
State of

Recruitment Marketing in 2024

Navigating the state of the hiring industry

The highly competitive hiring landscape in 2024 is notably more complex than in years past as the job market is expected to return to pre-pandemic status. The [Congressional Budget Office](#) projects that the unemployment rate will increase to 4.7% by mid-2024 from 3.6% around the middle of 2023, yet many organizations — especially those with over 2,000 employees — expect hiring volume in 2024 to outpace that of 2023.

Long-lasting pressure from the pandemic on remote work policies combined with economic uncertainty, a challenging geo-political environment, and an [increasing dissatisfaction](#) with current talent acquisition efforts may require employers to rethink how they attract, engage, and retain today's workforce.

Based on third-party research and insights from more than 450 talent acquisition leaders, Symphony Talent's *State of Recruitment Marketing in 2024* report answers those questions, highlighting the good, the bad, and the opportunities surrounding innovative talent acquisition and recruitment marketing strategies.



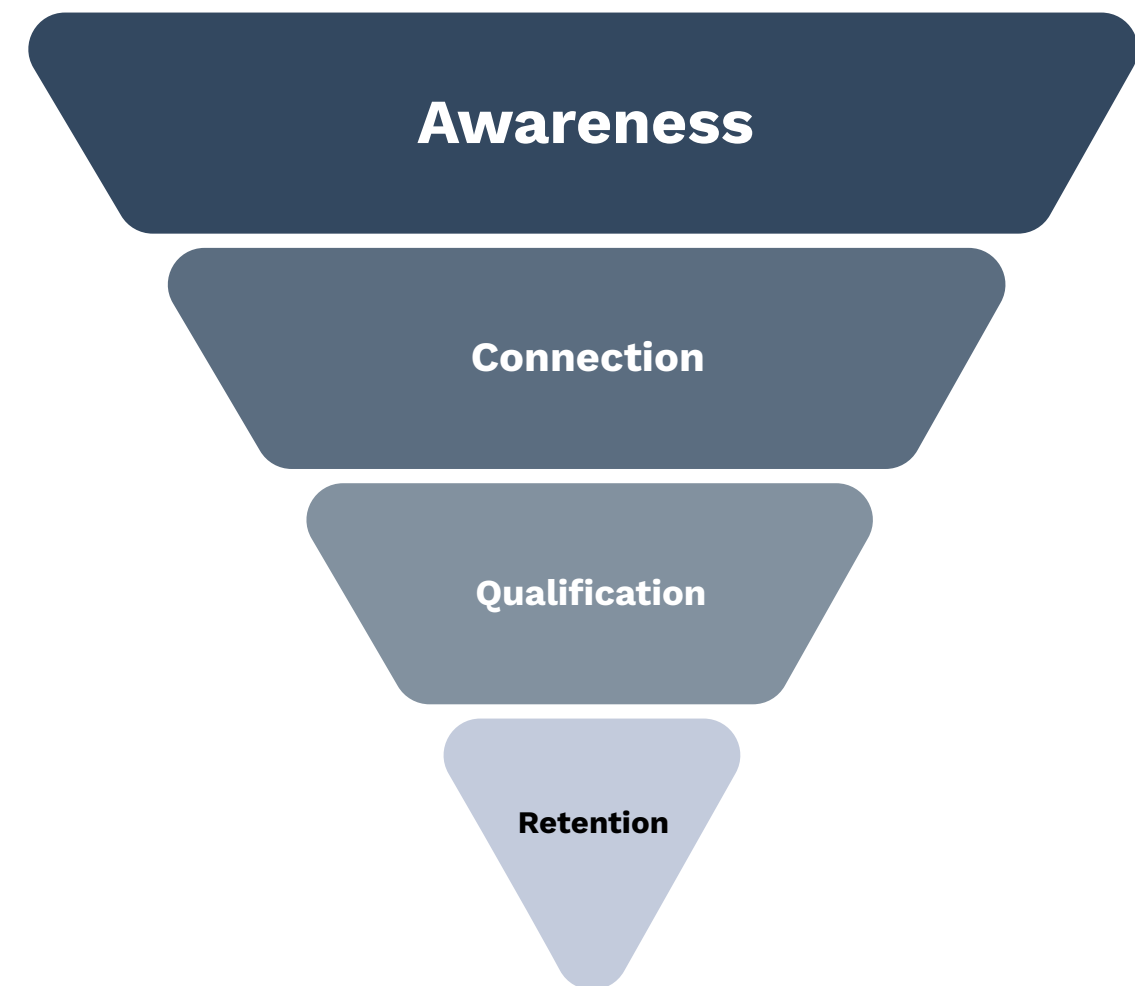
Despite a projected increase in unemployment rates, **53% of business leaders predict hiring volume will increase in 2024 compared to 2023.**

Funnel vision

“Funnel vision” isn’t a new concept. It’s a tried and true approach to talent acquisition that defines the recruiting process. Full-funnel recruitment marketing refers to the strategic approach of targeting and engaging potential candidates at every stage of the recruitment process, from awareness to application and ultimately to hire. By adopting a full-funnel approach, organizations can attract and engage candidates more effectively, ultimately leading to better hiring outcomes and a stronger talent pipeline.

To help talent teams align their 2024 talent acquisition and recruitment marketing strategies with funnel vision, this report examines the state of each stage of the funnel — awareness, connection, qualification, and retention — providing a data-driven snapshot of challenges, opportunities, and future priorities for leading talent teams.

The common thread throughout? Data reigns supreme and can be the difference between innovating for success and maintaining the status quo.

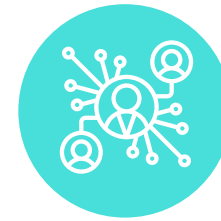


Key findings



Raising awareness

- Nearly half (48%) report that building a talent pipeline is the number one priority for 2024, yet reaching the right target audience remains a challenge for 68%.
- 63% have expanded their reach with recruitment technology.
- Using career websites (87%) to target, reach, and engage with talent exceeds that of other talent acquisition technology.



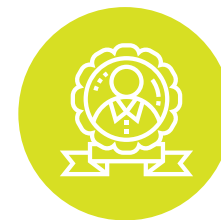
Building connections

- The top challenge (47%) when connecting with talent is managing manual systems/processes.
- Despite the importance of a data-driven talent acquisition strategy, only 22% describe their visibility/accessibility to data at the earliest stages of talent engagement as “excellent.”
- 59% use a CRM solution to manage the talent pipeline and engage with candidates.



Assessing qualifications

- 73% of C-level executives cite higher quality hires as a benefit of implementing talent assessments.
- 53% of VPs cite increased retention rates as a benefit of implementing assessments.
- 45% believe that talent assessments can create friction in the hiring process, and 60% report candidate drop-off.



Boosting retention

- Nearly half (46%) report an average tenure of two to five years within their organization.
- 86% currently have an employee referral program, helping to cut recruiting costs and improve retention
- 70% use an internal career site to communicate open positions to existing employees.

