



Software Engineering &
Application Development
Hiring Trends 2025

The Software Engineering & App Development market is evolving, creating both opportunities and challenges for recruiters, hiring managers, and business leaders. On the one hand, organisations now have access to more talent, thanks to the rise of remote and flexible working solutions.

On the other hand, attracting, engaging and retaining talent is becoming increasingly complex. More than 90% of businesses say they're struggling to find the candidates with the skills they need and keep their most valuable employees within the workplace.

Technology is evolving and there is an increasing demand for new, novel skill sets. Competition among employers is also increasing and new generations of candidates are making career decisions based on various priorities. In this landscape, businesses need to rethink their approach to recruitment.

Software Engineering leaders can no longer rely on old-fashioned approaches to talent sourcing or assume that a strong remuneration package will guarantee access to the right candidates.

The organisations that thrive in 2025 will be those that embrace innovative new technologies, invest in cultural transformation and find new ways to engage, develop, and empower talented teams.

In this guide, we'll discuss some of the major factors influencing the Software Engineering hiring and recruitment space in 2025 and how they'll affect your approach to finding and retaining employees. We'll show you how you can develop a proactive, future-proof strategy for talent acquisition and stay one step ahead of the competition.

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Welcome to the new age of Software Engineering recruitment, defined by evolving global talent pools, cutting-edge technology, and evolving economic pressures.

Today's marketplace offers excellent opportunities for forward-thinking businesses willing to adapt to candidates' changing needs. However, there are challenges to overcome.

Let's explore the defining characteristics of the Software Engineering talent market in 2025.

Shifting Talent Pools

The overall engineering talent pool will change in several ways in 2025. First, new generations of employees are entering the fold with new priorities to consider. These employees are looking for more flexible work, access to innovative technologies, and job offers from companies that share their values and societal concerns.

At the same time, global hiring and remote work are reshaping talent strategies. While tapping into international candidates can fill skill gaps, it also brings challenges. Just as companies will need to find a way to align employees from

Businesses must have an efficient and comprehensive hiring process if they are to find the 'diamonds in the rough'.

different generational groups, they'll need to implement strategies to maintain team cohesion among staff with various cultural differences.

In the months ahead, there will likely be an increasing focus on finding ways to connect and align workers, ensuring businesses can build more diverse teams.

Economic Issues

The economy is still in a difficult state moving into 2025. High interest rates, global debt, and social unrest are causing a range of issues for both governments and employers. In the engineering hiring landscape, budget restrictions will undoubtedly cause issues for companies trying to find money to invest in hiring and development strategies.

However, companies will need to free up access to resources to ensure they can take advantage of the latest technology, build the best onboarding programs, and offer employees the salaries and benefits they require.

According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Professional Development, in the UK, virtually every company will have to increase pay options in the years ahead as cost-of-living issues continue to impact employees.

Candidate Experience Expectations

In 2025, candidate experience will become a key differentiator in recruitment success. Job seekers will demand more than competitive salaries. They will expect personalised, transparent and seamless interactions throughout the hiring process.

A personalised approach, including tailored communication and relevant job recommendations, can create a stronger connection with candidates. Additionally, transparent and timely updates during the hiring journey foster trust and loyalty.

Companies will need to invest more time and effort into ensuring they deliver an excellent experience to team members throughout their lifecycle with the company, investing in better recruitment processes, onboarding, and continuous development.

Strategic Hiring Imperatives for 2025

With many diverse challenges to overcome, talent acquisition and retention in 2025 will require organisations to become more proactive and creative. They'll need to tap into innovative strategies to attract more talent, expand their hiring pool and improve their chances of stronger relationships with employees.

Technology Integration

Technology is a major factor shaping every part of the recruitment space today. Evolutions in technology aren't just impacting the skills that business leaders seek in top candidates. They're also transforming how companies find, assess, and recruit employees.

AI-driven recruitment platforms are becoming increasingly commonplace as companies look for more effective ways to streamline talent acquisition. While there are dangers to relying too heavily on these platforms, such as the risk of unintentional bias, these tools have benefits.

