



General Assembly Survey QuickRead Report May 2019

METHODOLOGY

An online survey of 500 hiring managers hiring for white-collar positions

CONTENT QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is the biggest talent-related challenge facing your company right now?

Response	%
Growing competition - competing with other companies to hire and retain top talent	41%*
Lack of qualified candidates - not enough with the right skills for open positions	38%
Growing recruitment costs - high cost of finding qualified talent	35%
Outdated skills - employees not having the skills to meet current business challenges	25%
High turnover - employees depart the company too frequently	24%
Lack of leadership vision – leadership doesn't plan ahead for technological disruptions	15%

* All decimals are rounded to the nearest percentage point. This may result in certain numerical totals adding up to slightly more or slightly less than 100%.



2. In the past year, which of the following initiatives, if any, has your company adopted specifically to help recruit and/or retain top talent?

Response	%
Increasing efforts in upskilling, such as training employees to advance in their current position new skills	47%
Increasing recruiting investment, such as spending more on job boards or career fairs	47%
Improving benefits, such as more in-office perks or more generous paid leave	45%
Changing hiring practices, such as focusing more on skills-based hiring rather than experience-based	43%
Increasing efforts in reskilling, such as training employees to move them into a different position	42%
More frequent raises, such as increasing salary to retain top employees	40%
None of these	2%
QuickFacts[±]	
Increasing efforts in upskilling / reskilling (net)	69%
Any (net)	98%

[±] Data under "QuickFacts" were derived from the responses, not included as response options that were read during fielding. We include QuickFacts in instances where we feel they will be helpful.



3. Which of the following, if any, do you believe are barriers preventing your company from investing more on formal trainings for employees?

Response	%
Financial cost, such as not having enough spending budget	44%
Difficulty in measuring, such as determining whether trainings are adding value	44%
Time cost, such as not having enough time in a work day	44%
Lack of buy-in from employees, such as low employee participation	34%
Lack of buy-in from leadership, such as not enough support from upper management	30%
Difficulty in planning, such as selecting topics to provide training in	29%
None of these	6%
QuickFacts	
Any (net)	94%

4. When hiring for new employees, which of the following attributes, if any, does your company focus on more now than it did 5 years ago? Meaning, paying more attention to these attributes when reviewing candidates.

Response	%
Soft skills, such as strong communication skills or work ethic	53%
Advanced digital skills, such as in data analytics or programming	52%
Higher education, such as graduate or post-graduate studies	47%
Unique work history, such as having experience in a different industry from my company's	47%
Prestigious work history, such as at growing tech firms like Google, Amazon, or Netflix	32%
None of these	3%
QuickFacts	
Any (net)	97%



5. If your company has ever rewarded or promoted an employee for gaining a new technical skill, in which of the following ways, if any, were they rewarded?

Response	%
A raise	54%
More responsibilities, such as managerial oversight	50%
A spot bonus	44%
A title change	41%
Other	2%
My company does not reward or promote employees for gaining new technical skills	4%
QuickFacts	
Company has rewarded or promoted an employee for gaining a new technical skill (net)	96%

(Among those whose company has rewarded or promoted an employee for gaining a new technical skill)

Response	%
A raise	56%
More responsibilities, such as managerial oversight	52%
A spot bonus	45%
A title change	43%
Other	2%

6. Have you ever had to lay off someone, specifically because your company adopted new technology that made the person's job irrelevant or redundant?

Response	%
Yes, more than one person	57%
Yes, one person	13%
No	30%
QuickFacts	
Yes (net)	70%



7. When your company needs more employees with advanced digital skills, which of the following is your company most likely to do?

Response	%
Train existing employees	45%
Hire new employees	43%
Outsource or hire a freelancer	12%

8. When recruiting or hiring for roles requiring advanced digital skills, on average, approximately how long does it take for your company to fill a position? Meaning, the average time from initially posting or beginning to recruit candidates until the position is filled.