The state of raising awareness

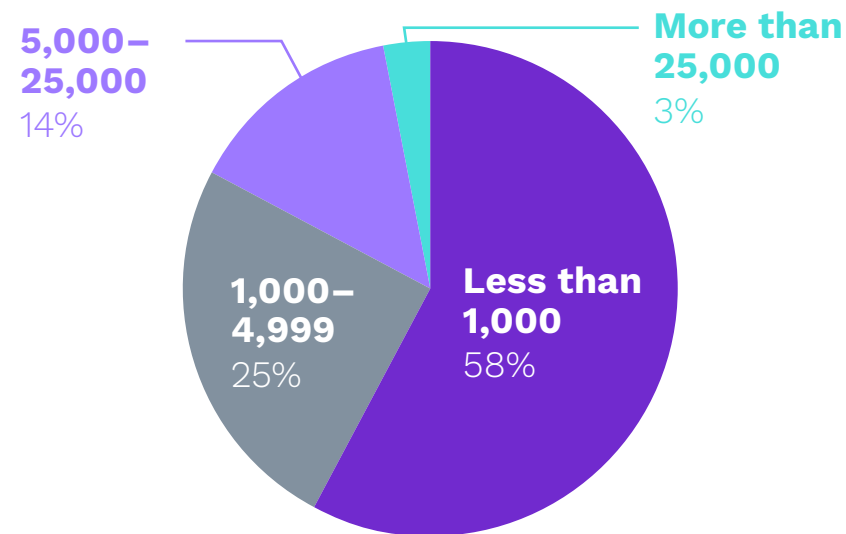
Hiring volume expected to increase in 2024

Despite a projected increase in the U.S. unemployment rate, many business leaders expect hiring volumes to increase over 2023 levels. While large businesses (25k+ employees) are most likely to increase their hiring in 2024, 55% of C-level executives believe hiring will increase at their organization in 2024.

How did hiring for your organization change throughout 2023, and how do you anticipate it changing in 2024?

	2023	2024
↓ Decrease	27%	11%
— Remain the same	31%	36%
↑ Increase	42%	53%

How many hires do you typically manage per year?



48%

report that building a talent pipeline is the number one priority for 2024.

68%

indicate that reaching the right target audience remains a challenge.

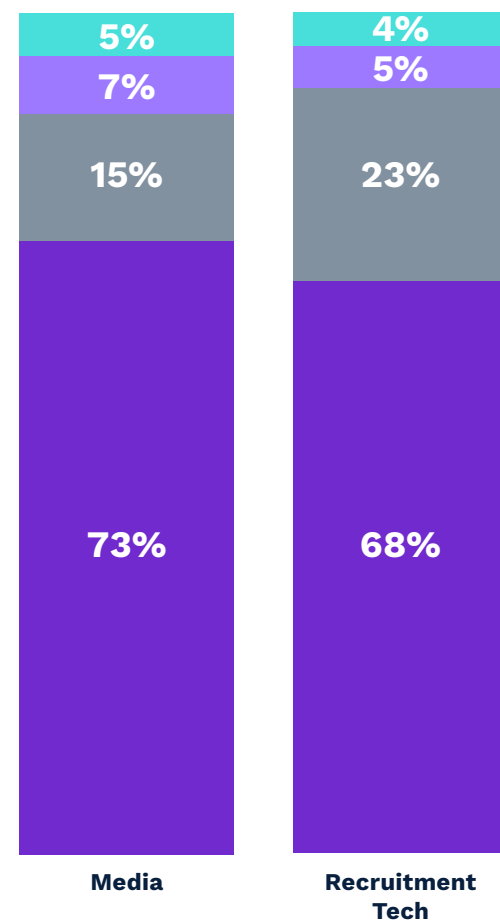
Despite shrinking HR budgets, technology remains a priority

You've heard it before, probably more in 2023 than in recent years. "Doing more with less" is a trend not only amongst HR and talent acquisition teams. However, for these teams, it underscores the criticality of recruitment marketing strategies, tactics, and technology that help attract the right talent. A 2023 Gartner report found that 25% of 2023 HR budgets decreased, compared to 12% in 2022.

So, where are HR teams investing?

Annual recruitment marketing budgets

■ < \$500,000 ■ \$500,000–1M ■ \$1-2M ■ \$2M+



Among those organizations leveraging technology to attract talent:

91%

see the benefit of investing in technology to attract talent.

63%

credit technology with expanding their reach.

53%

have experienced reduced time to application.

Among those organizations leveraging technology to connect with talent:

57%

have seen faster time to application.

42%

report better employer-candidate alignment.

38%

indicate higher engagement.

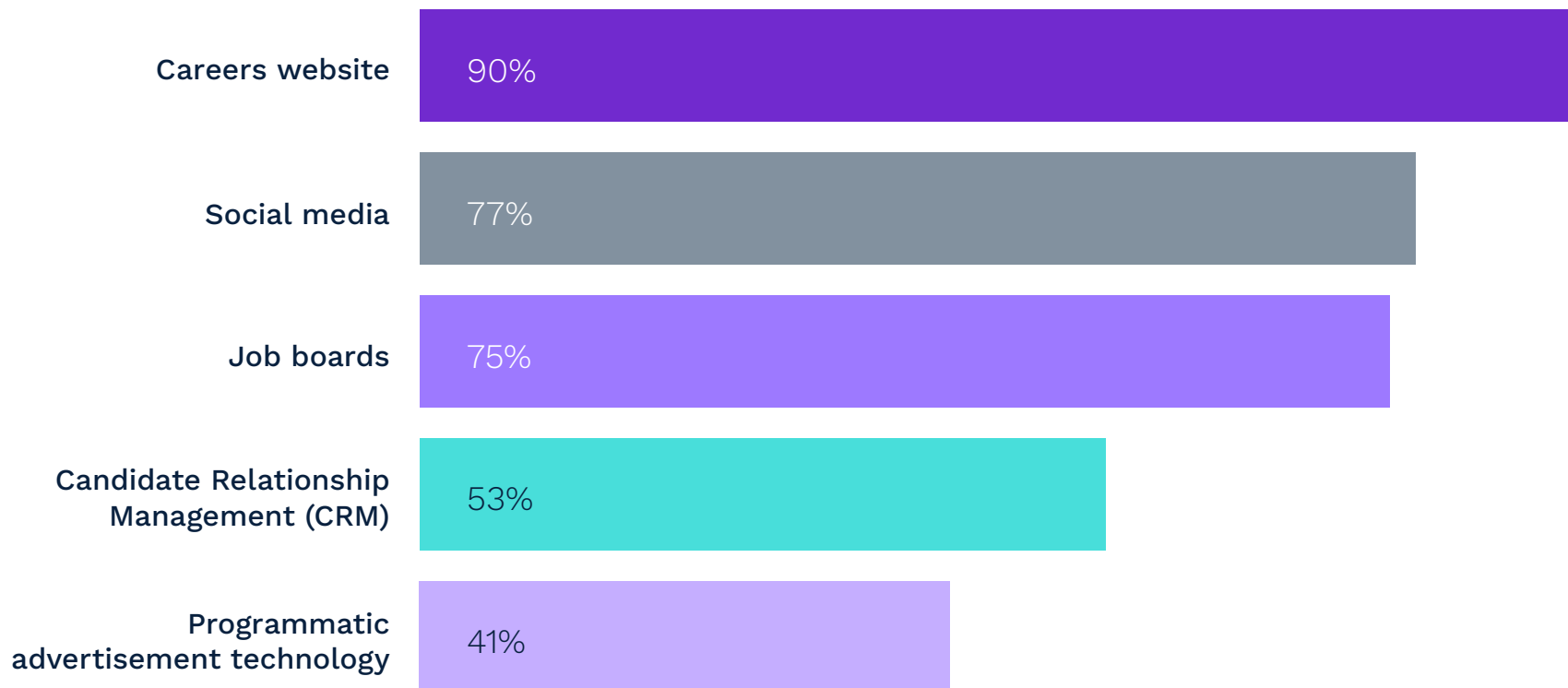
Make the most of your media and tech budgets with targeted, programmatic media.

