

2025 UK SALARY, BENEFITS & HIRING GUIDE

Software Engineering Edition



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our report.

Welcome to the develop 2025 UK Salary, Benefits & Guide: Software Engineering Edition!

At **develop**, we understand that In the competitive world of tech hiring, salary remains a critical factor in attracting top talent. While job satisfaction, stability, work-life balance and are increasingly important, staying competitive with salary expectations essential for is companies looking to secure the best candidates

With insights from 367 technology professionals across the UK, this salary, benefits and hiring guide provides a clear snapshot of the current state of the tech hiring landscape, actionable data, and recommendations to help empower businesses to make data-driven decisions and refine their hiring strategies.

By diving into this report, you'll uncover the most pressing concerns, preferences, and expectations of technology professionals in 2025.

We're excited to share this indepth report with you!



but first, here's a little about us.

We are a leading contributor to the technology and software engineering communities, and a disruptive recruitment business.

develop have been part of the software engineering ecosystem for nearly 15 years, partnering with the world's most forward-thinking companies. We specialise in product-based solutions for both permanent and contract recruitment, shaped to support the cutting-edge projects and ambitions of technology teams on a global level.

these are our software engineering brands.

we speak your language.













At develop, we're passionate about connecting your business with top technical talent, helping you scale with tailored recruitment solutions that drive innovation and success.

Our teams are talented, our processes are sophisticated, and our commitment to the tech community is unmatched.

Some of the world's most recognisable brands consider us as their key partners including:





key findings.

We've created this **2025 Salary**, **Benefits & Hiring Guide** to provide valuable insights into the latest salary trends and highlight significant shifts in the job market.

Whether you're a software engineer planning your next career move or an employer looking to attract top talent, this guide offers a comprehensive view of what truly drives the software engineering workforce today.

Key findings from our report include:

- 50% of our respondents expect a salary increase of at least 7% in 2025.
- 68% of software engineering professionals prioritise remote work flexibility when considering a new role.
- The top three factors influencing job decisions are base salary, company culture, and hybrid work options.
- On average, software engineering professionals prefer 2 interview stages, finding lengthy processes a deterrent.

These findings demonstrate a strong demand for adaptability and efficiency in **hiring practices**. Companies that align with these priorities are better positioned to attract and retain top software engineering talent in an increasingly competitive landscape.

Keen to learn how? Let's dive right in!

Discover what matters to talent.

50%

of software engineering professionals expect a salary increase of at least 7% in 2025.

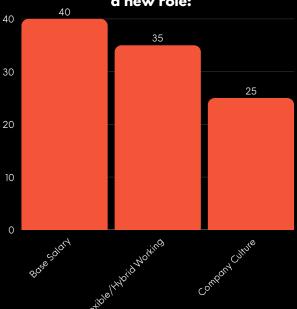
68%

of software engineering professionals prioritise remote work flexibility when considering a new role.

On average, software engineers prefer

interviews

The top priorities of software engineering professionals when choosing a new role:



The above figures reflect multiple questions and choices per respondent.



so, where is talent located?

The UK is home to a vibrant and diverse technology workforce, distributed across several major hubs and emerging regions. This guide reveals key insights into where tech talent thrives.

Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Scotland accounts for **8%** of our respondents, showcasing growth in areas like gaming, fintech, and software development. The combination of lifestyle benefits and growing venture capital interest makes these two cities attractive to professionals.

Leeds.

Holding **5%**, Leeds has positioned itself as a leader in digital transformation, particularly within the health and legal tech sectors.

Midlands.

With 10% of tech professionals, Birmingham has emerged as a rising star, attracting talent in cloud computing, big data, and healthcare technology.

Manchester.

Approximately 15% of our respondents identified Manchester as their base. The city is a leading hub for e-commerce and digital marketing, driven by significant investments and its reputation for affordable living.

Bristol and Bath.

This southwest region claims **7%** of tech talent, with strengths in renewable energy technologies, aerospace innovation, and creative tech industries.

London.

Over 40% of our respondents reside in London, making it the undisputed leader for tech innovation. The city offers the highest concentration of opportunities in sectors like fintech, Al, and cybersecurity. However, with rising living costs, tech professionals are seeking better worklife balance in other regions.





let's break it down.

how much do Java developers earn across the UK?

This section provides a detailed analysis of **Java developer** salaries for different experience levels—junior, mid, and senior—across key UK locations, including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, the Midlands, London, Bristol, and Bath.