They can automate time-intensive tasks such as sourcing and screening candidates, enabling hiring teams to focus on building relationships with top talent. By analysing historical data, AI also helps identify the best-fit candidates based on skills, experience, and cultural alignment.

Some solutions can even provide access to predictive insights that help companies forecast future hiring needs and candidate success rates.

Intelligent tools also influence how businesses assess and validate the skills of potential team members. Automated solutions can evaluate candidates' soft and technical skills through quizzes and simulations, helping companies make faster recruitment decisions while reducing the risk of bias.

These tools can help businesses make more data-driven decisions based on employees' abilities and personality traits, supporting diverse hiring efforts.

Technology is also becoming a critical tool for enhancing the candidate experience. For instance, with access to chatbots, companies can immediately answer candidate questions and follow up with them throughout the hiring journey without the need for manual communications.

Intelligent tools can help streamline meeting scheduling or enhance screening by enabling access to virtual asynchronous interviews.

Talent Acquisition Evolution

Engineering & Application Development businesses in 2025 will need to take a holistic and creative approach to finding relevant candidates. Simply listing open positions on job boards won't be enough.

Organisations will need to take a more proactive approach to identifying the candidates they need. This will start with examining existing teams, identifying skill gaps, and forecasting future requirements. It will also mean working with recruitment companies to build talent pipelines filled with active and passive candidates.



At the same time, businesses will begin using more digital channels to search for prospective employees. Already, Gallup suggests that around **50% of the employers** that have recently recruited new employees found them on a social platform or professional networking site.

This trend will likely continue, particularly as companies seek diverse staff members with different skills and backgrounds.

Company strategies for assessing and selecting candidates are changing, too. They focus less on employees specific credentials or educational backgrounds and instead prioritise skills-based hiring and cultural alignment.

If you don't already, you may need to be prepared to experiment with pre-hire tests and personality assessments in the future to gain a closer insight into which candidates hold the most potential for your team. Beyond this, businesses must invest more heavily in onboarding strategies to ensure quicker cultural integrations and better returns from new hires.

Structured, engaging, training with insights into cultural values and team-building exercises will help ensure that new employees can contribute meaningfully to your company's growth from day one.

Organisational Adaptation

The future workplace is dynamic, demanding that businesses embrace flexibility and adaptability. Although many companies encourage employees to return to the workplace part-time, employees will continue to demand flexible opportunities in the years ahead.

Organisations will need to take a more proactive approach to identifying the candidates they need.

To remain competitive and avoid losing talent to other Software Engineering employers, business leaders must be ready to embrace new trends like hybrid and remote working, four-day work weeks and flexible scheduling.

For many companies, this will require an investment not just in new technologies and cloud-based productivity platforms but also in new forms of leadership training. Leaders in Software Engineering organisations must find new ways to keep teams motivated, aligned, and engaged when not in the office.

Leadership training strategies will need to focus on helping managers and supervisors improve alignment between teams from different cultures and manage the complexities associated with other work schedules and staff working from various time zones.

This will be particularly important as diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives remain crucial to building an attractive company culture. Training programs must emphasise/emphasize emotional intelligence, adaptability, and digital communication skills so leaders can make the most out of distributed workforces and new generations of staff.

At the same time, how companies measure and manage performance will need to change in the years ahead. Business leaders will need to find new ways to keep track of staff engagement, productivity and efficiency levels without focusing exclusively on the number of hours they work or how often they're present in the office.

In 2025, there will be an increased focus on constantly monitoring results and creating feedback loops that enable constant process optimization and refinement.

The Importance of Employer Value Proposition in 2025

In the last few years, the importance of “Employer Value Propositions” or “EVPs” has grown significantly for Software Engineering hiring companies. A strong EVP isn't just crucial for attracting talent in a skills-short market; it's essential for retaining employees. According to Gartner, organisations that execute their EVP effectively can reduce employee turnover by 70%.