[Learn more about AdTech.](#)

A candidate-focused strategy meets talent where they are

When companies limit their recruitment marketing efforts to a specific channel, it detracts from the potential of a more effective recruitment marketing strategy — a candidate-focused strategy. Any hiring organization (or provider of recruitment marketing technology and services) can advertise jobs to many people, but that means little if you're not connecting with candidates in a meaningful way. Consider all of the available channels when determining how to best attract talent.

What channels do you use to attract talent?



A CRM solution serves as the backbone of a candidate-first strategy. Gain a competitive advantage by harnessing the power of a smart CRM with built-in AI, pre-defined workflows, and deep analytics across all activities.

[Learn more here.](#)



The state of building connections

Manual systems and processes add pressure, risk to connecting with talent

In connecting with candidates to find the right hire, talent acquisition teams mustn't waste time or lose great talent in the process. Yet, so many manual tasks still exist within the recruiting world — and they could cost you. For nearly half (47%) of organizations, the top challenge when connecting with talent is managing manual systems and/or processes. Imagine the possibilities for your talent acquisition team if you could remove low-value, error-prone, manual tasks.

Manual processes aren't the only thing holding talent acquisition teams back from connecting with talent. Twenty-eight percent report needing to develop more relevant content and messaging, and 25% are challenged by effectively communicating the employer brand.



Every touchpoint with a candidate should be authentic and engaging while delivering on your employer branding and value proposition. Easy-to-use campaign tools such as smart list segmentation, drag and drop design, and if/then workflows make communicating with candidates simple but smart. [Discover the impact of automation.](#)

What is your top challenge when it comes to connecting with talent?



CHALLENGE

47%

managing manual systems and/or processes.



CHALLENGE

28%

developing relevant content and messaging.



CHALLENGE

25%

effectively communicating the employer brand.

Technology delivers data-driven insights

Staying ahead in today's highly competitive talent acquisition landscape requires organizations to lean on data to inform decision-making more than ever before. Data analytics can provide valuable insight into candidates' preferences and strategy effectiveness during the recruitment process. By combining proven technology and data-driven candidate engagement strategies, talent teams can connect meaningfully, build trust, and drive excitement within their talent networks.

Despite the importance of a data-driven talent acquisition strategy, only 22% describe their visibility/accessibility to data at the earliest stages of talent engagement as "excellent."

How would you describe your current visibility and accessibility with data at the earliest stages of talent engagement?



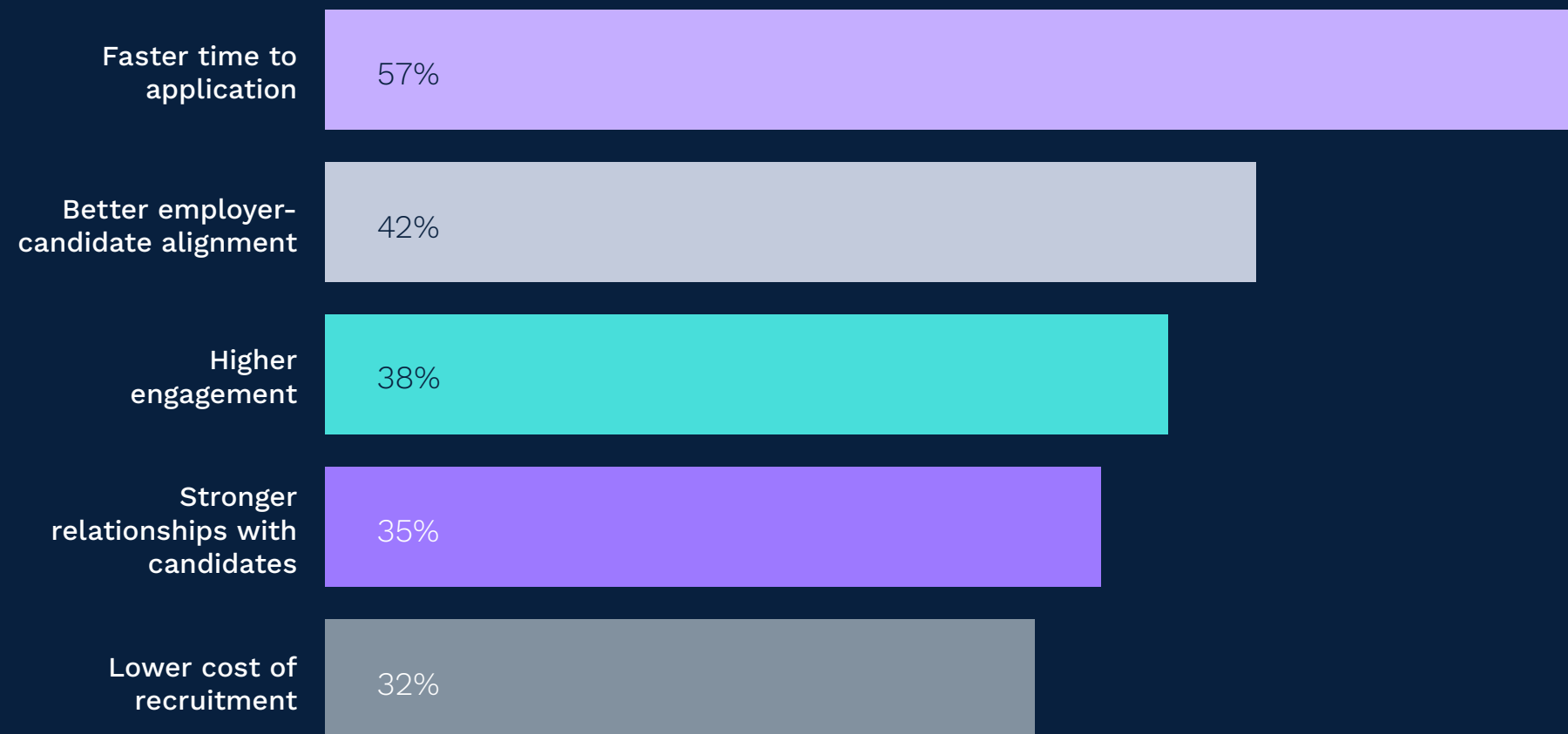
Powerful data analytics and insights — from reach to retention — at your fingertips. **Watch the webinar** and learn more about data-driven talent acquisition.