Whether you're looking to hire top talent or plan competitive compensation packages, gain valuable insights into how salaries vary by region and align with the thriving Java development market.

Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Junior: £35,000 and – £45,000

• Mid-Level: £45,000 - £55,000

• Senior: £55,000 - £65,000

Midlands.

• Junior: £28,000 – £38,000

• Mid-Level: £38,000 - £48,000

• Senior: £48,000 - £58,000

Leeds.

• Junior: £30,000 - £40,000

• Mid-Level: £40,000 - £50,000

• Senior: £50,000 - £60,000

Manchester.

• Junior: £30,000 – £40,000

• Mid-Level: £40,000 - £50,000

• Senior: £50,000 - £60,000

Bristol and Bath.

• Junior: £28,000 - £38,000

• Mid-Level: £38,000 - £48,000

• Senior: £48,000 - £58,000

London.

• Junior: £40,000 – £50,000

• Mid-Level: £50,000 - £65,000

• Senior: £65,000 - £80,000



how much do .NET developers earn across the UK?

This section provides essential insights into the salary ranges for .NET developers categorised by experience levels and locations. Whether you're hiring for junior, mid-level, or senior roles, gain a comprehensive understanding of how compensation varies from Edinburgh to London and other key UK regions, helping you stay competitive in attracting top .NET talent.

Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Junior: median £24,973

Mid-Level: median £49,781

• Senior: £58,000

most in-demand roles.

.NET developers make up a majority of the workforce surveyed, commanding an average salary of £55,687.

Leeds.

Junior: £30,000 – £35,000

• Mid-Level: £35,000 - £47,500

• Senior: £47,500 - £60,000

Midlands.

• Junior: £30,000 – £35,000

• Mid-Level: £35,000 - £47,500

• Senior: £47,500 – £60,000

Manchester.

• Junior: £30,000 - £35,000

• Mid-Level: £35,000 - £47,500

• Senior: £47,500 - £60,000

Bristol and Bath.

• Junior: £30,000 – £35,000

• Mid-Level: £35,000 - £47,500

• Senior: £47,500 – £60,000

London.

Junior: £35,000 – £40,000

• Mid-Level: £50,000 - £60,000

• Senior: £75,000+



how much do JavaScript developers earn across the UK?

This section offers a comprehensive breakdown of **JavaScript developer** salaries across various experience levels and UK locations. Whether you're hiring for junior, mid-level, or senior roles, gain insights into earning potential in cities like Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, and London, and understand how regional trends impact the demand for JavaScript talent.

Edinburgh and Glasgow.

• Junior: £40,000 - £45,000

• Mid-Level: £45,000 - £55,000

• Senior: £55,000 – £65,000

specialised talent.

Cross-functional roles combining .NET and JavaScript are also notable, with an average salary of £61,952, reflecting their versatility in handling varied development needs.

Leeds.

• Junior: £35,000 – £45,000

• Mid-Level: £45,000 - £55,000

• Senior: £55,000 - £65,000

Midlands.

• Junior: £30,000 - £40,000

• Mid-Level: £40,000 - £50,000

• Senior: £50,000 - £60,000

Manchester.

• Junior: £35,000 - £45,000

• Mid-Level: £45,000 - £55,000

• Senior: £55,000 - £65,000

Bristol and Bath

• Junior: £30,000 – £42,000

• Mid-Level: £42,500 - £55,000

• Senior: £55,000 - £62,500

London.

• Junior: £40,000- £50,000

• Mid-Level: £50,000 - £77,500

• Senior: £77,500 - £92,500





how much do python developers earn across the UK?

This section provides an in-depth look at salary ranges for **Python developers** across various experience levels and key UK locations. Whether you're looking to hire for junior, mid-level, or senior roles, explore how compensation varies from Edinburgh to Bath and gain valuable insights into the growing demand for Python talent.

Edinburgh and Glasgow.

- Junior: median £22,500
- Mid-Level: median £56,619
- Senior: median £65,000

top earning roles.

Professionals working with **Python** command the highest average salary at **£73,000**, indicating strong demand for Python expertise in high-growth areas like data science, machine learning, and automation.

Leeds.

- Junior: median £22,500
- Mid-Level: median £50,619
- Senior: median £65,000

Midlands.

- Junior: median £22,500
- Mid-Level: median £56,619
- Senior: median £65,000

Manchester.