Building the ideal EVP for 2025 will mean going beyond building an excellent remuneration package and focusing on concepts like value alignment, development, and candidate experience to position your company as an “employer of choice” for top talent. :



Brand Positioning

Building and promoting a compelling employer brand will be critical. It's not enough to tell candidates you're a company focused on sustainability, diversity, or innovation. You need to show them evidence of your unique value proposition.

This means embracing social media platforms and sharing stories about employee achievements, workplace programs, and initiatives that highlight what makes your company so impressive. Create a website that gives candidates a behind-the-scenes view of what it's like to work with your business, with testimonials from staff and insights into your mission or vision.

Cultural Differentiation

"Culture by design" will be a major trend in 2025. Software Engineering hiring companies won't be able to sit back and allow the ideal organisational culture to form independently. They must create a supportive, inclusive environment where collaboration and innovation thrive.

If you still need to do so, now is the time to align the key stakeholders in your business and identify the values that will guide your team into the future. Focus on the cultural factors that matter most to modern employees, such as diversity, equity, inclusion, consistent development, agility, and resilience.

Benefits Innovation

Unique benefits packages will become more important to the hiring landscape in 2025, particularly for companies struggling to keep up with new salary expectations. Leading companies will create benefits packages tailored to the

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needs of specific staff within their environment, carefully considering their priorities and expectations.

Your future benefits packages could include a four-day workweek option for mental health and wellness resources or extended parental leave. Programs designed to reduce stress, improve well-being, and enhance life outside work will stand out, too, as employees prioritise greater work-life balance.

Work Model Flexibility

In 2025, flexibility in the workplace won't just be a "perk"; it will be the norm for countless design and tech companies. Although not every company can embrace fully remote working strategies, some flexibility will be essential. If you can't give your teams the option to work remotely all the time, consider hybrid work schedules instead.

When hybrid work isn't an option, look for ways to give teams more control over their work/life balance, with four-day work weeks or flexible hours. This approach will help you attract a more diverse talent pool to your team and reduce the risk of losing staff to other employers.

Retention and Development Strategies

As talented designers encounter many opportunities from competing employers in 2025, investing in retention and development will become essential. Businesses must focus on upskilling and reskilling existing employees to bridge skill gaps and improve their appeal to potential candidates.

At the same time, they'll need to take a comprehensive approach to keeping staff members motivated, engaged, and aligned to reduce turnover. Here are some critical areas you'll need to focus on to optimise your teams in 2025.

Versatile Talent Development Strategies

A solid approach to career development has always been important to attracting and retaining talent in the Product Design industry. In 2025, however, upskilling, reskilling, and training team members will become a strategic priority. It will be crucial to ensure businesses bypass skill gaps, even in a talent-short environment and keep staff productive.

In 2025, creating highly personalised development and career pathways will be crucial. Business leaders will need to work with team members to understand their goals and priorities, as well as their learning preferences and styles.

Based on each employee's specific career goals, create a development plan for each team member that aligns with your business goals and helps you fill skill gaps. Experiment with various strategies, from online courses and workshops to traditional classes and mentorship programs. Monitor the results of each strategy to see what works.



Developing leadership pipelines and succession planning strategies will also be crucial. As experienced leaders retire or move on, companies need a ready pool of trained individuals to step into critical roles. Developing high-potential employees ensures continuity and prevents knowledge loss while addressing the growing demand for leaders who can manage diverse, remote and hybrid teams.

Engagement Optimisation

Keeping employees engaged is crucial to ensuring they actually want to stay with your company rather than search for opportunities elsewhere. However, investing in employee engagement doesn't just impact retention rates.

According to **Gallup studies**, increased engagement leads to increased earnings per share for virtually every company. In other words, happy and engaged employees make your team more profitable. Building and maintaining engagement starts with developing an incredible company culture that's inclusive, supportive, and innovative.

Focus on creating an environment where employees feel valued, connected, and aligned with the company's mission. Ensure your team members know your company's values and provide training to help staff from diverse backgrounds connect and align effectively.