Connecting with candidates requires help from technology

Recruitment candidate relationship management (CRM) systems aren't new, but industry-wide adoption is not yet a reality. Though 59% of organizations use a CRM solution to manage the pipeline and engage with talent, many organizations lack an effective way to build relationships with current and potential candidates.

For those talent teams that leverage a CRM to power recruitment marketing efforts, the benefits range from lowering the cost of recruitment to increasing time to application.

What benefits have you experienced by implementing technology to help connect with talent?



59%
of organizations use a CRM solution to manage the pipeline and engage with talent.

The state of assessing qualifications

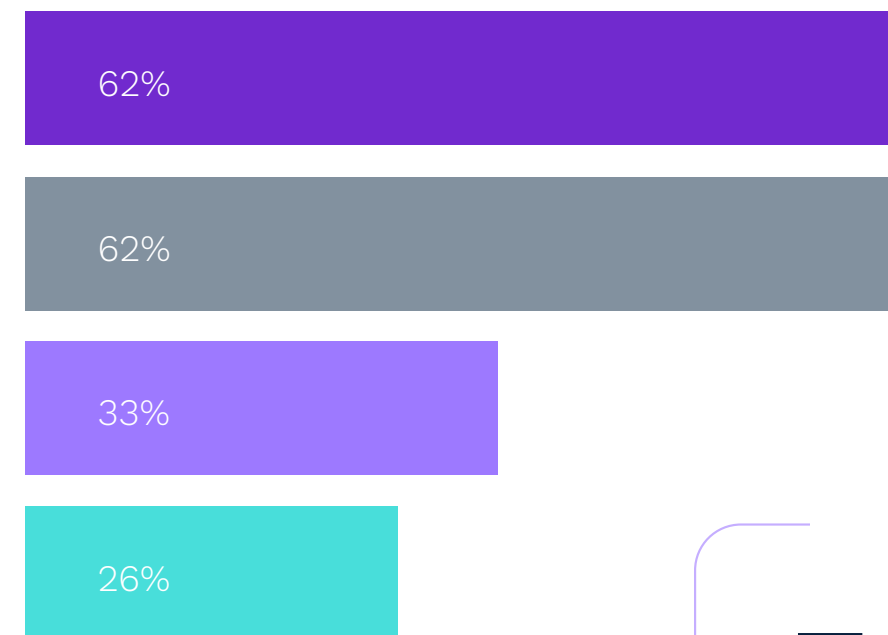
Talent assessments help identify right-fit talent

Recruitment, by nature, is a human-focused process that naturally includes some bias. Wherever there is an opportunity to eliminate bias, doing so can help talent teams make fairer, data-driven hiring decisions. **Talent assessments** are one way to do this and aim to measure whether a candidate is the right fit for a role — whether based on skills, personality, cognitive ability, or other variables.

What types of pre-hire assessments do you use?



What types of employee assessments do you use?



73%
of C-level executives cite higher quality hires as a benefit of implementing talent assessments.

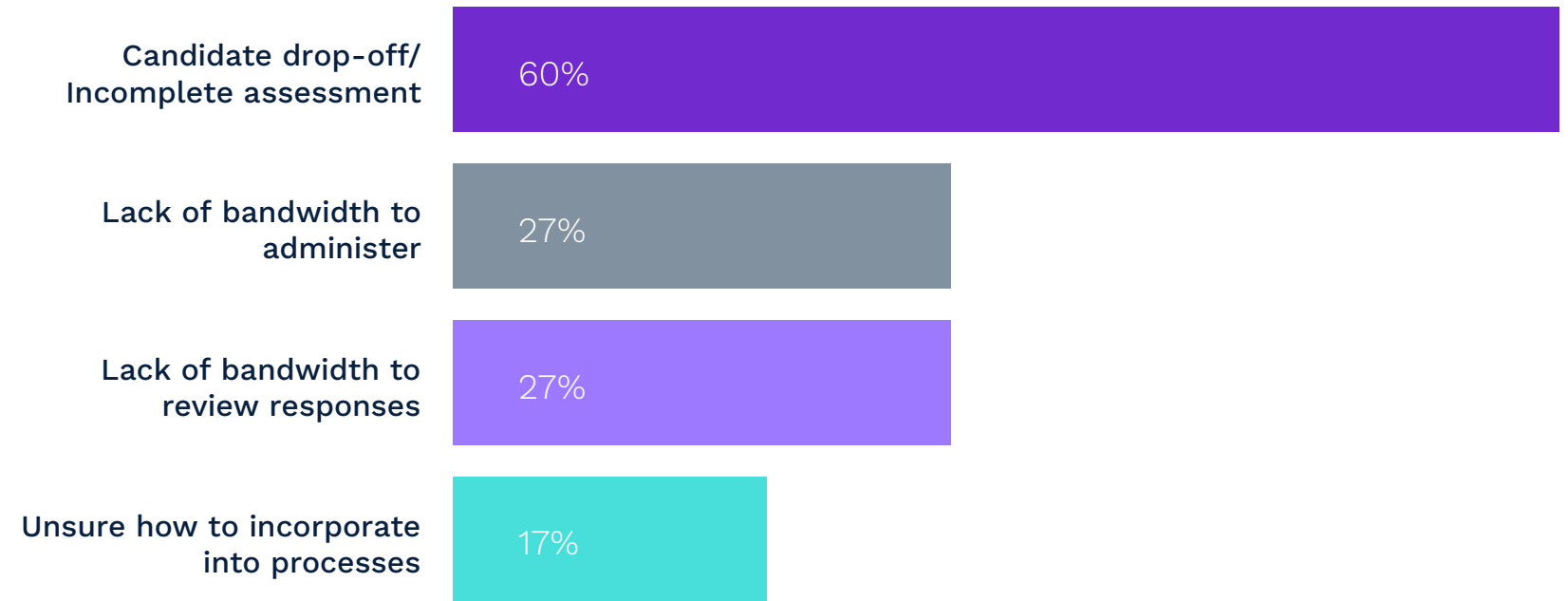
Perceived friction and candidate drop-off hold teams back from widescale implementation

A well-designed and well-managed candidate journey helps ensure the right candidate gets hired. For 59% of organizations, that involves pre-hire assessments. When leveraged successfully, assessments provide talent acquisition teams with the objective data they need to make informed hiring decisions. However, many organizations need help with their assessment strategy.