- Junior: median £22,500
- Mid-Level: median £57,439
- Senior: median £67,000

Bristol and Bath.

- Junior: median £32,420
- Mid-Level: median £50,619
- Senior: median £67,000

London.

- Junior: median £36,642
- Mid-Level: median £57,409
- Senior: £85,000 £105,000



how much do PHP developers earn across the UK?

This section offers an in-depth breakdown of **PHP developer** salaries by experience level and location. If you're looking to hire junior, mid-level, or senior developers, gain insights into how earning potential varies across UK cities and leverage this data to stay competitive in attracting top PHP talent.

Edinburgh and Glasgow.

• Junior: £25,000 - £30,000

• Mid-Level: £35,000 - £45,000

• Senior: £45,000 - £55,000

Leeds.

• Junior: £28,000 - £32,000

• Mid-Level: £35,000 - £45,000

• Senior: £45,000 - £55,000

Midlands.

• Junior: £25,000 – £30,000

• Mid-Level: £32,000 - £42,000

• Senior: £42,000 – £52,000

Manchester.

• Junior: £27,000 - £32,000

• Mid-Level: £35,000 - £45,000

• Senior: £45,000 - £55,000

Bristol and Bath

• Junior: £26,000 – £30,000

• Mid-Level: £32,000 - £42,000

• Senior: £42,000 - £52,000

London.

• Junior: £30,000 – £35,000

• Mid-Level: £45,000 - £55,000

• Senior: £55,000 - £70,000



how much do embedded developers earn across the UK?

This section offers a comprehensive breakdown of **embedded developer** salaries by experience level and location. For those hiring junior, mid-level, or senior embedded developers, gain insights into how compensation varies from the Midlands to London, and understand the growing demand for embedded expertise across industries.

Edinburgh and Glasgow.

• Junior: median £28,500

• Mid-Level: median £41,000

• Senior: median £49,483

Leeds.

• Junior: median £26,000

• Mid-Level: median £38,000

• Senior: median £50,000

Midlands.

• Junior: median £25,000

• Mid-Level: median £37,000

• Senior: median £48,000

Manchester.

• Junior: median £26,000

Mid-Level: median £38,000

• Senior: median £50,000

Bristol and Bath

• Junior: median £28,000

• Mid-Level: median £42,000

• Senior: median £55,000

London.

Junior: median £30,000

• Mid-Level: median £45,000

Senior: £60,000



the shift toward remote-friendly regions.

The appeal of regional hubs is growing as remote work reshapes hiring strategies. Many professionals now prioritise access to affordable housing, shorter commutes, and better quality of life. As a result, businesses embracing hybrid or fully remote models can attract top talent from these areas, reducing dependency on traditional locations like London.

regional salary comparisons.

Salaries also reflect regional trends, with professionals in London earning an average of **20-30%** more than their counterparts in other parts of the UK. However, when adjusted for living costs, cities like Manchester and Birmingham offer greater overall affordability.

leveraging regional diversity.

To stay competitive, employers must broaden their approach, focusing on engaging with talent in underutilised regions. By tapping into these diverse hubs, businesses can access new pools of highly skilled professionals eager to contribute to dynamic projects.

boost retention with remote flexibility.

68% of tech professionals prioritise remote work flexibility when considering a new role. Providing remote or hybrid working options not only helps businesses attract top talent but also supports their employees' work-life balance, ultimately improving talent retention and satisfaction.

key trends.

- Python's dominance in high-paying sectors signals a continued shift towards Al and data-centric roles, which are rapidly growing in demand.
- To stay competitive, businesses must balance their hiring strategies between widely-used languages like JavaScript and emerging highvalue skills in Python, ensuring they attract the right talent for both broad and niche requirements.

experience and seniority levels.

Experience levels significantly impact salary expectations and workforce dynamics in the technology industry. Let's explore how compensation evolves with seniority, providing critical benchmarks for entry-level, mid-level, and senior professionals.

emerging talent at junior levels.

While professionals with 0-1 years of experience represent the smallest group of our respondents, their competitive salaries indicate that employers are willing to invest in fresh talent with strong potential.

This suggests that entry-level roles in high-demand areas (e.g., data science, cloud computing) are becoming increasingly valuable.

mid-level professionals drive growth

The mid-level talent pool i.e. 6-10 years of experience earns an average salary of £50,648, reflecting their contribution to both execution and mentorship within teams.