Businesses must focus on upskilling and reskilling existing employees to bridge skill gaps and improve their appeal to potential candidates.

Invest in enhancing communication to improve company culture and strengthen relationships between team members. Ensure all staff, including hybrid and remote workers, stay connected with virtual meetings and regular all-hands conferencing sessions.

Another key step to keeping employees engaged in 2025 will be developing a comprehensive feedback loop. Business leaders should implement recognition strategies that ensure they can constantly reward and celebrate the contributions of team members. Experiment with diverse recognition strategies and gamification, such as leadership boards, to motivate staff.

Don't wait for an annual review to share feedback with staff members. Commit to regular back-and-forth interactions and check-ins with every employee. Celebrate small wins and proactively work on addressing weaknesses whenever they arrive.

At the same time, make sure you're not just sharing feedback with your teams but actively sourcing it, too. Ask your staff regularly for their ideas on how you can improve the workplace, adjust processes or enhance company culture. One-on-one meetings, anonymous surveys and more will give you an intuitive way to constantly improve employee engagement.

Resource Allocation and ROI Analysis

Strategic resource allocation underpins successful retention and development programs. It's important to think carefully about how and where to allocate resources and how to measure their return on investment.

Technology Investments

Investments in technology, for instance, can transform HR operations and employee experiences. AI-driven learning and performance management platforms can streamline processes while candidate experience tools improve onboarding and integration.

Cloud-based collaboration platforms and project management tools can make monitoring team progress easier, provide constant feedback and align remote staff members. While the upfront costs of these tools can seem significant, their impact can lead to reduced turnover, better efficiency and enhanced performance in the long term.

Training Requirements

From reskilling initiatives to leadership development, training efforts require dedicated budgets and time. However, the return on investment is significant.



Developing, training, and upskilling your employees can reduce future talent acquisition costs, minimise/minimize the costs of employee turnover and improve productivity and efficiency in the workplace.

After implementing a training or development initiative, monitor changes in productivity metrics, retention rates, or absenteeism levels. Consider how training and mentorship strategies have impacted business efficiency or helped reduce error rates.

Process Optimisation

Process optimisation also delivers measurable returns. Streamlined workflows and updated performance management systems save time, reduce errors, and improve employee satisfaction. Similarly, implementing measurement systems to track engagement, productivity and retention ensures that resources are allocated effectively.

Metrics-driven approaches allow leaders to identify areas for improvement and adjust strategies for maximum impact. Invest time regularly assessing your current Product Design processes and techniques and experimenting with new ways to enhance performance and efficiency.

Consider how training and mentorship strategies have impacted business efficiency or helped reduce error rates.

Implementing Your Future-Proof Hiring Strategy

Building a future-proof Software Engineering & IT Development hiring and recruitment strategy in 2025 means more than just being able to adapt quickly to trends. Businesses must take a structured approach to aligning their recruitment efforts, development initiatives and retention strategies with future goals.

Here's a quick step-by-step guide you can use to update your recruitment strategy this year.

Step 1: Resource Allocation

Effective hiring begins with the strategic allocation of resources. Consider how you will assign your budget to different recruitment tools, technology, training, building your employer brand, or seeking support from Software Engineering recruitment teams.

Think carefully about the return on investment you can expect from each initiative rather than just the initial costs. Importantly, be ready to upgrade your strategy in the future as you discover new insights and the hiring market continues to change.

Step 2: Develop your Timeline

Establishing a realistic timeline for implementing new recruitment strategies is essential. After all, if you're making granular changes to everything from how you assess candidates to how you develop new leaders, you can't expect a revolution overnight.

Identify your priorities first, and create a plan for achieving short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals. Short-term milestones might include integrating new technologies or launching recruitment campaigns, while long-term objectives could focus on developing the leadership pipeline.

Step 3: Assigning Team Responsibilities

Defining team roles and responsibilities prevents inefficiencies in the recruitment process. HR professionals, hiring managers, and team leads must collaborate, each playing a specific role in recruitment and onboarding.