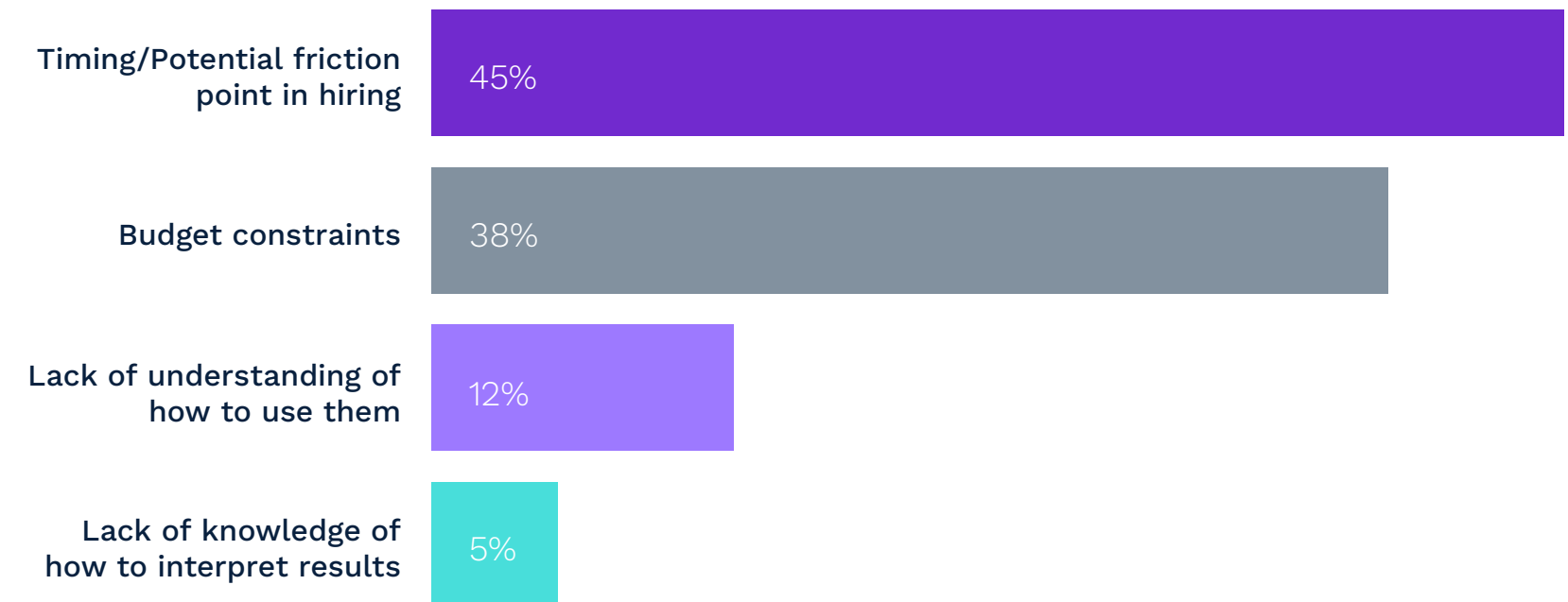
There's no one-size-fits-all approach to assessing candidacy. To reduce potential friction and candidate drop-off, a carefully curated, science-backed assessments strategy is key. See how one Fortune 500 company leveraged talent assessments to elevate the recruitment process and deliver greater cultural fit. [Read the case study.](#)

What are the challenges you've experienced with talent assessments?



Of the 41% of organizations that *don't* leverage pre-hire assessments as part of their candidate journey, 45% believe it's because it creates friction in the hiring process.

What holds you back most if you don't use talent assessments, or only on a limited basis?



Benefits include driving informed decisions, boosting retention

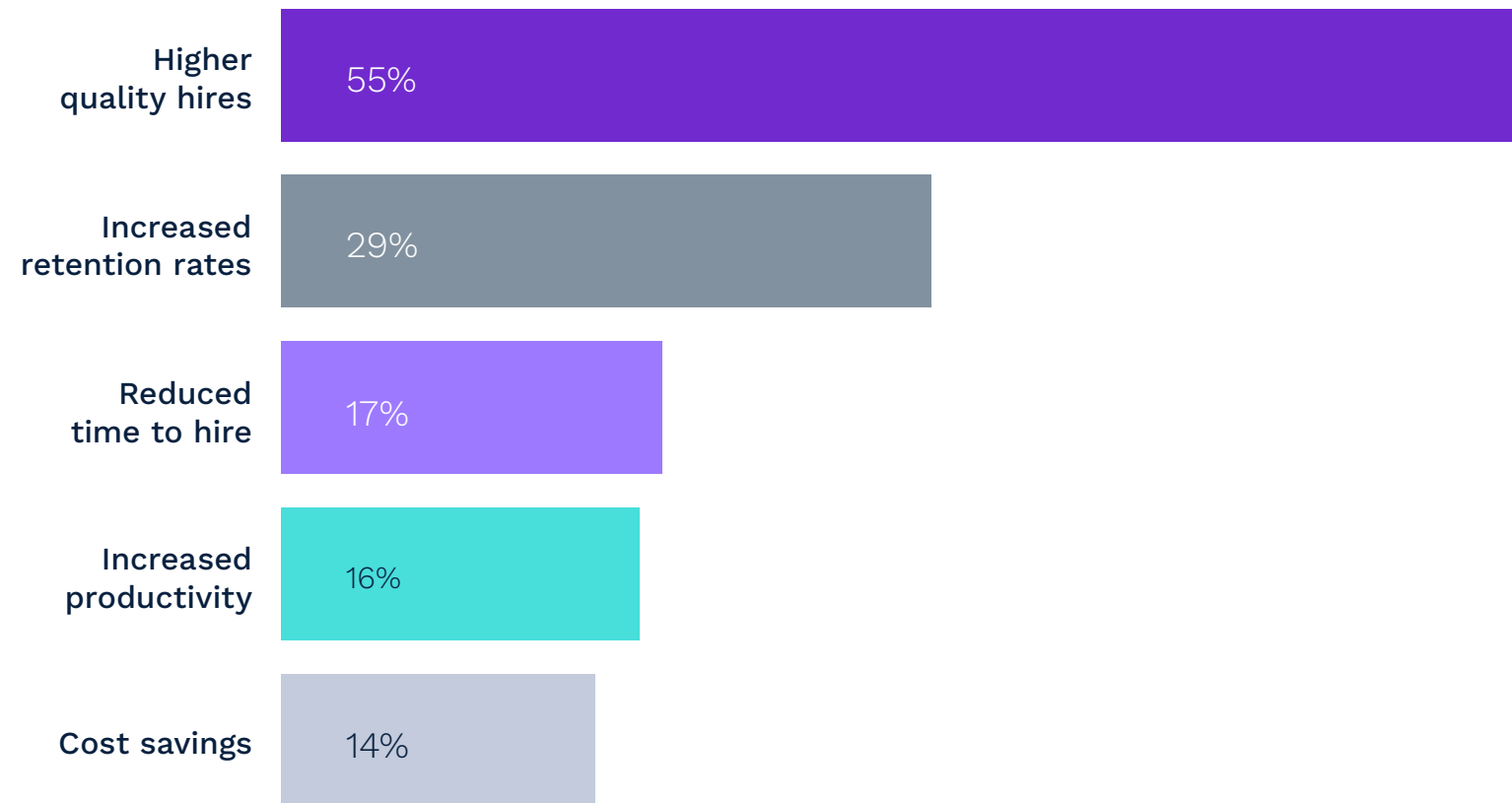
Not only do talent assessments provide a clear indication of candidates' capabilities to do the job, but they can also help predict if they will be a good fit for organizational and/or team culture and, therefore, retention.

