRM Thought Leadership: CHRO Priorities and Perspectives Report](#)
- » [SHRM Thought Leadership: 2025 SHRM State of the Workplace Report](#)
- » [How-To Guide: How HR Can Write Better AI Prompts for Interview Questions](#)
- » [Untapped Talent: Unlocking the Potential of Overlooked People](#)
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