Technology specialists might oversee the integration of AI tools, while marketing teams manage employer branding. You may even choose to work with specialised Software Engineering recruitment teams to build on the abilities of your current employees. Clear communication and training across these roles are essential to fostering alignment.

Step 4: Defining and Monitoring Success

Measuring the effectiveness of a hiring strategy requires clearly defined metrics. Key performance indicators (KPIs) include everything from time-to-hire and cost-per-hire to candidate satisfaction and retention rates. Ensure you have a clear and consistent way to constantly track these metrics, whether using analytical tools or surveys to gather feedback.

Regularly analysing your hiring metrics and success rates will ensure you can take strategic steps to improve the return on investment for your recruitment efforts.

Step 5: Risk Mitigation

Future-proof strategies also account for potential risks. Economic fluctuations, skills shortages and rapid technological changes can disrupt hiring plans. Companies can mitigate these risks by building flexibility into their processes, maintaining diverse talent pipelines and fostering internal development to reduce reliance on external hires. Invest in scenario planning to prepare for unexpected challenges and train your teams on agility and adaptability. Consider working with specialist recruitment teams and staffing firms when you need extra support tackling particularly strenuous hiring challenges.

Prepare for the Future of Hiring

The future of hiring demands bold, forward-thinking strategies that address both immediate challenges and long-term goals. Moving into 2025, businesses will need to take a proactive and creative approach to embrace new technologies, enhancing their employer value proposition, and reorganising workplace structures.

They'll also need to focus on developing and upskilling teams to overcome talent gaps, enhance employee engagement and build company cultures where new employees can thrive. Taking a strategic approach to updating your recruitment and talent acquisition strategies now, based on the trends in the current market, will give you a crucial edge in the years ahead.

At the same time, it's important to stay agile. After all, the hiring space will continue to change, introducing new opportunities and challenges to overcome. The steps above will help you to build an adaptable plan for constant recruitment optimisation and long-term success. However, remember to consider the benefits of working with the experts, too.

A professional Engineering & Application Development company can help you to sidestep many of the challenges emerging in today's hiring market, elevate your employer brand and ensure you can access the crucial talent you need for continued growth..

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About Us

Carson Harris Associates was founded by Simon Carson in 2004 as an executive search firm specialising in UX/UI, software engineering and app development.

Simon has over 30 years of experience in the industry, having served previously as the Sales Director of US based, Management Search International. As Managing Director of Carson Harris, Simon oversees our business development and client relationship management, and is on hand to provide one to one guidance on all aspects of the hiring process.

Our delivery teams are based in London, Dublin, and Nairobi, and our consultants have hands-on experience in their specialist fields.

With collaboration always at the heart of what we do, our partner companies now range from startups to globally recognised brands.

At Carson Harris, we've got a proven track record of consistently securing desired outcomes for the companies we work with.

Generating CVs and portfolios is the easy part of recruitment. Understanding the talent behind them is where Carson Harris excels. We give our partners solutions rather than options.

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Testimonials

“We’ve been using Carson Harris for over five years now, since our early startup days, and they’ve been an integral part of our journey. From the outset, they became our first choice for product and UX roles—two areas that are absolutely crucial to the success of our company. Their deep understanding of our needs and ability to deliver top-tier talent has been key to our team’s growth”

Hemal Vaghela

“Carson Harris have been on our PSL for many years and always one of our first go to’s for software devs and UX designers. They build proper relationships and the calibre of candidate they provide is always top notch. I’ve dealt with dozens of agencies over the years and Carson Harris will always be one of my favourites for the professionalism they provide as well as the relationships I’ve built with them. Could not recommend them more highly!”

Sarah Lamontagne

“I have used Carson Harris for both perm and contract placements and wholeheartedly recommend them. I always feel incredibly well taken care of and like I am their number one priority. The quality and speed of the short-listing is unmatched and the way they understand how to pitch my company and to manage the candidate flow is great. No-nonsense, refreshingly honest recruiters.”

Adina Kuse