53%

of VPs cite increased retention rates as a benefit of implementing assessments.

Despite the unbiased view that assessments provide into the potential match between a candidate and a role or a candidate and the employer, 27% of organizations that have implemented assessments indicate no perceived benefits. This points to the need for a truly strategic approach to talent assessments and a robust offering of unbiased, compliant, specialized assessments.

What benefits have you experienced since implementing talent assessments?



[Read the blog](#)

and discover the strategic advantage of skills-based hiring.

The state of boosting retention

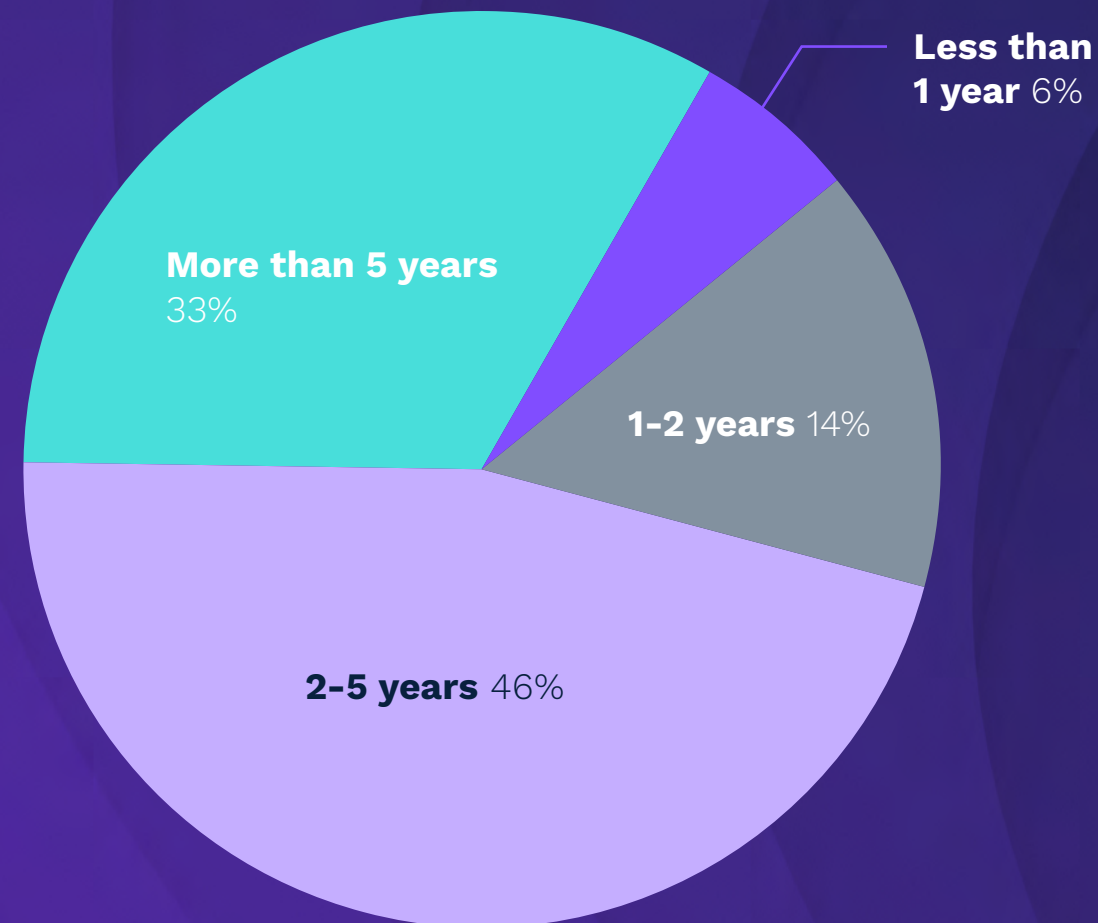
Finding and hiring the right employees is critical, but retaining them is just as important. After all, replacing talent is often more expensive than retaining talent. SHRM reports that costs associated with employee turnover can range from 90 to 200 percent of the employee's annual salary.

While there are many ways — pulse survey, satisfaction score, recognition, and absenteeism, to name a few — to gauge employee engagement and help predict retention rates, average tenure is often the North Star metric.

2024 trend data from Forbes indicates that employees aged 55 to 64 have an average tenure of 9.9 years, while employees 25 to 34 have an average tenure of only 2.8 years.

If this trend continues as younger generations of employees enter the workforce, talent teams must consider unique strategies to keep these employees engaged and retained.

What is the average tenure within your organization?



Referral programs lower recruiting costs, drive retention

Some of the best recommendations come from people we know and trust. For talent teams, that means candidate referrals from existing, trusted employees.

An effective referral program can help talent teams:

- Source right-fit hires through the employee network
- Lower overall recruiting costs
- Expand the talent network
- Improve employee engagement and retention

86%

currently have an employee referral program.

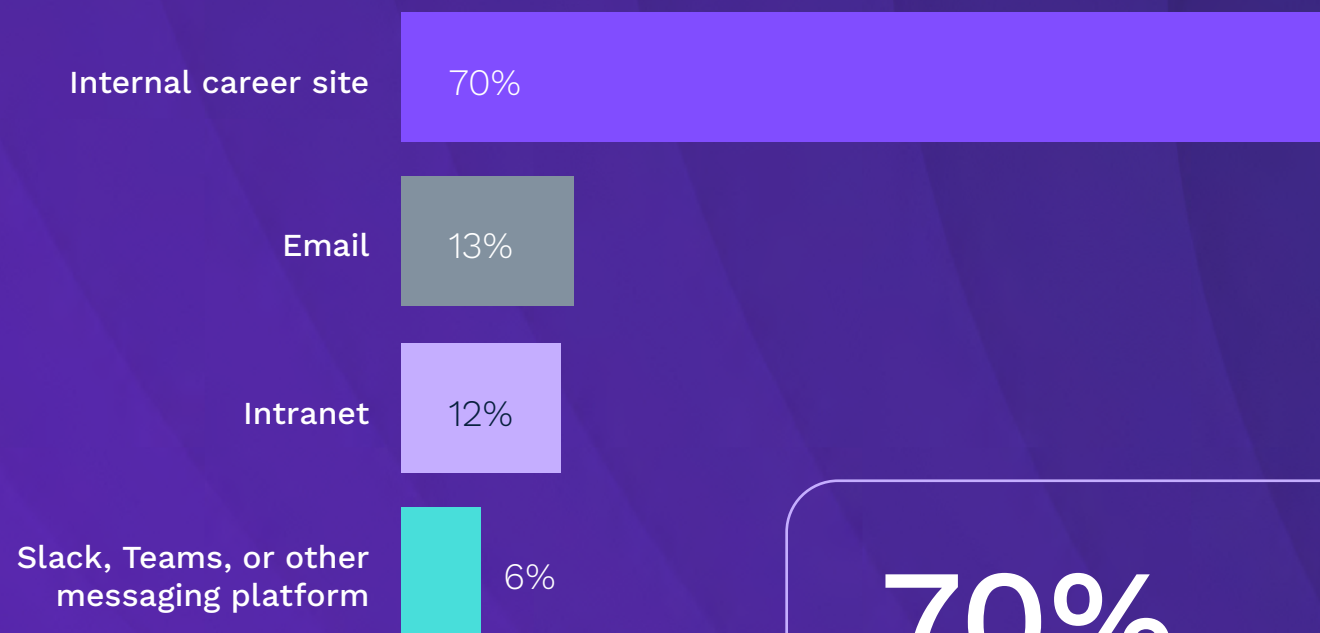
Employees know what it takes to excel within an organization ... and who in their network would get the job done well. Well-designed and well-managed referral programs empower your best employees to leverage their networks to bring in other top performers, ultimately encouraging them to stay longer and continue to do good work.