Employers should target this group with leadership training and skills development programs to build a strong succession pipeline.

senior professionals' impact

Professionals with 10+ years of experience earn the highest salaries (£80,960-£100,000+).

These individuals bring expertise and stability to organisations, making them critical for strategic roles. Employers can maximise their value by offering executive coaching and consulting opportunities.

salary growth by experience.

There is a notable salary increase with experience, particularly for professionals transitioning from mid-level to senior roles.

However, early-career professionals (0-1 years) receive competitive salaries compared to those with 2-3 years, reflecting **demand for fresh talent in niche or high-demand areas**.

actionable insights.

Senior professionals (10+ years of experience) command the highest salaries and are essential to the organisational expertise, while **junior professionals** offer a cost-effective way to bring in fresh talent and new perspectives.

To retain **mid-level professionals**, employers should emphasise clear career growth pathways. Providing tailored mentorship and leadership programs for senior talent can help leverage their experience, foster retention, and ensure their expertise is passed down to the next generation.

Developing mentorship programs that bridge the gap between junior and senior staff will promote knowledge transfer, ensuring both retention and continuous development. For mid-level professionals, offering clear paths to leadership roles maximises their long-term potential and strengthens the overall talent pipeline within the organisation.

salary satisfaction.

Compensation continues to be a pivotal factor for tech professionals. Our survey reveals that **60%** of respondents are somewhat or very satisfied with their current salary.

Interestingly, salary satisfaction tends to increase with experience, as senior developers and managers report higher satisfaction compared to those in entry-level roles.

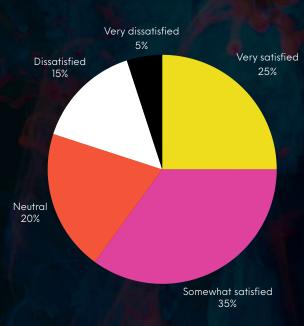
43% of software engineering professionals with over a decade of experience command salaries well above industry averages, reflecting the value placed on expertise.

To attract senior talent, businesses should focus on showcasing career development opportunities, leadership roles, and a strong company vision. Senior professionals often value the ability to influence decisions and lead strategic initiatives, as salary satisfaction is typically less of a concern.

For entry-level professionals, businesses can stand out by offering clear career progression paths, learning and development opportunities, and linking salary growth to milestones. Highlighting a supportive environment and maintaining transparent expectations further enhances the appeal. By aligning their approach with the priorities of each group, businesses can effectively attract both senior and junior talent.

For companies, aligning salary packages with market expectations is crucial to attract top-tier talent. Transparency around compensation during the hiring process plays a significant role in securing candidates.

distribution of salary satisfaction.



Our data reveals varying levels of satisfaction among software engineering professionals regarding their salaries. While **25%** report being very satisfied, indicating that their compensation aligns well with their expectations, a notable **35%** are somewhat satisfied, suggesting room for improvement.

Meanwhile, 20% remain neutral, potentially reflecting uncertainty or ambivalence about their pay. On the other hand, 15% are dissatisfied, and 5% are very dissatisfied, creating a total of 40% who are either neutral or dissatisfied.

This highlights a key opportunity for businesses: these individuals may be open to better offers, making them prime candidates for companies offering competitive compensation, clear growth opportunities, and appealing benefits.

more than money.

While salary is a cornerstone of job satisfaction, other factors carry significant weight in career decisions too.

Our survey highlights that **74%** of respondents value flexible or hybrid working options as a top priority. Additionally, **65%** consider company culture pivotal, often citing strong leadership and a collaborative environment as key drivers of satisfaction. Opportunities for career growth, mentorship, and skills development also feature prominently among desired attributes.

By combining flexible work arrangements, a supportive culture, and development pathways, hiring managers can create an offer beyond financial compensation that aligns with what software engineering professionals are looking for.

what technology professionals want.

74%

of software engineering professionals consider Flexible / hybrid working options extremely important

65%

see the company culture a priority

benefits.

When evaluating a new role, software engineering professionals carefully consider the benefits package as a decisive factor, often prioritising it as highly as salary.