Response	%
1-2 weeks	18%
3-4 weeks	21%
5-6 weeks	13%
Over 6 weeks	39%
My company has not recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills	8%
QuickFacts	
Company has recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills (net)	92%
Average (weeks)	8

(Among those whose company has recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills)

Response	%
1-2 weeks	20%
3-4 weeks	23%
5-6 weeks	14%
Over 6 weeks	43%
QuickFacts	
Average (weeks)	8



9. Which of the following specific advanced digital skills do you think are most difficult to find when recruiting new employees?

(Asked among those whose company has recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills)

Response	%
Cybersecurity, such as protecting intellectual property and private information stored on computers or networks	31%
IT infrastructure / system administration, such as maintaining or upgrading computer systems	27%
DevOps, such as understanding how to deliver features, fixes, and updates to programs and applications to maximize business efficiency	25%
Programming, such as writing code for web and mobile applications	24%
Data science, such as machine learning and predictive analytics	24%
Product management, such as overseeing the development and deployment of web applications and digital products	22%
Digital marketing, such as using online and digital channels to promote products / services	21%
UX/UI design, such as designing the interface for web and mobile applications	14%

10. On average, approximately how much would you estimate your company spends recruiting and hiring for a role requiring advanced digital skills? For example, the total amount of money spent across job postings, recruitment site subscriptions and/or outsourced recruitment services or firms.

(Asked among those whose company has recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills)

Response	%
Less than \$500	20%
\$500-\$1,000	25%
\$1,001-\$5,000	27%
Over \$5,000	28%
QuickFacts	
Average (dollars)	\$23,662



11. Approximately how much more, if any, does your company spend on recruiting for positions that require advanced digital skills, compared to positions that don't require those skills?

(Asked among those whose company has recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills)

Response	%
1-10% more	29%
11-25% more	30%
26-50% more	25%
51-75% more	10%
More than 75% more	3%
My company does not spend any more on recruiting for advanced digital skills	3%
QuickFacts	
1-50% more (net)	84%
More than 50% more (net)	12%
Company spends more on recruiting for advanced digital skills (net)	97%

(Among those whose company spends more on recruiting for advanced digital skills)

Response	%
1-10% more	30%
11-25% more	31%
26-50% more	26%
51-75% more	10%
More than 75% more	3%
QuickFacts	
1-50% more (net)	87%
More than 50% more (net)	13%

12. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement – employees with adequate advanced digital skills are some of the most difficult positions to hire.

(Asked among those whose company has recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills)

Response	%
Agree strongly	37%
Agree somewhat	57%
Disagree somewhat	4%
Disagree strongly	2%
QuickFacts	
Agree (net)	94%
Disagree (net)	6%



13. For which of the following reasons do you feel employees with adequate advanced digital skills are some of the most difficult positions to hire?

(Asked among those who agree employees with adequate advanced digital skills are some of the most difficult positions to hire)

Response	%
The standard or required skills change more than other types of positions	53%
Candidates typically want more in salary or benefits than we can offer	44%
There is too much competition for talent, meaning with other companies	44%
Recruiters don't understand the field well enough to select candidates	35%

14. On average, approximately how many total hours would you estimate employees spend onboarding a new employee in a role requiring advanced digital skills? Meaning, the total time that human resources, supervisors or other existing staff spend specifically on training and orienting the employee to the skills, processes and tools required for the job.

(Asked among those whose company has recruited or hired for roles requiring advanced digital skills)

Response	%
Less than 8 hours	8%
8-39 hours	24%
40-80 hours	41%
Over 80 hours	27%
QuickFacts	
Average (hours)	80

15. If employees at your company had adequate advanced digital skills training, how confident are you, if at all, that they could advance to a degree that would place your company as a digital leader in your industry?

Response	%
Very confident	45%
Somewhat confident	50%
Not very confident	4%
Not at all confident	0%
QuickFacts	
Confident (net)	95%
Not confident (net)	5%



Methodological Notes:

The General Assembly Survey was conducted by Wakefield Research (www.wakefieldresearch.com) among 500 hiring managers hiring for white-collar positions, between May 3 and May 15, 2019, using an email invitation and an online survey.

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. For the interviews conducted in this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 4.4 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.