Internal career sites are not to be underestimated

Marketing open positions to your employee network is just as important as marketing to your external candidate network. In fact, 96% of organizations have an internal mobility strategy. Determining the best channels to promote internal opportunities for mobility is vital.

How do you communicate open positions internally most often?



70%
use an internal career site to communicate open positions to existing employees.



Recommendations for advancing recruitment marketing strategies

The state of recruitment marketing in 2024 presents both opportunities and challenges for talent acquisition teams. Building a robust talent pipeline remains a top priority, yet reaching the right target audience continues to be a significant challenge. However, leading teams are leveraging recruitment technology to expand their reach and engage with candidates more effectively. While career websites remain a popular choice for targeting talent, the adoption of talent assessments by C-level executives is proving beneficial in driving higher quality hires and improved retention rates.

To address these priorities and challenges, talent acquisition teams should consider the following recommendations:

1

Harness technology

to streamline processes and enhance the candidate experience. Implementing a CRM solution can help manage the talent pipeline and engage with candidates more efficiently, while also providing valuable insights into candidate interactions.

2

Invest in data-driven strategies

to improve visibility and accessibility to data at all stages of talent engagement, enabling more informed decision-making.

3

Leverage internal initiatives

such as employee referral programs and internal career sites to aid in both reducing recruiting costs and improving retention rates.

By leaning on technology to address key industry priorities and challenges, leading talent acquisition teams can position themselves ahead of the curve in attracting, engaging, qualifying, and retaining top talent in the dynamic landscape of recruitment marketing in 2024.

A full-funnel approach to recruitment marketing

Keeping up with the competition requires talent acquisition teams to take a full-funnel approach to recruitment marketing, embracing the rich data available at every stage to advance candidates to co-workers in a data-driven way.

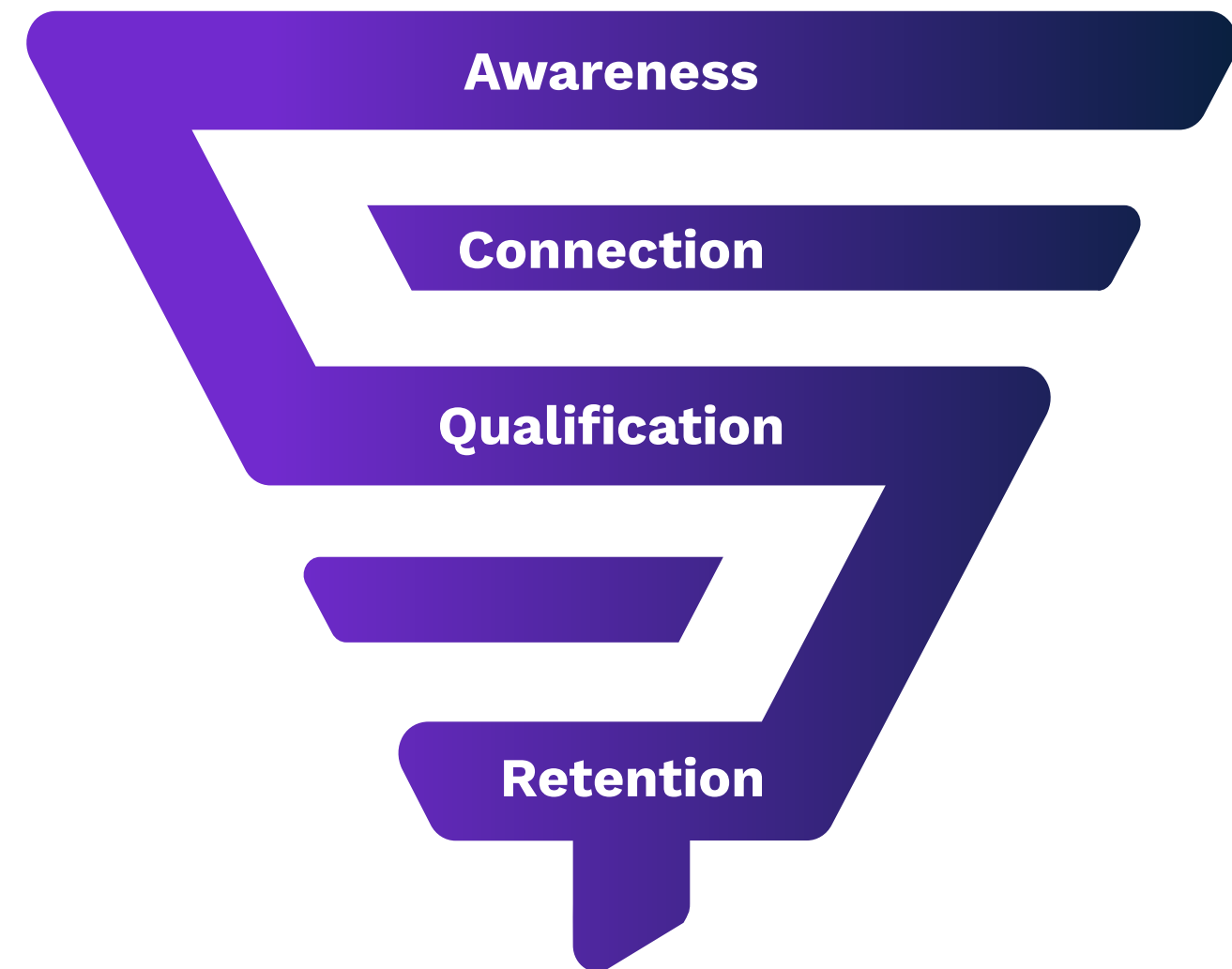
The talent funnel mindset empowers talent teams to develop data-driven strategies for tailoring messaging, adjusting engagement tactics, assessing qualifications, and boosting retention based on where candidates are in their talent pipeline.

Recruitment teams should choose a technology partner that offers solutions across the entire talent funnel, which enables teams to scale more effectively while ensuring data integrity and a seamless experience.

Symphony Talent is the only recruitment marketing partner to combine innovative, purpose-built technology and robust data analytics with award-winning creative and brand services and strategic advisory across the full talent lifecycle.

Don't settle for "good enough" with vendors who only address a slice of the funnel.