Our survey uncovered the following trends among respondents:

- Flexible Working Arrangements: A standout 80% of software engineering professionals ranked this as the most important benefit. Flexibility includes the ability to work remotely or adopt hybrid models, allowing employees to achieve a better work-life balance.
- Professional Development Opportunities: Over 65% of respondents value companies that invest in their skills. Access to training programs, certifications, and conferences creates a pathway for career growth, which is a significant motivator.
- Equity and Profit-Sharing Schemes: Start-ups and high-growth companies often attract top talent by offering equity. 48% of respondents noted that being a stakeholder in a company's success was a powerful incentive.
- Health and Wellness Perks: A comprehensive health insurance package, gym memberships, and wellness programs are highly appreciated, with 55% citing these as key benefits.
- Generous Leave Policies: Software engineering professionals emphasised the importance of having adequate paid leave, parental leave, and mental health days to recharge. 40% of respondents reported this as a crucial factor when comparing job offers.
- Performance Bonuses: Over 50% of surveyed professionals are motivated by bonuses tied to individual or team performance, ensuring alignment between personal contributions and company success.
- Tech Allowances: In addition to salary, 30% of software engineering professionals appreciate stipends for purchasing equipment like laptops or home office setups, enabling them to work effectively from anywhere.



Organisations offering tailored, well-rounded perks are better positioned to attract and retain top professionals in a competitive market. As employees increasingly seek roles that align with their personal values and professional goals, benefits that foster holistic well-being and growth are no longer optional but essential.

beyond the pay-cheque: company values.

In today's competitive job market, attracting top talent goes beyond offering competitive salaries. Candidates prefer working in a compelling company culture that resonates with them on a deeper level.

We've highlighted some key factors that businesses should focus on to differentiate themselves and appeal to the best candidates. By effectively communicating core values, promoting transparent leadership, and offering clear opportunities for career development, businesses can build a workplace culture that attracts and retains talent.

values and mission.

Businesses can benefit from clearly communicating their core values and mission across websites, social media, and job descriptions. By sharing real examples of how these values are practiced daily, companies can help candidates connect with a purpose-driven culture that resonates with their own beliefs.

employee testimonials and stories.

Companies can share employee stories through videos, blog posts, and social media to offer authentic insights into workplace culture.

These stories can highlight how collaboration and leadership contribute to career growth and development.

leadership and transparency.

Businesses can encourage open communication from leadership by sharing regular updates on goals, challenges, and successes.

This approach helps build trust and reinforces a supportive culture, while also showcasing the strength of the leadership team.

offer clear career development and mentorship programs.

Organisations can emphasise their commitment to employee growth by offering clear career paths, mentorship, and training programs.

This demonstrates to potential hires that the company values their development, creating a supportive and forward-thinking culture.

is a degree necessary?

The value of formal education in software engineering is being redefined. Our findings reveal that hiring managers are increasingly prioritising practical experience and certifications over traditional degrees. Here's the breakdown of how different credentials weigh in hiring decisions:

- Practical Experience: 55% of hiring managers rank this as the most important factor. Demonstrating hands-on skills through real-world projects or previous roles often outweighs formal qualifications.
- **Certifications**: **30%** of respondents value industry-recognised certifications, such as AWS, Azure, or Google Cloud, as clear indicators of specific technical expertise.
- Degrees: Only 15% of hiring managers view degrees as a critical requirement, reflecting the shift toward skills-based hiring.

This shift opens opportunities for non-traditional candidates and underscores the importance of demonstrating proficiency and a growth mindset.

55%

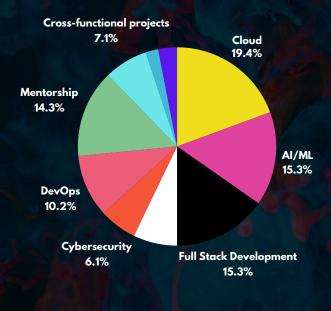
Practial Experience

30%

Certifications

15%

Degree



When asked about the skills and career development programs being prioritised in 2025, the responses reflect a clear focus on emerging technologies and leadership development.

Cloud skills lead the way with 19%, followed by Al/ML at 15%, and Full Stack Development also at 15%. Data Engineering (7%) and Cybersecurity (6%) remain important, while DevOps skills are prioritised by 10%.

Mentorship and leadership development stand at 14%, underlining the growing emphasis on leadership training.

Other areas of interest include cross-functional projects (7%), Blockchain (2%), and a range of specialised skills like Architecture, Automation Testing, Transitional Change, and ETL (3%). This data highlights the key areas where professionals are investing in their growth to stay competitive in an evolving tech landscape.