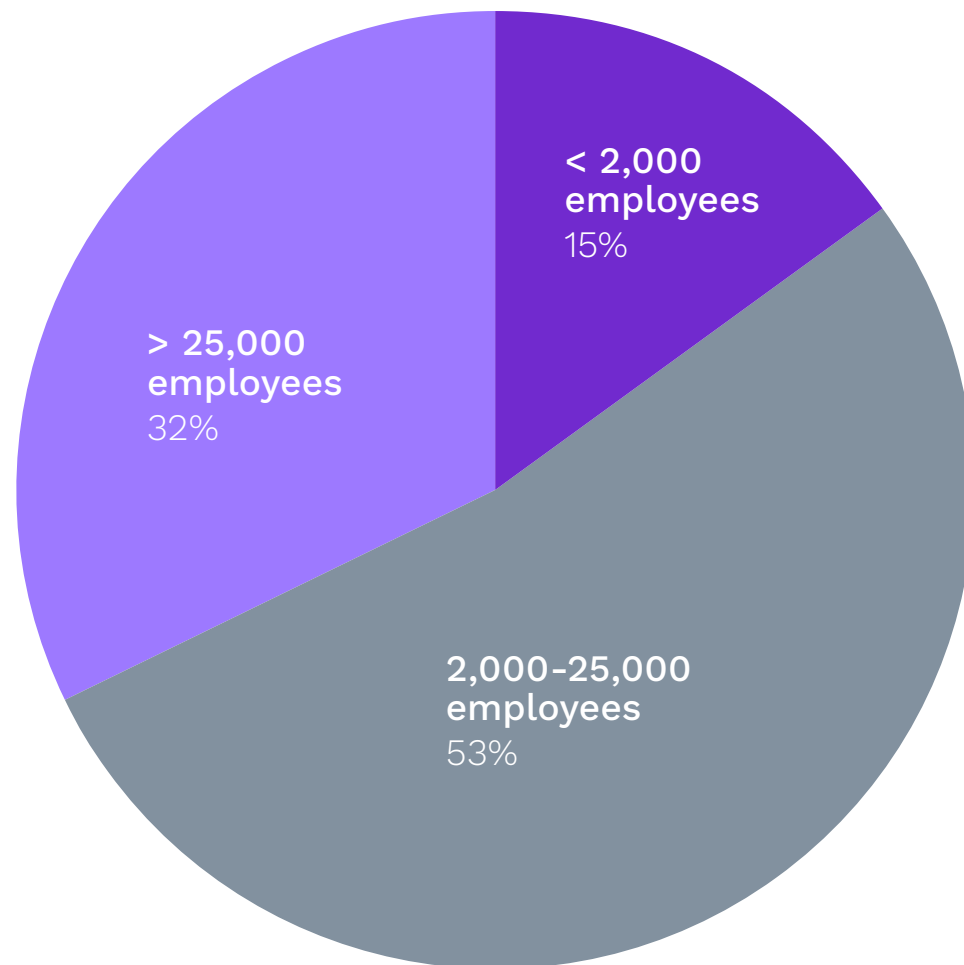
[Contact us](#) to learn more.



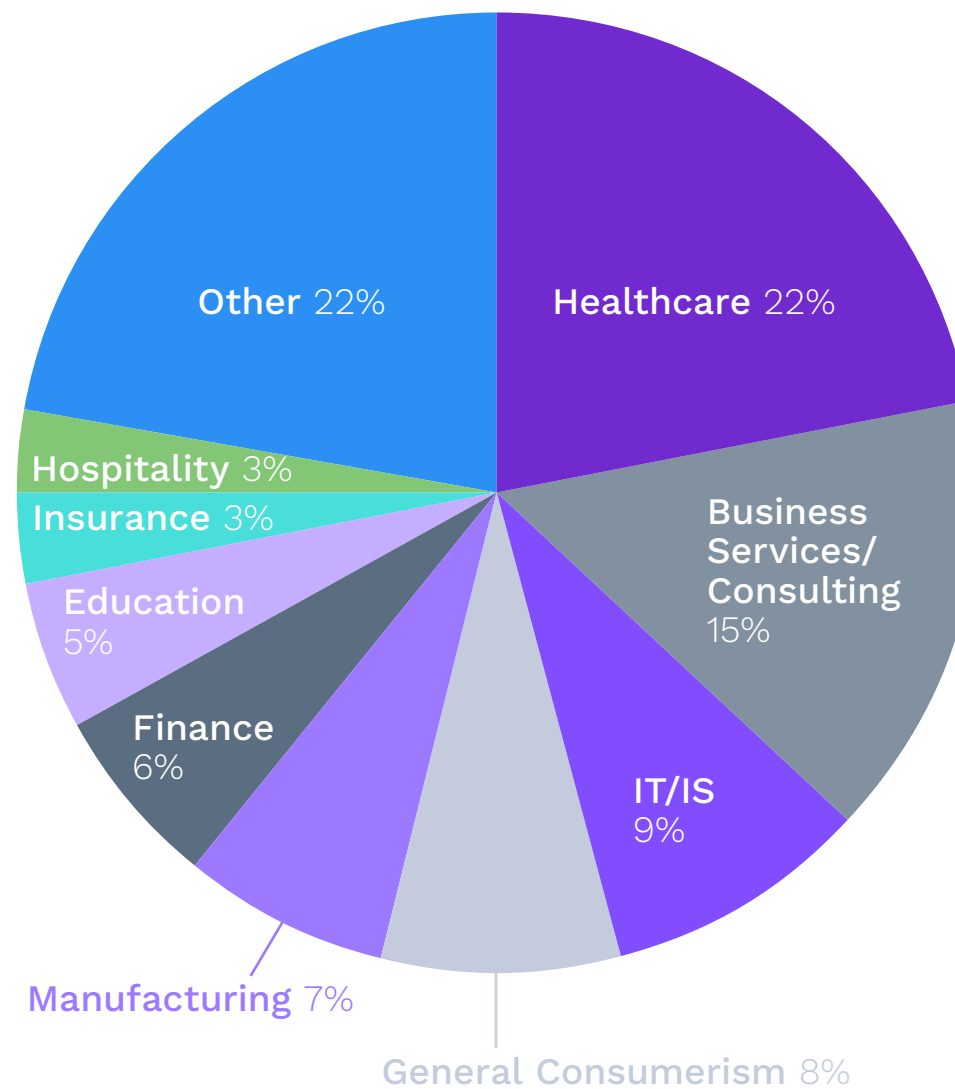
About the research

The *State of Recruitment Marketing in 2024* report is an annual in-depth look at trends, challenges, future priorities, and progress at leading organizations across the globe. The report is based on a survey conducted in November 2023 by a third-party research organization, which captured responses from more than 450 HR and talent acquisition professionals from various industries. Survey participants self-identified as C-level executive decision-makers, functional decision-makers, influencers, and users.

Organization size (number of employees)



Industries represented





Symphony Talent is a recruitment marketing technology and creative services company that helps talent acquisition teams execute strategies that empower innovative candidate interactions. Our recruitment technology and award-winning Employer Value Proposition (EVP) strategy and employer brand campaigns support clients across the globe, including the world's leading brands.

Visit symphonytalent.com to learn more.