By equipping employees with these essential tools and highlighting them as learning opportunities in job descriptions, businesses can effectively differentiate yourself in the market.

the interview process.

Software engineering professionals prefer interview processes that are efficient and transparent. With 2 interview stages being the preferred norm, lengthy or overly complex processes often deter candidates from pursuing opportunities further.

Streamlined interviews not only enhance the candidate experience but also expedite hiring decisions, giving companies a competitive edge in securing talent.

Clear communication of expectations and feedback during the process also leaves a positive impression on candidates, strengthening employer branding.

interview stages.



Our survey reveals a clear preference for simplicity in interview stages. The majority of respondents favour:

- A technical assessment or coding test to evaluate skills.
- A final interview with team leads or decision-makers to assess cultural fit and finalise decisions.

Companies adopting this streamlined approach report higher candidate satisfaction and improved hiring outcomes. Overly complex interview processes risk losing top talent to competitors.

when talent searches.

Understanding when and why talent searches for new roles is essential for crafting effective retention and recruitment strategies. Let's examine the frequency with which professionals expect to change roles for career growth, shedding light on their motivations and expectations. Businesses can leverage this intel to align their practices with employee needs and industry trends.



key trends in role-change frequency.

- Most professionals prefer stability but look for growth every 2-3 years, emphasising the need for ongoing development opportunities within this timeframe.
- However, frequent changes (e.g., annually) are less common, indicating that professionals prioritise growth opportunities within a role before moving on.

employer strategy.

- To attract long-term talent, focus on creating visible career progression paths and regular salary reviews.
- For roles prone to annual turnover, implement engagement strategies such as tailored rewards or upskilling opportunities to retain top performers.

These insights can help employers align career progression and development opportunities with retention strategies.



where talent searches.

When exploring new opportunities, software engineering professionals rely on a combination of platforms.

Leading the way are job boards like LinkedIn, Indeed, and Glassdoor, with 43.5% of professionals turning to these platforms for job searches. Recruitment agencies follow closely behind, trusted by 19.9% of respondents, particularly for high-value roles.

In today's digital age, job searching has evolved into a strategic process. Gone are the days of flipping through classified ads; professionals now have access to an array of resources to find their next career move. 13.3% of tech professionals rely on professional networks to explore opportunities, while 12.5% prefer direct applications through company websites.

Networking within professional communities and attending industry events are crucial for many, with 6.0% using referrals from their connections and 4.8% leveraging social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter to discover job openings.

For employers, optimising their presence across these channels is essential. A strong, multi-platform strategy ensures better engagement with top talent and helps build robust talent pipelines for the future.



use Recruiters only

websites

use Professional **Networks**

use company

use Referrals





what's next?

The findings from this survey provides a clear roadmap for businesses to navigate the evolving software engineering hiring landscape.

To succeed in 2025, companies can focus on:

- Offering competitive salaries that align with market expectations.
- Enhancing flexibility in work arrangements to attract a diverse workforce.
- Investing in career development opportunities to retain top talent.
- Simplifying interview processes to improve the candidate experience.

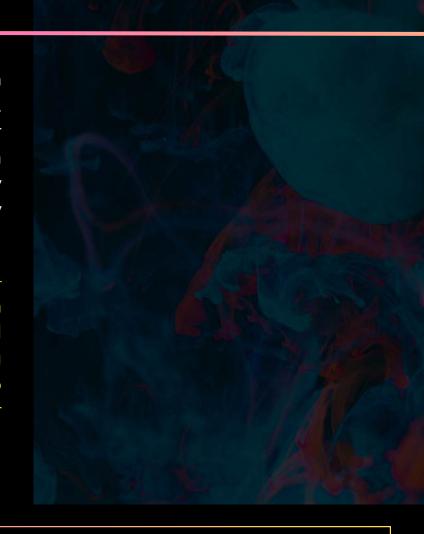
By applying these insights, businesses can refine their hiring strategies to position themselves as employers of choice in a dynamic and competitive market, attracting and retaining the best talent.



contact us.

With 15 years of experience in software engineering recruitment, we provide tailored solutions that streamline your hiring process—from strategy to onboarding—backed by expert consultants who truly understand your needs.

To learn more, send us a message — our consultants are true experts in their respective niche markets, and we'd love to chat. We also offer a **free**, **no-obligation assessment** to help you better understand your options





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